

Rules and Regulations for Arles Graveyard
Situated in the grounds of the Sacred Heart Church, Arles, Co. Laois

Arles Parish Office: Phone (059) 862 5456; Email: arlesparish@gmail.com

1. Introduction

Arles graveyard is situated in the grounds of the Sacred Heart Church, Arles, Co. Laois. The right of burial in the graveyard is granted subject to the decrees and canons of the Catholic Church and the rules and regulations of the graveyard. Title to all graveyard lands remain in the Parish. The Parish Priest is responsible for the grounds including boundaries and buildings.

The graveyard is a sacred place, a place of history, peace, dignity and respect, where generations of parishioners have laid their loved ones to rest since the 18th century.

Burial plots will be available to the extent that land is available for this purpose at the time of burial.

The Parish Priest:

- manages the conduct of funerals, memorials, traffic, employees (paid and voluntary), visitors and control of all persons in the graveyard.
- has the right to enforce all rules and regulations and to exclude from the graveyard any persons found to violate these regulations.
- reserves the right to review, revise and amend the rules and regulations on a needs basis, for the conduct of the graveyard.

The purpose of these rules and regulations is to assist those who use or visit the graveyard, to ensure that the graveyard is maintained to a respectable condition and to assist the pastoral group in that process. We appreciate and thank you for your full cooperation and support in this matter.

It is a condition of burial in this graveyard that these rules and regulations are adhered to.

2. New Grave Plots

New grave plots will be allocated for deceased parishioners.

Where families have an historical link with the parish or a family tradition of interment in the parish graveyards, burial plots will be available. Only in exceptional circumstances will plots be available to non-parishioners with no demonstrable ties to Arles parish.

Application to acquire a grave plot in the graveyard shall be made to the Parish Priest.

The application shall include the full name and age of the deceased, address and place of death and contact details to ensure future identification against the Register.

The application process for a grave plot may be handled by the appointed Funeral Director on behalf of the deceased, family or named next of kin.

Grave plots may not be “pre booked/pre purchased”. Plots shall be allocated in sequence,

according to the next available plot in compliance with the graveyard layout.

Prior approval by the Parish Priest must be granted for the erection of a monument or placement of any kerbing/coping at the graveside.

Charges are payable at the current prevailing rate, to the Arles Parish Account.

Grave plot charges shall be determined and reviewed by the Parish Priest.

Payment shall be made through the Funeral Director, family member or named next of kin.

The sale of a grave plot to a third party is not permitted.

3. Grave Plot Size

Grave Plots will be available in Three Standard Sizes:

1. Single Plot: 2.44m (8ft) long by 1.22m (4ft) wide
2. Double Plot: 2.44m (8ft) long by 2.44m (8ft) wide
3. Treble Plot: 2.44m (8ft) long by 3.65m (12ft) wide.

The outer limit for graveside kerbing/coping MUST NOT exceed these dimensions.

4. First Interment

Each grave, when opened for the first interment therein, shall be sunk to the depth of 2.45m (8ft) at least, or in the case the nature of the sub-soil will not permit the grave being sunk to such depth, then to such lesser depth of 1.83m (6ft).

The lid of the coffin or upper surface thereof must be sunk to a depth of at least 1.22m (4ft) below the ordinary level of the ground.

No interment shall be permitted in the graveyard, nor shall any deceased person be admitted into the church previous to interment, unless the body is enclosed in a coffin of wood or other sufficiently strong material, subject to the approval of the Parish Priest.

5. Opening of Grave Plot

The Parish Priest must always be notified prior to the opening of a grave plot.

No grave shall be re-opened within fourteen years after the burial of a person unless to bury a member of the same family, in which case a layer of earth not less than 300mm (1ft) in depth shall be left undisturbed above the previously buried coffin; but if on re-opening any grave the soil be found to be offensive, such soil shall not be disturbed.

Under no circumstances shall human remains be removed from the grave.

No grave, in which a body has been interred, shall be opened, save for the purpose of interment or exhumation (with License), without the permission of the Parish Priest.

The Funeral Director shall take responsibility for the opening of a grave, in both new and existing grave plots. Responsibility for the opening of a grave plot lies solely with the Funeral Director or person/s delegated by him/her in compliance with Health and Safety Regulations.

Excavation of graves shall be carried out by hand or by mini-diggers in compliance with the relevant Health and Safety Regulations. Under no circumstances shall heavy machinery be used for opening graves. Safety shoring equipment must be installed when the digging depth reaches 1,22m and beyond.

All necessary precautions to protect paths, kerbs, monuments and surrounding graves from damage shall be taken by the operative or undertaker carrying out the works. This includes the laying of protective covering on paths and the use of portable platforms for soil excavated.

All spoil and excess material resulting from the excavation of a grave plot must be collected and removed from the graveyard for proper disposal elsewhere, by the Funeral Director and his operatives carrying out the burial.

6. Funerals and Burials

Funerals and or burials may take place at a date and time agreed with the Parish Priest. The Funeral Director must liaise with the Parish Priest or the Parish Office to arrange a funeral and or burial service.

A certificate of Cremation must be presented before any burial of cremated remains can take place. Cremated remains shall be contained in a casket, urn or other container made of wood, or other material sufficiently strong as agreed with the Parish Priest.

The scattering of cremated remains within the grounds of the graveyard shall not be permitted under any circumstances.

After burial, graves shall be tidied and left in an acceptable condition by the Funeral Director and his operatives.

Following burial, at least six months to one year shall elapse before a monument is erected, to allow for the grave to settle. The earth must be levelled before any permanent memorial, (with the necessary permission), is erected.

7. Trees and Shrubs

No trees or shrubs shall be planted on any grave plot in the graveyard.

8. Flowers and Pot Shrubs

All withered flowers including wreaths and pot shrubs, deteriorated artificial wreaths and arrangements shall be removed by the owners of the grave plot or their representative and taken away from the graveyard for safe disposal elsewhere.

9. Headstones and Memorial

No Headstone, Tablet or other memorial of any description shall be erected or constructed on any grave plot without the consent of the Parish Priest.

A descriptive statement of what is proposed, detailing size and material to be used, together with the name of the intended Monumental Sculptor to be contracted for the works.

The headstone or monument shall be of traditional design and finish and shall be in keeping with the existing headstones in the area.

The maximum height of headstone structures shall not exceed 1.2m (4ft 6ins).

In the case of a Celtic or Latin cross of traditional design, the height shall not exceed 2m (6ft 6ins) and the width shall not be greater than 1.0m (3.3ft).

All structures shall have reinforced bases with steel dowels.

The use of materials of a perishable nature such as timber, ironwork or the like as part of any monument or structure in the graveyard will not be permitted, except in cases of the erection of a temporary notice of burial. Temporary notices shall be for a period of 12 months.

No other structures of a permanent nature other than a headstone and kerbing/coping are permitted in the vicinity of the grave.

No railings, chains, seating, benches, paving or gravel stones will be provided or permitted around any grave.

Secondary monuments, additional to the headstone, such as statues including those of animals, carriages etc. are not permitted.

The headstone must be inscribed with the full name, address, date of death, and age (optional) of the deceased including relationship to the deceased interred earlier in the grave plot, where applicable. For example: husband; wife; son; daughter; etc.

All works shall be kept within the confines of the grave plot. Work shall not encroach onto adjacent grave plots or onto paths.

Before any monumental works are carried out in the graveyard, the contractor must make contact with the Parish Priest. Suppliers or erectors of grave monuments must provide evidence of insurance indemnifying the graveyard owner. The same suppliers or erectors of grave ware must be in a position to provide a Safety in the Workplace Statement prior to the commencement of work in the parish graveyards.

The contractor erecting the headstone, shall be responsible for the protection of paths, surrounding graves and monuments. This includes the laying of protective covering on paths, steps adjacent to the grave plots etc. and the use of portable platforms for materials and as a work base.

The mixing of sand, cement or other materials on the turf or paths is not permitted.

The contractor erecting the headstone is responsible for making good any damage done to turf, adjacent grave plots, monuments or other graveyard features at their own expense.

All spoil and excess material resulting from the preparation for, and erection of, a headstone or kerbing/coping to a grave shall be removed from the graveyard by the contractor carrying out the works for safe disposal elsewhere.

The graveyard shall not be used as a temporary or long-term storage area for any material or tools by contractors or their employees carrying out works in the graveyard.

The Parish accepts no responsibility for memorials or their safety and security. Once a memorial is erected it remains the property of the family of the deceased, who are responsible for maintaining it in a safe condition at all times. If a memorial is damaged or is in a dangerous state, and as a result injury is caused to a third party, then the responsibility shall lie with the family of the deceased.

The parish shall not be responsible for damage to memorials caused by water, ground shifting, inadequate design and or defective foundations.

No person or persons shall carry out any work in the graveyard, without first obtaining the consent of the Parish Priest. The Parish Office: Phone: (059) 862 5456; Email: arlesparish@gmail.com

10. Maintenance and Care of Graves and Memorials

The maintenance, appearance and safety of graves and memorials remains the responsibility of the grave plot owner and should be carried out in compliance with these rules and regulations.

The repair and or removal of broken memorials is the responsibility of the grave plot owner.

11. Maintenance of the Graveyard

The general maintenance of the graveyard including buildings, boundaries, walkways, paths and all other features shall be the responsibility of the Parish Priest and the Pastoral Group.

Grass cutting in the graveyard shall be carried out by an approved contractor throughout the growing season.

12. Damage to Memorials

No person shall willfully deface, destroy or damage any building, wall, fence, monument, headstone, tomb, tablet, notice board, signs or any other structure, whether belonging to the Church or the owners of burial plots, or pull up any trees, shrubs, or flowers therein, or put up any notice on any wall, or play any game of sport therein, or unlawfully disturb any persons visiting the graveyard, nor shall commit any nuisance within the graveyard.

13. Visitors to the Graveyard

Visitors shall treat the graveyard as a sacred place that should be treated with dignity and respect.

1. Shall not walk on any planting, shrubberies, graves or enclosures, but shall confine themselves to the paths and walkways therein, where possible,

2. Shall not interfere with any of the headstones, memorials or other features within the graveyard,
3. Dogs must be kept on a lead and under control at all times and any dog waste must be cleaned up and taken away from the graveyard for disposal elsewhere, and
4. No drugs and or alcohol shall be consumed in the graveyard at any time.

Queries shall be directed to the Parish Office. Phone: (059) 8625456 Email: arlesparish@gmail.com

Acknowledgements:

Kinnegad Parish Burial Policy 2018

https://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/death/after_a_death/burials.html 2017

St. Kevin's Cemetery Regulations 2015 - Laragh, Glendalough, Co. Wicklow

Limerick City and County Council Cemeteries Bye-Laws 2015

Laois County Council Cemetery Bye-Laws 2007