

THE PARISH OF SAINT MALACHY

24, Alfred Street, Belfast, BT2 8EN

RE: Saint Malachy's Crypt: Cremation Vault

Dear Sir/Madam

Thank you for your inquiry regarding Saint Malachy's Crypt. The Crypt holds around two thousand Cremation Vaults which are for the burial of Ashes. Vaults are currently being sold for the price of £600.00 per person. Only one Urn is permitted per Vault. The Crypt is closed to members of the public at all times.

Payment must be made in full if you would like to purchase a vault. A certificate will be issued upon receipt of £600.00 per person. We are unable to accept any form of part-payment.

To make full payment please make cheques payable to 'Saint Malachy's Parish' and post to Saint Malachy's at the above address. Please include your name, address and contact telephone number along with your cheque. Alternatively, if you would like to pay in cash please call in person to the presbytery during office hours Monday - Friday 10.00 am - 2.30 pm. A certificate will then be issued to you. Please note the parish office will be closed for lunch for one hour between 12.30 pm - 1.30 pm Monday - Friday.

I enclose a copy of the regulations currently in force regarding Saint Malachy's Crypt for your attention along with a list of frequently asked questions. If you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact the parish office on the telephone number below.

Many thanks.

Tel: 028 90 321 713

Fax: 028 90 333 224

Email: saintmalachys@hotmail.co.uk

F.A.Q

Q. Do I have to be a Parishioner of Saint Malachy's to be eligible to purchase a vault?

A. No. The sale of vaults in Saint Malachy's Crypt is not restricted to Parishioners.

Q. How many vaults are there?

A. There are around two thousand vaults in Saint Malachy's Crypt.

Q. Can I reserve a vault before I purchase it?

A. No. We do not have the facility to reserve Vaults. Vaults will be sold on a first come first served basis.

Q. Can I purchase one vault and place more than one urn in it?

A. No. Only one urn is permitted per vault.

Q. Can I place the ashes of two people in a single urn and place this in one vault?

A. No. This would require an urn that is too large in proportion to fit into the vault.

Q. Can I purchase more than one vault?

A. Yes. There is no limit to how many vaults a person can purchase.

Q. Can I purchase vaults that are positioned beside each other?

A. Yes.

Q. How much does a vault cost?

A. At present a vault costs £600.00.

Q. Will the vaults increase in price?

A. The vaults may be subject to a price increase at any time. Any increase in price will be decided by Saint Malachy's Finance Committee.

Q. Can I spread the cost of a vault over a period of time?

A. No. We can only accept full payment of £600.00.

Q. Can I pay for a vault by credit/debit card?

A. No. We can only accept payment by cash or cheque.

Q. Can I send my cheque by post?

A. Yes. You can send your cheque to us by post and once payment has been processed we can issue you with your certificate(s) by post. Please include a letter stating who the vault(s) are for and a return address. Please DO NOT send any cash by post. Saint Malachy's does not accept responsibility for any money/cheques/certificates lost via post.

Q. If I am paying by cash do I need to call into the office personally?

A. Yes. Or you can send someone responsible to act on your behalf.

Q. What does the £600.00 cost include?

A. The £600.00 cost covers the price of the vault. It DOES NOT cover the cost of the urn, the cremation, or any funeral costs.

Q. Who will place the urn into the vault?

A. The urn will be placed in the vault by a priest.

Q. Once I pay the £600.00 for the vault are there any additional costs involved to have the ashes interred?

A. No. There are no additional costs involved to have the ashes interred.

Q. Why is the Crypt closed to members of the public?

A. The ceiling in the Crypt is very low and there are sections where one is required to bend down low to gain access. For insurance reasons we cannot allow access to the public due to the risk of personal injury.

Q. Once I purchase a vault can I be granted access to view the crypt?

A. No. For insurance reasons the crypt will remain closed to the public at all times, regardless of vault ownership.

Q. Will my family/friends be able to place flowers in the crypt?

A. No. Flowers can be left in the Church but are not permitted in the Crypt.

Q. I am not a Parishioner. If I purchase a vault do I have to have my funeral at Saint Malachy's Church?

A. No. The funeral would take place in your own Parish as normal.

Q. How much notice is required before an interment can take place?

A. We will require AT LEAST 48 HOURS notice of an interment in order to make the necessary arrangements.

Q. Once ashes are interred in the crypt is it possible to organise Mass to be said for the deceased in Saint Malachy's Church?

A. Yes. If you would like to organise a Mass to be said for the deceased person please contact the Parish Office. Mass on the First Friday of each month is offered for those whose remains are interred in Saint Malachy's Crypt.

Q. Is there any ceremony before the ashes are interred?

A. Yes. Ashes are usually interred after Mass and there is short ceremony beforehand.

THE REGULATIONS CURRENTLY IN FORCE

The attention of the Applicant is drawn to the following matters:

The above price does not include:

A - Funeral expenses.

B - The urn.

The certificate must be retained as it constitutes proof of ownership of the right of a vault and must be produced on each occasion on which an inurnment is to take place.

Only the name and date of death of the deceased may be recorded on the plate attached to the urn.

Shrubs, flowers etc. may not be placed in the vault or Crypt.

The Crypt is closed to the public at all times.

48 hours notice must be given for an opening of a cremation vault.

Only **one urn** can be placed in the vault.

A Guide for the Interment of Ashes



**Saint Malachy's Parish
Belfast**

"Memento homo quia pulvis es, et in pulverem reverteris"

INTRODUCTION

“Remember you are dust, and unto dust you shall return”. These words from the Book of Genesis remind us that we were fashioned from the dust of the Earth. After our death our souls continue on their journey that by God’s mercy will lead them into Paradise; our bodies, vehicles for our souls on their journey through this life, return to the Earth. However, as Catholics, our belief is that at the end of time God will raise our mortal bodies and make them like His own in glory. Because we *do not believe* that death is the end of the human person, and we *do believe* in the resurrection of the body, we show care and reverence for the mortal remains for those who have gone before us marked with the sign of faith. The body of the deceased is brought to the Church for the Funeral Mass and during the Final Commendation it is revered with incense, a sign that during the deceased person’s lifetime their body was the temple of the Holy Spirit.

CATHOLICS AND CREMATION

The Catholic Church's preference has always been to bury the dead. The ban on cremation was to oppose the pagan practices that were considered to be anti-Christian. The Romans did not believe in an afterlife so they cremated their dead therefore the Christians of the early Church avoided cremation because of this connection with the Roman view. Another reason why this practice fell into disfavour with the Christians was simply because Jesus was not cremated.

Cremation was also disallowed largely because enemies of the Church sometimes ordered the cremation of the bodies of the faithful and the scattering of their ashes. This was in order to try to ridicule the Church’s belief in the Resurrection of Our Lord and our own resurrection, or as a way of seek-ing to obliterate the memory of Catholic martyrs. To this day, Canon Law forbids cremation when cremation is implemented for the purpose of denying the resurrection of the body.

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The Church's rejection of cremation was never intended to imply that someone who is cremated would never go to Heaven. The Church has never opposed the cremation of Catholics after disasters such as a plague, earthquakes or floods when individual burials would have been next to impossible.

In 1963, while continuing to maintain a strong preference towards burial, the Church became more open to allowing cremation. As more and more Catholics became aware of this change in Canon Law, an increasing number of Catholics have chosen cremation. The Church permits cremation as long as the following conditions are met:

- A - The ashes of cremated Catholics are to be respected as a body would be respected by burial either in a mausoleum or in a cemetery.
- B - The ashes are not divided.
- C - Ashes are not to be scattered.
- D - Ashes are not to be kept in someone's living room or any other place, other than those places mentioned in ~~the~~ above.

SAINT MALACHY'S CRYPT

During the Restoration of Saint Malachy's Church it was found that the area beneath the Church was sufficiently large enough (the entire floor space) to accommodate the interment of ashes. With the shortage of

The word ~~columbarium~~ comes from the Latin *columba* meaning dove and originally referred to compartments for doves and pigeons (dovecotes). Many modern columbaria are built above ground but Roman columbaria were built underground, the Catacombs. Each section of columbaria in Saint Malachy's Crypt is named after the famous catacombs of Rome; Saint Cecilia, Saint Agnes, Saint Sebastian and so on. Each columbarium is numbered vertically so if you wish to have two beside each other do not be concerned if the numbers are not sequential. An example is outlined below.

1	4	7	10	13	16	19	22	25	28
2	5	8	11	14	17	20	23	24	29
3	6	9	12	15	18	21	24	27	30

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. How much does it cost?

A. £600 per person.

Q. Is the Crypt open to the public?

A. Due to height restrictions this is not possible. However the names of all those interred in the Crypt are recorded in a Book of Remembrance on Saint Joseph's Altar. Mass is offered on the First Friday of each month for those interred in the Crypt.

Q. What are the dimensions of each niche?

A. Each niche is able to hold an urn which is 1300 long, 1000 wide and 1000 high.

Q. Are non-Parishioners allowed to be interred in the Crypt?

A. Yes.

Q. How do I buy a niche?

A. Please contact the Parish Secretary using the details below.

Q. Is there a ceremony for the entombment of ashes?

A. Yes, the Rite of Committal is celebrated by one of the priests of the Parish in the Church with the family of the deceased present. When the prayers are concluded the priest will inter the ashes in the Crypt.

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