

## New resting place for stillborn babies at Rookwood

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It's described as "holy ground for tiny lives".

A special crypt at Rookwood Cemetery has been set aside as a free final resting place for stillborn babies.

The Catholic Cemeteries Board is offering free interment and memorial for the cremated remains of stillborn babies in its Holy Innocents crypt - an offer that could save bereaved parents thousands of dollars.

The board's CEO Michael McMahon said it is a way of easing the burden on families in their hour of need.

"Every parent deserves the right to an affordable place to hold their loved ones remains," Mr McMahon said.

"Having a place to visit and reflect can bring healing to families.

The crypt is located within the Mausoleum of the Resurrection. Each child buried in one of the niches will have their name and date of death individually inscribed.

Parents will only have to pay the cremation fee.

Mr McMahon said the free service is appropriate for families of any Christian faith.

The idea has won the approval of Amanda Bowles who runs of Bears of Hope Pregnancy and Infant Loss Support.

"It is amazing that the Catholic Cemeteries Board is offering access to one of these crypts for free," she said.

"It allows families to have a sacred place for their much loved baby."

Mrs Bowles's has firsthand experience of how devastating it is to lose a child.

In January 2006, her son Jesse was stillborn at 21 weeks.

"Acknowledgment that parents have lost a life so precious is crucial to the grieving process and I believe this is a real step forward in educating the community on the devastation faced by parents whose lives and dreams are shattered in just one moment," Mrs Bowles said.

For more information phone the Catholic Cemeteries Board on 9649 6423 or go to

<http://www.catholiccemeteries.org.au>