



**SAINT  
PATRICK'S  
CATHEDRAL  
DUBLIN**

**Guided Tour Script**

**Education Department**

## Mission Statement

Saint Patrick's Cathedral stands as a witness to the Church's calling to give God praise and glory in an ordered and seemly way. Through the rites and ceremonies of the Church of Ireland, the Cathedral upholds an unbroken tradition of worship inherited from the ministry of her Patron, Saint Patrick. In responding to this calling, the Cathedral draws people of all backgrounds into a living community of those who seek inspiration and consolation; those who enquire, learn, and serve.

## Script Objective

This booklet is intended to assist staff, volunteers, and trainee guides in Saint Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin with the development of their guided tour skills.

Although called a script, it is not expected that it be delivered verbatim; instead, it is designed to provide some facts and history about the Cathedral. People interpret the Cathedral in different ways and this is an important feature of any worthwhile and memorable tour. It is suggested that a guide deliver the information contained herein as a narration of the Cathedral's story across the ten stops around the building.

Rubrics are printed in red to afford the guide a suggestion about how best to deliver the information practically; however, a pragmatic approach to safety and captive interest must always be taken. The primary objective of any tour of Saint Patrick's should be the delivery of correct and engaging information; equally important is the safe movement of all people around the Cathedral. This means that guides are responsible for ensuring that their group – regardless of size – does not cause a hindrance to other visitors. We ask all guides to respect the barriers in place around the building, with the exception of the choir stalls: you may bring a group into the *aisle* of the choir stalls, provided that the barriers and gates are replaced afterwards. Do not permit members to enter the musicians' stalls.

It would be impossible in a booklet like this to cover all aspects of the Cathedral; this script provides merely an overview of the most interesting aspects of the life and history of one of the most popular tourist attractions in Ireland. It is expected that tour guides be well-versed in other areas of the Cathedral's work too in order to better inform visitors.

Saint Patrick's Cathedral is not just a monument. The place is a working church and its history is being written continually. This script is also a working document, and suggestions for updates – additions and/or subtractions – are gratefully received.

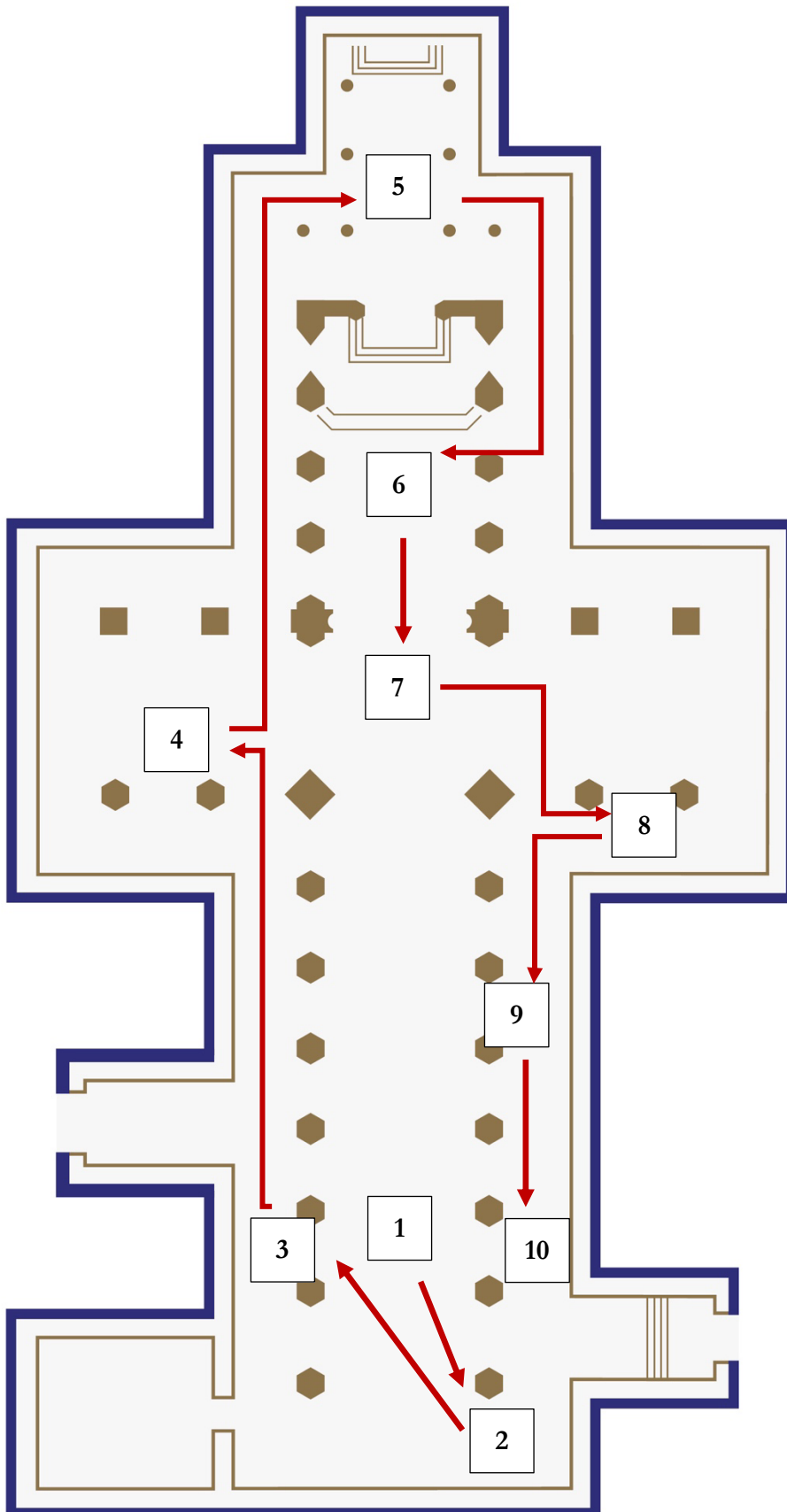
## Updated

This script was approved and shared in November 2022.

## Contact Details

The development of the tour script is the responsibility of the Cathedral's Education Department.

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## 1. Welcome & Introduction

### Overview:

- Greeting, name, length of tour, journey around the building
- Story of Saint Patrick
  - West Window (39 images; William Wailes and Company of Newcastle, England)
  - Cathedral Park (1901), Celtic Grave Stones, Well
- First church on the site
  - Wooden church (1121)
  - 'in insula' and the River Poddle
- Collegiate church (1191) and Cathedral status (1219)

### Welcome

*Begin the tour as directed by the Welcome Desk Supervisor. The group should gather in the Nave by the Celtic Grave Stone near the shop and the audio guides. Begin by facing West and encourage the group to form a semi-circle around you, facing East.*

Welcome to Saint Patrick's Cathedral. You are one of hundreds of thousands of visitors and pilgrims who visit us each year, as people have for centuries and will continue to for centuries to come. My name is [Name] and I am a [Volunteer/Dublinia/Staff] tour guide. I will lead you on a short guided tour around this magnificent building.

We will start here at the West End, walk down to the North Transept, into the Lady Chapel, call into the Choir Stalls, then the South Transept, and finally ending up roughly back here again. The tour will take approximately 30 to 40 minutes. If you have any questions as we go, please don't hesitate to ask.

### Story of Saint Patrick

*Remain in location. Upon reference to the West Window, gesture upwards and encourage the group to turn and look, whilst delivering the information.*

The beginning of our story goes back to the time of Saint Patrick himself, or Maewyn as he may have been known then, in the 5<sup>th</sup> Century. The West Window tells his life through 39 different pictures. It was made by William Wailes and Company, based in Newcastle in England, and installed during the Guinness Restoration in the 1860s.

The story starts in the bottom left upwards, when he was captured as a slave and brought to Ireland; then the bottom right upwards, when he escaped captivity, returned to his homeland, and received a vision from God, telling him to return to Ireland and tell people about Christianity; then the centre panes depict his traveling around Ireland, converting the Pagans. This great window was restored in 2004, with each piece of glass being removed and cleaned, and the lead- and iron-work replaced. Wailes and Company also made some of the windows in the Lady Chapel and the South Transept.

People say that when Saint Patrick returned to Ireland, he came through this part of Dublin and stopped in the park next door. Here, there used to be a well, which is said to have been used by Saint Patrick to baptise people into the Christian faith. In 1901, when the park next door was being created, they found four early Christian grave slabs, each featuring Celtic crosses carved into them. These are symbols of the first Christians in Ireland. One of these slabs – this one, by the Cathedral shop – was covering, what we believe to be, that ancient well.

## **The Early Church**

*Remain in location.*

There has been a church on this site for around 1000 years. There are two pieces of evidence to support this. First, these grave slabs; and second, there is historical reference to a church here in 1121. It was called Saint Patrick's *in insula*. That means 'on an island', and we believe this primitive wooden church would have sat between two branches of the River Poddle. Up until the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, this river still posed a flooding risk, so it was diverted in 1880 through a pipe underneath the footpath at the West of the building, and the Cathedral floor was raised by approximately 2 feet (60 cm) and these Victorian tiles were laid. The river is one of the reasons why we do not have an underground crypt.

In the 12<sup>th</sup> Century, the Anglo-Normans arrived in Ireland. As well as being excellent warriors, the Anglo-Normans were expert in stone construction. The first Anglo-Norman Archbishop of Dublin, John Comyn, in 1191, raised the status of Saint Patrick's from a parish church to that of a collegiate church: a church with a greater number of clergy and one that is dedicated to learning, as well as worship. Dublin already had a cathedral – Christ Church Cathedral, just up the hill from here – so Comyn's motives for this elevation are not entirely clear. Perhaps the freedoms of being outside of the city walls appealing to him.

In 1219, Comyn was succeeded by Archbishop Henry of London, and he further elevated the status of Saint Patrick's to that of a cathedral. A year later, the old wooden church was knocked down and a 50-year-long construction programme began to build a new stone building. This work was overseen by Henry's successor, Archbishop Luke. He never saw the completed building because he had gone blind by the time the work was finished.

There have been countless people who have been involved with this church since the time of Saint Patrick and people have worshipped as the local faithful and pilgrims from all over the world in this very building since the 13<sup>th</sup> Century. And many of those people have sought to be remembered in some way, but few quite as grand as the first stop on our tour.

## 2. Boyle Monument

### Overview:

- Erected by Richard Boyle, first Earl of Cork, in honour of his second wife, Lady Catherine
- Erected in 1631, finished in 1632
- 16 members of their family
- Robert Boyle (Father of Chemistry): Boyle's Law, to do with pressure

### Installation

*Bring the group over towards the Boyle Monument. Stand in front of the monument, facing North, and invite the group to form a semi-circle facing South. If the area around the Cathedral shop is busy, this stop on the tour might only be briefly mentioned towards the end of the Introduction, before moving on to the North Aisle.*

Of all the 200 monuments in the Cathedral, this one is the largest and is dedicated to the Boyle Family. It was erected by Richard Boyle, the first Earl of Cork, in honour of his second wife, Lady Catherine, in 1631 and finished a year later.

### Family Depictions

*Remain in location.*

It depicts 16 members of their family: near the top is Dean Robert Weston, Lady Catherine's grandfather and Lord Chancellor of Ireland; below him are Lady Catherine's parents; then on the first floor is Richard and Catherine, surrounded by their children; and finally, the boy in the middle at the bottom is their youngest son, Robert. Robert Boyle is often referred to as the 'Father of Chemistry' and he is the man who gave us 'Boyle's Law': this states that, for a gas at a constant temperature, increasing the pressure means that its volume will decrease. He died on the 31<sup>st</sup> December 1691 and is buried in the churchyard of Saint Martin-in-the Fields, London.

### Placement in the Cathedral

*Remain in location.*

The Boyle Monument originally stood behind the High Altar; this shows their power, wealth, and influence at the time. However, under the orders of Lord Deputy Thomas Wentworth, the monument was moved from their further down the Nave, and eventually to where it sits today. This angered the Boyle Family so much that they played a part in Wentworth's eventual downfall and execution.

We will now walk over towards the statues on the North side of the building, walking around the Cathedral shop.

### 3. North Aisle Statues

#### Overview:

- 200 years old
- Variety of important people
  - Marquis of Buckingham, by famous Irish sculptor: Edward Smyth
  - Captain Boyd, and his ghostly dog

#### Statues

*Bring the group from the Boyle Monument, around the Cathedral shop, towards the statues, through the arch next to the Celtic Grave Slab. Depending on the size of the group, it may be difficult to gather the people close to you, given the width of the aisle.*

These statues are around 200 years old and depict a variety of important people in the Cathedral's history: from sailors to clergy. This statue is possibly one of the finest pieces of sculpture in the country; it is by a famous Irish sculptor – Edward Smyth – and is of the Marquis of Buckingham, who was the first Grand Master of the Order of the Knights of Saint Patrick.

We are about to walk passed a statue of another popular character in the Cathedral's story: that of Captain John McNeill Boyd – his statue is the one just beyond the North Door here, pointing rather dramatically. He was a sailor for most of his life, quickly working his way through the ranks of the Royal Navy. He died heroically trying to save the lives of fellow sailors during some of the worst storms ever to hit the east coast of Ireland. He is buried in the graveyard of Saint Patrick's Cathedral.

Legend tells us that Boyd's Newfoundland dog, who accompanied the rescue boat that recovered his body, followed him to the grave. When it was filled, he lay on top and refused to leave, eventually dying of hunger. Many claim to have seen the dog appear at the base of his statue in the Cathedral, former Dean, David Wilson, reputedly among them.

We will now walk down towards the North Transept. Do look at Captain Boyd's statue as we pass. There is also the second of the four Celtic gravestones further down before the next stop.

## 4. North Transept

### Overview:

- Door of Reconciliation
  - Butlers of Ormonde & Fitzgeralds of Kildare
  - 1492
  - 'To chance your arm'
- Flags
  - Earliest from 1850s
  - Left to decay: soldiers never die, they simply fade away
- Tree of Remembrance
  - 2014
- Organ Loft
  - 1901, 4000 pipes
- Window
  - Dedicated to Lord Iveagh, Edward Cecil Guinness (son of Benjamin Lee Guinness)

### Door of Reconciliation

*Bring the group down the North Aisle, and stand on the East side of the Door of Reconciliation. Encourage the group to gather between the Door of Reconciliation and the Tree of Remembrance. If space is limited, another gathering location is on the North side of the Tree of Remembrance.*

Our next story comes from the year 1492, the same year that Christopher Columbus travelled across the Atlantic to America. During that year, in Ireland, a feud was taking place on the outskirts of Dublin between two families: the Butlers of Ormonde and the Fitzgeralds of Kildare. The Butlers were losing the battle and fled to the Cathedral to seek refuge. This door used to hang on the other side of the Cathedral, separating the South Transept from the rest of the Nave. The South Transept used to be a Chapter House, where the Cathedral clergy would meet. The Butlers locked themselves in the Chapter House. The Fitzgeralds followed the Butlers into the Cathedral and asked them to come out in order to make peace. The Butlers, afraid that they would be slaughtered if they left the safety of the Chapter House, refused to leave. So the head of the Fitzgeralds – Gerald Fitzgerald – ordered a hole to be cut in the door. He put his arm through the door to shake hands with the Butlers, and peace was made. This door is now known as the Door of Reconciliation, and it is said that the popular Irish idiom 'to chance your arm' stems from here.

### Flags

*Remain in location.*

This part of the Cathedral is dedicated to remembrance. Therefore, there are many objects which relate to military history. The flags above us are some of the regimental colours of Irish regiments, who fought in the British Army, prior to Irish independence. These include the Royal Dublin Fusiliers (from the First World War), the Connaught Rangers, and the Royal Irish Regiment. The first of these flags date from the 1850s, from the Napoleonic wars. It was customary to hang regimental colours in a church when the regiment was disbanded or the flag is no longer used. You might ask why the flags are in such poor condition: once the standard has been laid up, it is left to slowly fade away. There is a saying: that soldiers never die, they simply fade away – and the same is true of the flags. We are not permitted to conserve or even move the flags once they are laid up. Debate continues to the present day over whether or not to break with tradition and conserve them: one point of view suggests that these flags are part of Irish history and should be conserved for future generations to enjoy; the opposite view is that these flags were hung and left to decay originally in order to serve the purpose of remembering fallen soldiers, and this tradition should be honoured.



## Tree of Remembrance

*Remain in location.*

In 2014, a new monument was added to the Cathedral. The Tree of Remembrance remembers all those who have been affected by conflict. It was inspired by the centenary of the First World War and features a tree, which has been destroyed by war, and it is surrounded by barbed wire at its base. Visitors to the building are encouraged to leave behind a message for someone who has been affected by conflict of any type.

## Organ Loft

*Remain in location.*

A new organ and a chamber to hold it were built in 1901 above the North side of the choir. The organ contains over 4000 pipes, ranging in size from 8 inches (20 centimetres) up to 32 feet long (nearly 10 metres). The staircase leads up to the organ chamber, and was designed by Sir Thomas Drew, while the organ console on display here is the 1901 console, which was replaced in 1963, during a restoration on the organ.

## Window

*Remain in location.*

This window is dedicated to Edward Cecil Guinness, Lord Iveagh, and son of Benjamin Lee Guinness. Lord Iveagh continued his father's great support for the building, giving a new peal – or set – of bells to the Cathedral in 1897.

*Either this, if the Lady Chapel is open:*

We will now walk around to the Lady Chapel, where there will be an opportunity to sit for a moment, before moving into the Choir Stalls. *(Proceed to Lady Chapel via North Aisle)*

*Or this, if the Lady Chapel is closed:*

Unfortunately, the next stop on the tour is inaccessible due to the Lady Chapel being closed; however, we will move straight on to the Choir Stalls. *(Proceed to Choir Stalls – Stop 6 – via Choir North Aisle Door)*

*Or this, if the Lady Chapel and the Choir Stalls are closed:*

Unfortunately, the next two stops on the tour are inaccessible due to the Lady Chapel and Choir Stalls being closed; however, we will move straight on to the Crossing. *(Proceed to Crossing – Stop 7)*

*Not included in the script is detail about King William III's seat, the Duke of Schomberg's burial, and Archbishop Fulk de Sandford's burial. It is worth noting that, should a guide wish to discuss these, it is better to provide the context whilst assembled in the North Transept or in the Lady Chapel and allow the group to look at these whilst passing. Large groups gathered and stationary in the North Choir Aisle are a hindrance to the passage of other visitors.*

## 5. Lady Chapel

### Overview:

- Extended in 1270
- Conservation
  - Restored in 2012/13 at a cost of €1,000,000
  - 2020/21 Roof Project at a cost of nearly €10,000,000
- Huguenot connection: 'French Chapel'
- Window: 'I was thirsty and ye gave me drink' (Guinness)

### Extension

*Provided that no service is taking place, bring the group into the Lady Chapel and invite them to sit if needed. Stand at the front of the seats, between the group and the altar, facing West. If many individuals are sitting in the seats, it might be best to remain standing at the West End of the seating. Delivery of content here should be quieter to reflect the peace and tranquillity of the chapel.*

We are approximately half way through the tour, so do take a seat if you would like to pause for a moment.

This part of the building is known as the Lady Chapel: it is dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. It is an extension, which was added to the East End of the Cathedral in around 1270. This is a very common feature in medieval cathedrals. Today, this chapel is still used for services throughout the week; usually a Eucharist (or Mass) takes place here, or in one of the side chapels, three times a week.

### Conservation

*Remain in location.*

We have talked a few times about the Guinness Restoration of the 1860s – and there will be more about that later – but here we can see how conservation is constantly ongoing here.

This part of the Cathedral is an excellent example of how we spend money which it receives through tourism. As you will know, tourists who visit the Cathedral are charged an entrance fee. This money is spent ensuring that this building – nearly 1,000 years old – remains standing for at least another 1,000 years.

Between 2012 and 2013, this area was closed off from the rest of the Cathedral and the space was fully restored at a cost of nearly €1,000,000. This work included the cleaning of the walls and the windows, and ensuring that the area was structurally sound. This is why the area now appears brighter than the rest of the building.

2021 saw the completion of the largest restoration project on the building since the 1860s and included the replacement of over 14,000 slates on the upper levels of the roof, repairs and cleaning of high level masonry, new lead valleys, and upgrades to both our fire detection and lightning conductor systems. If you turn around and see the view of the vast ceiling all the way down the Nave, you can see why the project cost nearly €10,000,000.

You are of course probably wondering: what is still original? The basic fabric of the building is still the same from the 13<sup>th</sup> Century, but much of the interior appearance of the Cathedral has changed over time. When we reach the Crossing shortly, we will see how else the Guinness Restoration changed the interior.

## **Huguenots**

*Remain in location.*

The Lady Chapel was also known for a time as the 'French Chapel' because it was used by the Huguenots. These were French Protestants who, from 1666 to 1816, fled France as refugees and found a home here in Dublin. Many of the monuments in this area are dedicated to significant Huguenots, such as Dr Elie Bouhereau, the first librarian of Marsh's Library next door. As we walk to the next location, we will pass a bell dedicated to the Huguenots as we leave the Lady Chapel.

## **Window**

*Remain in location.*

One of the windows on the South side of the space remembers Annie Lee Plunkett, wife of Archbishop Plunkett, and daughter of Benjamin Lee Guinness. She was renowned for her charitable work, and is remembered here with a very appropriate piece of scripture for her family 'I was thirsty and ye gave me drink'.

*Either this, if the Choir Stalls are open:*

We will now enter one of the most sacred parts of the building: the Choir Stalls.

*(Proceed to Choir Stalls via Choir South Aisle Door)*

*Or this, if the Choir Stalls are closed:*

Unfortunately, the next stop on the tour is inaccessible due to the Choir Stalls being closed; however, we will move straight on to the South Transept. *(Proceed to South Transept – Stop 7 – via South Choir Aisle)*

## 6. Choir & Sanctuary

### Overview:

- Stalls
  - Choir (choristers & lay vicars) and Chapter/Knights
- Cathedral Choir
- Chapter
  - National Cathedral *versus* Christ Church Cathedral
- Knights of the Order of Saint Patrick
- Altar & Sanctuary
  - Altar frontals & colours
  - Burials

### Stalls

*Entering the Choir Stalls via either of the Aisle Doors, bring the group into the centre. If the group is small, it might suffice to remain by the steps of the Sanctuary; however, larger groups ought to be moved into the middle of the stalls. Do not permit group members to enter the stalls. This stop often requires lifting the rope barrier upon entry; ensure it is replaced after all members of the group are gathered.*

These are the Choir Stalls. You will see that there are three rows on either side; it is the same arrangement on both sides. The first row is for the Choristers: these are boys and girls; the second row is for the Vicars Choral: these are professional adult singers; and the most elaborate row at the back is for the Cathedral Chapter, and once upon a time, the Knights of Saint Patrick.

### Cathedral Choir

*Remain in location.*

Our Cathedral Choir is composed of approximately 30 boys and girls – known as Choristers – who are aged between 6 and 12. The Choristers sing two services every day during term time: they arrive at 8:30 in the morning for a rehearsal before a 9:00 service of Matins. Then they go to the Cathedral Choir School, over the road from here. After school, they come back for a rehearsal at 4:30, before a service of Evensong at 5:30. This pattern is repeated every day during term time, as well as additional services on a Sunday.

For Evensong, the Choristers are joined by the Vicars Choral, who stand behind the Choristers. The Vicars Choral – sometimes known as Lay Clerks or Songmen, in other cathedrals – are eight professional adult musicians, who are amongst the best classical singers on these islands.

### Cathedral Chapter

*Remain in location.*

The back row is used by the Cathedral Chapter. The Chapter is a group of priests who are responsible for the governance of the Cathedral. In other cathedrals, the Chapter is drawn from that cathedral's diocese. Saint Patrick's Cathedral does not have a diocese; we are the National Cathedral for the whole Church of Ireland. This means our Chapter is comprised of clergy from around the country. Although we are *in* the Diocese of Dublin, we are not *of* it. For comparison, Christ Church Cathedral, up the hill from here, also have choir stalls like this for their Chapter. Christ Church is the Cathedral for the Diocese of Dublin – and that is where the Archbishop of Dublin's seat is and their Chapter is drawn from *only* Dublin – however, we are the Cathedral for the *whole* island of Ireland. Here, the Dean of the Cathedral is ultimately responsible for what happens, rather than a Bishop.

### **Knights of the Order of Saint Patrick**

*Remain in location.*

The banners, helmets, and plaques on the back row of the stalls represent the Knights of the Order of Saint Patrick. The Choir Stalls also served as a Chapel for the Order from its foundation by George III in 1783, to the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland (the separation of Church and State) in 1871. The Banners and Hatchments above the Choir represent some of the members of the order in 1870. One of the last people to be installed into the order was the Prince of Wales in 1869; he later became Edward VII. The order moved their services and ceremonies to Dublin Castle, and in the Castle today, you can see some of the banners in Saint Patrick's Hall.

### **Altar & Sanctuary**

*Remain in location.*

The altar frontals – the piece of cloth hanging on the front of the High Altar – were made by the Royal Irish School of Needlework around one hundred years ago. There are various different designs of different colours for the different seasons of the Church's liturgical year: green for ordinary time, purple or blue for Lent and Advent, red for Passiontide, and white or gold for Christmas and Easter.

Underneath the altar is a large vault, which contains the bodies of at least 50 people. Most of these people are from two families: the Boyles – whose monument we saw at the start of the tour – and the Loftus family. Adam Loftus – Viscount Lisburne – is buried just to the side of the altar, and if you look up from where he is buried, you will see what killed him. The cannon ball, which hangs from the South wall, was fired during the Siege of Limerick in 1691. Adam Loftus was fighting in the Williamite Army, which was laying siege to the city, when he was struck by this cannon ball. His body was moved back from Limerick and he is buried just underneath these steps.

From here, we will move to the Crossing. We will exit via the gate here; please be careful of the step down. We will gather in front of the wooden pew, just to the right.

*Exit the Choir Stalls via the Crossing Gate. Ensure that the Gate is closed after the group have left the Choir.*

## 7. Crossing

### Overview:

- State Pew
  - Crest, and Viceroy's Seal
- Pulpit
  - Guinness Restoration
  - Memorial to Dean Pakenham
- Lectern
- Guinness Restoration

### State Pew

*Gather around the South side of the State Pew, in order to see the crest.*

The State Pew is where the President sits when attending services and ceremonies here. On the front of the pew is a royal coat of arms. The Royal Viceroy in Dublin, the monarch's representative, previously used the seat prior to Irish independence. The President's Seal of Office – a gold harp on blue background – can now be seen on the back of the pew. The harp flipped on its axis would be the logo of Guinness.

### Pulpit

*Remain in location.*

The pulpit is where the preacher gives the sermon from on Sundays, usually on the Bible readings of the day. It is also a memorial to Dean Pakenham, who was Dean of the Cathedral during the Guinness Restoration.

### Lectern

*Remain in location.*

The brass eagle lectern is where passages from the Bible are read to the people during our daily services. The eagle is said to be the strongest of birds, and here we see it carrying the word of God on its back, above the ball, which represents earth. The eagle is also closely associated with John, author of the fourth Gospel.

### Guinness Restoration

*Remain in location.*

By the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, this Cathedral was in a terrible state. When Charles Dickens visited in 1853, he said that it was in a 'lamentable state of decay.' Fortunately, Sir Benjamin Lee Guinness, a member of the congregation and owner of the Guinness brewery, stepped forward and personally undertook the restoration of this Cathedral in the 1860s. He spent £150,000 (or €30 million in today's money) on this job. He decided to take the opportunity to modernise the Cathedral in some ways, by removing all the partitions which divided the Cathedral into separate parts.

The North Transept, for example, was called the Church of Saint Nicholas *With-out*. It was used as a parish church in its own right and there was a screen which separated this area from the rest of the Cathedral. There was another chapel, opposite Christ Church Cathedral, which was called the Church of Saint Nicholas *With-in*, because it was inside the city walls.

In medieval times, the South Transept was a separate Chapter House, separated by the Door of Reconciliation. The Choir also extended down to the two large pillars, and a pulpitum, or screen, separated the Choir from the Nave. Guinness removed all of these partitions, creating one open expanse, in keeping with a lot of the changes made in English cathedrals at the time.

Benjamin Lee Guinness's sons continued his generous work by adding the tiles to the floor of the Cathedral and by donating a stained glass window. To this day, the Guinness family members are generous supporters and remain an important presence in the life of the Cathedral.

## 8. South Transept

### Overview:

- Discovery Space
- Three-part statue of Saint Patrick
- Alexander McGee, servant of Dean Swift

### Discovery Space

*Bring the group to the West aisle of the South Transept, by the three-part statue of Saint Patrick.*

This is the South Transept of the Cathedral. This part of the Cathedral has recently been transformed into an area called the Discovery Space: it provides visitors with an opportunity to learn a little more about the Cathedral's life and history. You can also do activities such as brass rubbings and jigsaws. There are also some headphones, through which you can listen to music from the choir and the organ. And there is an interactive touch screen display, with various activities for adults and children. If you like, after this tour, you can come back to the space and find out more.

### Three-Part Statue of Saint Patrick

*Remain in location.*

Here, attached to the wall, is a statue of Saint Patrick. We have lots of images of the saint around the Cathedral but this particular statue has had a rather unusual life. We think that it was created around the time of the Guinness Restoration (1860s) but that it is made up of different parts from different periods: the body is part of a 13<sup>th</sup> Century statue of an Archbishop; the head is from a newer statue, probably 17<sup>th</sup> century; and the base is probably part of an old pulpit in the Cathedral. Of course, no one knows what Patrick looked like for definite.

### Alexander McGee Plaque

*Remain in location.*

The small plaque in the corner remembers Alexander McGee, who is one of the only normal (for want of a better word) men to be buried in the Cathedral. McGee received a plaque because he was the servant to an exceptionally important man, Jonathan Swift, whom we discover at the end of the tour, just one stop away.



## 9. Presidents and the Cathedral

### Overview:

- Presidents today
- Douglas Hyde (1938–1945)
- Erskine Childers (1973–1974)

### Presidents Today

*Bring the group to the two presidents' busts, via the South Aisle.*

The Cathedral enjoys a close relationship with the office of the Irish President. The President regularly attends services in the Cathedral, particularly around Remembrance Sunday in November each year, laying a wreath to those affected by conflict. The Cathedral has also hosted the inaugurations and funerals of Irish Presidents in the past.

### Douglas Hyde

*Remain in location.*

Douglas Hyde was the first President of Ireland (1938–1945). At the time of his death in 1949, Roman Catholics were forbidden to attend services in non-Catholic churches, by a threat of excommunication from Rome. As a result, most of the Irish government ministers were unable to attend his funeral because it was held in a Church of Ireland cathedral. Instead, they remained in cars outside the building, before following the coffin to its final resting place.

Interestingly, Hyde's memorial plaque here is the only one in the Cathedral written in the Irish language.

### Erskine Childers

*Remain in location.*

Erskine Childers became the President in 1973. He died less than a year later. By that time, the ban on Roman Catholics attending non-Catholic services had been lifted.

We will now finish our tour discussing the Cathedral's most famous person, aside from Saint Patrick.

## 10. Jonathan Swift

### Overview:

- Gulliver's Travels; Dean 1713–1745
- Pulpit (on wheels for long sermons?)
- Cabinet (two death masks; early editions of writings; skull cast)
  - Support for those with mental illness; Swift's perceived madness
- Burial location
- Epitaph (written before he died)

### Who was Swift?

*Bring the group near the Swift Cabinet and Epitaph, so that Swift's Pulpit is still in view.*

Jonathan Swift is the most famous man to be buried in the Cathedral. He is best known for being the author of 'Gulliver's Travels', or as it was originally titled, 'Travels into Several Remote Nations of the World.' Alongside writing a major classic of English literature, Swift was also Dean of this Cathedral, from 1713 until his death in 1745.

### Pulpit

*Remain in location, but encourage the group to look at the pulpit.*

Just back where we came from, we passed a large, wooden pulpit, from which Jonathan Swift used to preach. It was said that his sermons were up to 4 hours in length, so people used to fall asleep. Swift had wheels fitted to the bottom of the pulpit so that, during these long homilies, he could call for his servant – Alexander McGee, whose plaque we saw earlier near the statue of Saint Patrick – to wheel his pulpit next to anyone who had fallen asleep in order to shout down and wake them up.

### Cabinet

*Remain in location, but encourage the group to look at the pulpit.*

In the wooden cabinet, there are various Swift-related items, including two of his death masks. It was common practice at the time of death to take these masks of notable public figures. Also on display are some early editions of his writings including, 'A sermon upon sleeping in Church,' and a cast of Swift's skull.

In his later years, Swift was troubled by imbalance and noises in his ears; this, combined with a stroke in 1742, led many to declare him mad. 90 years after he died, his body was exhumed and examined by Sir William Wilde, father of Oscar Wilde, who was a prominent physician in the city. Sir William discovered that Swift had a loose bone in his inner ear, and that this – Meniere's disease – was at the root of much of Swift's problems.

It is ironic that Swift was thought mad, as he had left money in his will to found a hospital for treating those with mental illness, a hospital which still exists today just over a mile from here. Saint Patrick's Hospital, or 'Dr Swift's' as it was also known.

## Burial Location

*It might be necessary to move closer towards the Welcome Desk; position the group so that they can see the burial location and epitaph.*

Jonathan Swift is buried next to his great friend in life, Esther Johnston (or Stella, as she was better known). Some assert that Stella and Swift married; however, there is no evidence of this. Esther followed Swift to Ireland and remained his closest friend until her death in 1723, much before Swift's. On the night of her burial in the Cathedral, Swift moved from his usual room in the Deanery, across the road from here, to avoid seeing the light from the Cathedral, which would tell him the burial was taking place.

## Epitaph

*Remain in location.*

Finally, Swift's epitaph is on the wall above the door here. Unusually, Swift wrote it himself before he died. Apparently, he did not like the idea of somebody else getting the final say on his life. So it's only right that Swift gets the final say on our tour today – the translation reads:

*Here lies the body of Jonathan Swift, Doctor of Divinity and Dean of this Cathedral,  
Where savage indignation can no longer lacerate his heart;  
Go traveller and imitate if you can, this dedicated and earnest champion of liberty  
He died on the 19<sup>th</sup> October 1745, aged 78*

Thank you for joining us on this tour today. I hope you have enjoyed your visit to the Cathedral. You are welcome back any time and I do encourage you to come to one of our services, where you can hear the choir: every weekday at 9am or 5:30pm (*unless it's the summer holiday, in which case refer to the Music List on the gates outside or on the website*).



## **Education Department**

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## **Saint Patrick's Cathedral**

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