

Conservation of the Sarcophagi in the Pio-Christian Museum



RESTORATION PROCESS INCLUDES:

Contracting outside qualified restorers to intervene on upkeep of all the objects in the Pio-Christian collection, allowing one to enjoy their full aesthetic beauty. The restoration required by each piece varies, but in general we can enumerate the following common steps:

- Diagnostic research
- Preparatory works
- Removal of dust and calcium deposits
- Complete cleaning
- Consolidation of cracking and stucco work
- Documentation of restoration

Total Cost € 75 .000,00

► The Pio-Christian Museum preserves over 300 sarcophagi or frontal parts of sarcophagi, which date from circa 250 A.D. to the beginning of the 5th century A.D. It is the richest collection of early Christian archaeological discoveries that exists in the world. Such a colossal lapidary patrimony like this one is subject to severe conservation problems, which can only be partially resolved by the limited staff of the restoration laboratories of the Vatican Museums already heavily involved in preserving more severely damaged pieces in their care. The dust and debris that has collected over the centuries has deposited itself so deeply into the pieces that mere

vacuuming is not sufficient. Furthermore, the pieces have calcium deposits and large stains from glues and varnishes used in previous restorations. Thus an overall restoration of the collection is necessary to review each piece, establish its conservation state and give the attention each piece needs.

Thanks to a generous donation from the Dan Murphy Foundation, this project has begun, but we are still in need of funding so that all the sarcophagi can receive the conservation they need.



Detail of Sarcophagus
in the Pio-Christian Museum