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Massacre victims' families ask for apology

BY Staff reporter

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Remembering: A mural on the Whiterock Road, west Belfast PICTURE: Coim O'Reilly

FAMILIES of 11 people shot dead after the introduction of internment have marked their loved ones' anniversary, renewing their call for an apology for their deaths from the British government.

Eleven people were shot and killed in Ballymurphy, west Belfast by the British army in the days following the introduction of internment on August 9 1971.

On Saturday, the Ballymurphy Massacre Group, made up of victims' families, unveiled a mural on the Whiterock Road and held a remembrance walk revisiting the scenes of their deaths.

Catholic priest Fr Hugh Mullan was shot dead as he gave Last Rites to a victim. Mother-of-eight Joan Connolly and 14-year-old Desmond Healey were also among those who died.

Mrs Connolly's daughter Brieger Voyle said the 11 victims were unarmed, contrary to the claims of the army.

"There was a cover-up at the time of what happened. We want to know why they were shot and to receive an apology which acknowledges that our family members were not armed," she said.

The group are to meet SDLP leader Mark Durkan, the Consultative Group on the Past, chaired by Lord Eames and Denis Bradley and intend to travel to Brussels to raise awareness of their campaign.

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