

## Have You Seen My Favorite Tree in the Cemetery?

*By Sister Mary Christopher*

The blue spruce is a beautiful tree. The new growth on it in the springtime produces a beautiful light blue expansion of new needles and eventually larger branches. Later on, in maturity, it blends in with the older green branches. We have a blue spruce in our cemetery in Fond du Lac. It can't be more than 9 years old. It may be older as I'm sure it was stunted when first planted and it was a struggle for it to be what it is today.



If someone were looking for a Christmas tree for their home, they would bypass this tree immediately. Maybe that is why we got it for our cemetery. I can imagine our grounds caretaker bracing it up as a young tree, trying to help it grow upright like all normal trees. But the little tree did not give up. It struggled like a young child with polio trying to stand straight like others who played baseball and ran freely. He had a brace to contend with and was considered handicapped and disabled. Today you might say that it was challenged. And so the little tree was challenged.

Today this little tree is an inspiration to me and to all who see it with clear eyes. This little blue spruce is a joyful symbol, like a young girl learning to dance, doing a ballet and a pirouette in her little blue tutu on a moss green dance floor. She is twirling around freely. There is a joy present, freedom- saying, "See what I can do, won't you join me?"

This tree is a symbol of hope, positiveness, new life. There was faith in daily challenges, acceptance of love in a warm sun and rain that watered it from the heavens. Its roots dug deeper and its spine-trunk began to straighten. The pirouette dance went on giving inspiration to all who would observe and meditate on the story of the blue spruce who wouldn't give up.

Our cemetery is an appropriate place for the little tree with its story. Those buried there tell us of hope after facing challenges of life. There is the promise of new life, freedom, value of faith, and love. The deceased and the little tree go well together and share their story with those who will listen. Little tree, live on, dance and give joy to eyes and hearts that long for your inspiration.