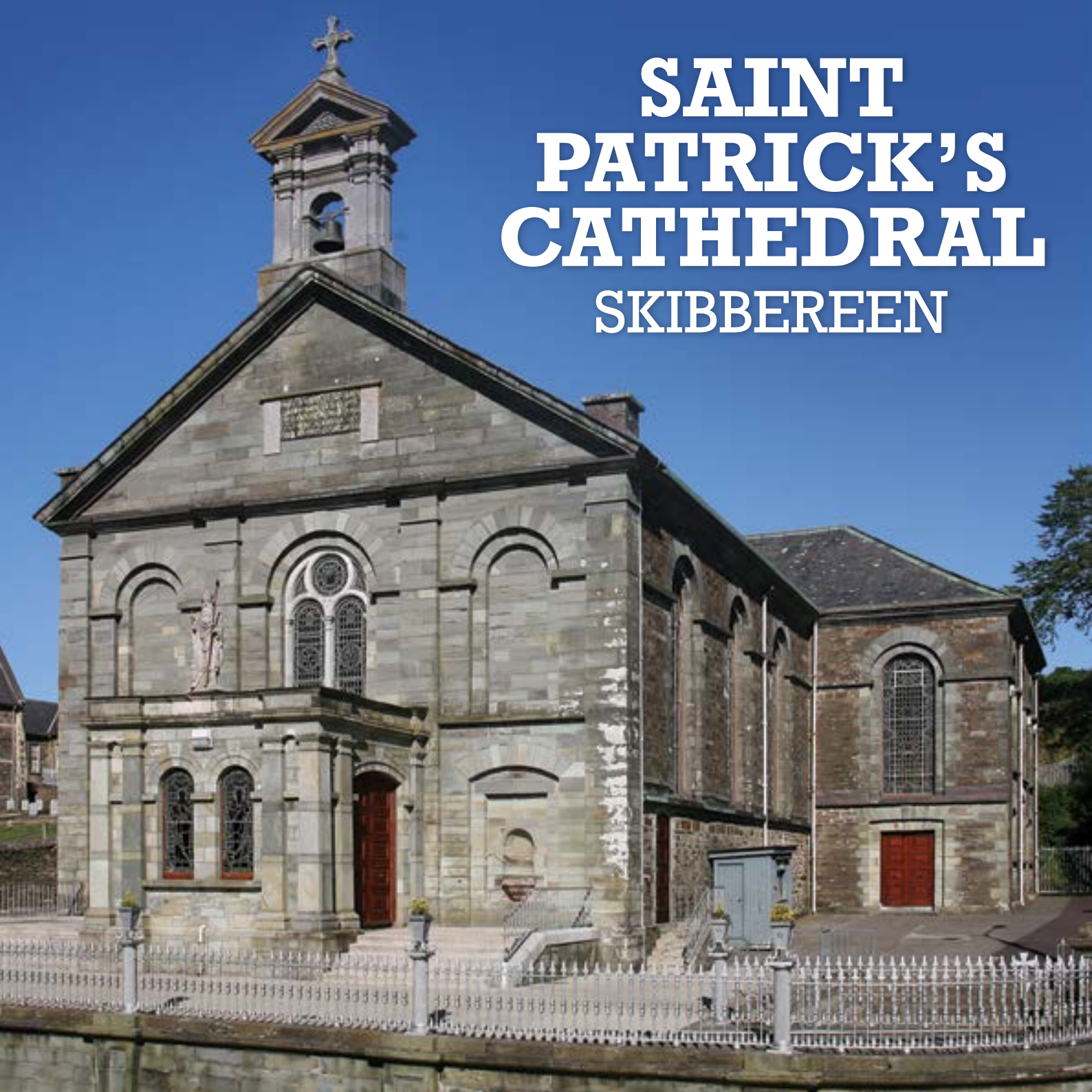
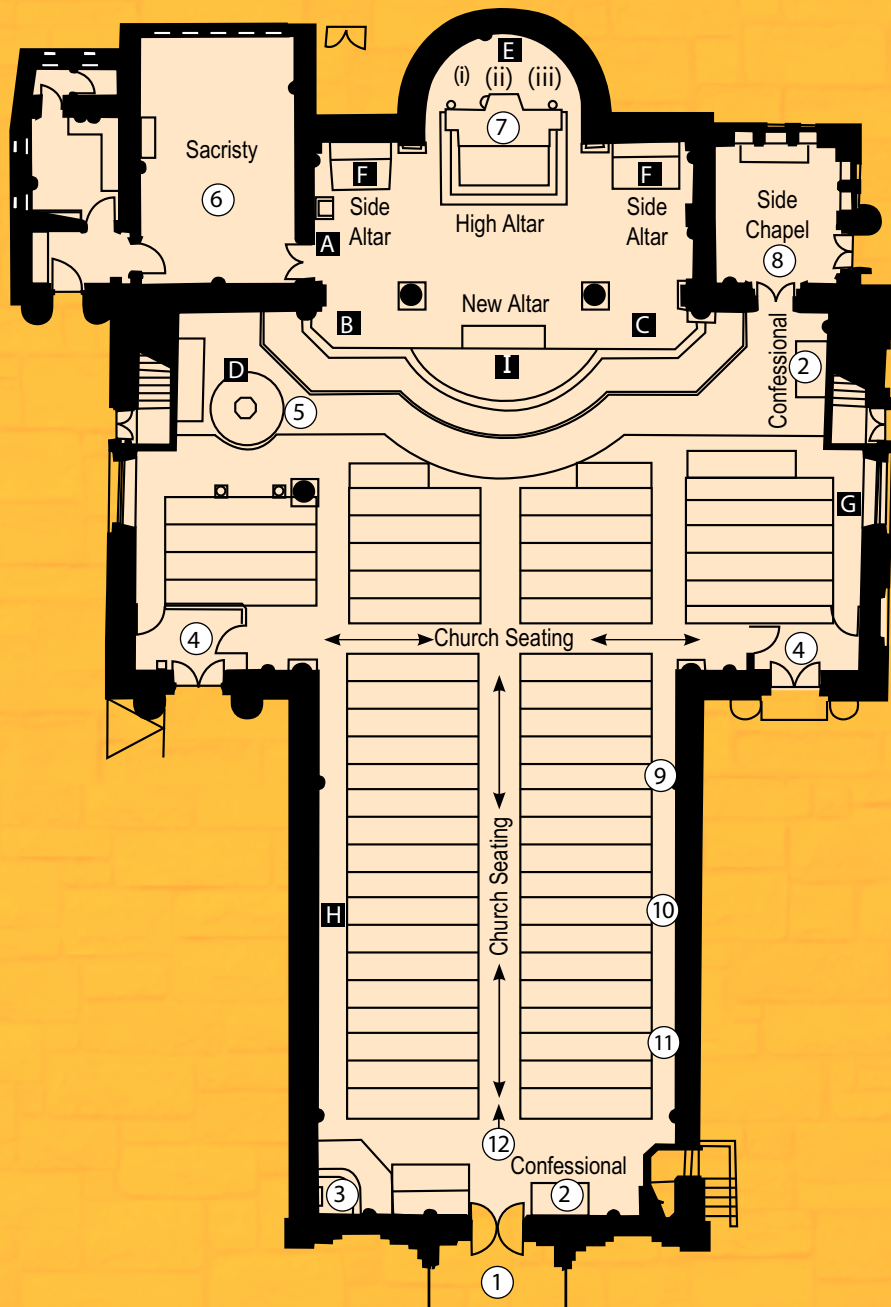


# **SAINT PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL**

## **SKIBBEREEN**





## FLOOR PLAN

1. Main entrance, 1882.
2. Confessional x 2.
3. St Anthony's Shrine now in the former Baptistry. Constructed from the 1950 pulpit, that was formerly in the Sanctuary.
4. Transept Porticos, 1950.
5. Baptistry, formerly site of a Confessional.
6. Sacristy.
7. High Altar in memory of Bishop Michael O'Hea (1858-1876), Erected 1882.
8. Blessed Sacrament Adoration Chapel.
9. John Hogan Memorial over grave of Most Rev Michael Collins, Bishop of Cloyne and Ross (1831-32).
10. Memorial tablet over grave of Most Rev Michael O'Hea, Bishop of Ross (1858-1876).
11. Memorial tablet over grave of Most Rev Denis Kelly, Bishop of Ross (1897-1924).  
The site also holds the mortal remains of a fourth bishop, Most Rev Patrick Casey (1935-40). This grave is located in the grounds at the top left of the vehicular entrance.
12. Organ. Installed 1865. Major overhaul carried out in 2007.





## SAINT PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL, SKIBBEREEN

The building was undertaken by Fr Michael Collins as a parish church in the Diocese of Cloyne and Ross. The foundation stone was laid in 1825. Completed by 1826, the original was a modest T-shaped building designed by Michael Augustine O'Riordan from Doneraile, Co Cork.

The first major, and by far the most significant, improvements to St Patrick's Cathedral were carried out in the early 1880s by Bishop William Fitzgerald. He engaged the services of George Coppinger Ashlin, the finest architect then available, to design a radical modernisation of the Cathedral. These renovations changed the dynamic of the building to a cruciform shape and the cast of the

Cathedral was transfigured to the splendour it possesses to this day.

The eastern wall behind the original High Altar was opened; a semi-circular apse was added. The apse was embellished by three stained-glass windows. The High Altar, dedicated to the memory of Bishop O'Hea (1858-1876), and the Marian Altar, supplied by Pearse and Sharpe of Dublin, were erected. The arcade of three arches above the Sanctuary and two dividing the transepts from the nave, the polished pillars of granite, the coffered ceiling which they support, all date from 1882-1883. Two further renovations were effected in 1950 and 2005.



Altar of the Sacred Heart.  
Date of construction of this Altar is estimated at c.1910. It was provided during the episcopacy of Bishop Denis Kelly (1897-1924).

F



Statue of the Blessed Virgin from the studio of Franz Mayer, Munich, 1882. Modelled on *The Immaculate Conception of Los Venerables, or of Soult* (1678) by Bartolomé Esteban Murillo (1618-1682). Altar from the studio of James Pearse, Brunswick Street, Dublin, father of Patrick H. Pearse, leader of the Easter Rising of 1916. The marble of the Holy Communion Rails was also from James Pearse.



I

This table-type Altar is the second of its kind to have appeared in Saint Patrick's Cathedral. It was salvaged from the Mercy Convent Chapel, Skibbereen, deconsecrated following closure of the Convent in 2004. It was reconditioned and much altered as part of the Cathedral refurbishments of 2004-2005.



Cathedra or Chair of the Bishop (1882). It is the presence of this item of sacred furniture which defines a Church as a Cathedral.



A



B

Ambo (2005). The Alpha and Omega on the panel represent the first and final letters of the Greek alphabet. The Scripture readings are proclaimed and a Homily is delivered from the Ambo.

Sedile or Chair of the Celebrant (2005). For exclusive occupation by the Celebrant of the Mass and from which he will rise when the Gospel Acclamation is proclaimed or sung, to proceed to the Ambo.



C



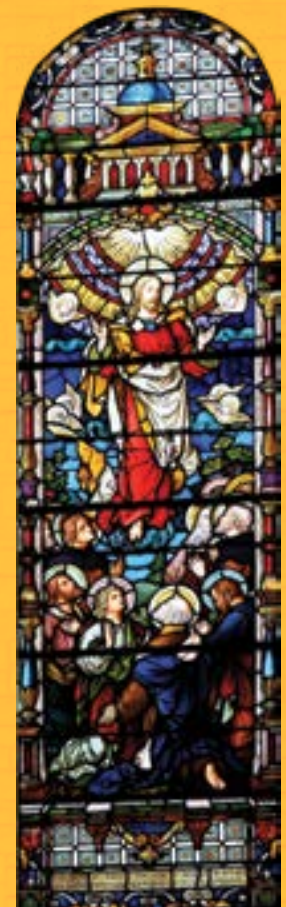
D

Baptismal Font (1882), restored and relocated in 2005. In former Baptistry from 1882 to 1987 at rear of nave. (In South side of Sanctuary, 1988 to 2004). In new Baptistry from 2005 with artwork in glass. 'Ego Te Baptiso' by Maria Safaei Ashtiani added in 2007.



E (i)

Window of the Agony in the Garden (1882). Donated by Skibbereen Women's Confraternity of the Sacred Heart.



E (iii)

Window of the Ascension of Our Lord (1882). Erected by the Misses Catherine and Louise Mary MacCarthy of Glencurragh, Skibbereen, in memory of their deceased parents.



9

Memorial plaque over the grave of Bishop Michael Collins, Bishop of Cloyne and Ross, 1831-32, by John Hogan (1800-1858). As Bishop Collins died on 8 December 1832, the commission was probably given to Hogan in 1833. Bishop Collins lies buried beneath the soil of the nave, under this magnificent memorial plaque. Two other bishops, Most Rev Michael O'Hea (1858-1876) and Most Rev Denis Kelly (1897-1924), are buried in the Cathedral, also on the south side. One other bishop, Most Rev Patrick Casey (1935-1940) is buried in the grounds of the Cathedral.

H

This portrayal of Saint Patrick in stained glass which dates from the late 1920s, was erected by Most Rev James J. Roche, Bishop of Ross (1926-31) in memory of his predecessor, Bishop Kelly, who died in 1924.



E (ii)

### WINDOW OF THE CRUCIFIXION, DONATED BY BISHOP FITZGERALD (1882).

To complete this triptych of the stained glass art, our Lord's Passion is at the left and His Ascension is at the right.

G



Coat of Arms of the Diocese of Ross. Represented also at two locations elsewhere: over the Cathedra in the Sanctuary and in one of the three panels executed in mosaic on the plinth of St Anthony's Altar at rear of nave. It features St. Fachtna, founder of the Diocese, pointing the Faithful towards the Church.

The motto reads: TURRIS FORTIS MIHI DEUS  
(God is a strong tower for me).





Blessed Sacrament Adoration Chapel. Converted to its present use from 1992. Originally built as a Mortuary Chapel, c. 1910. Altar design is attributed to Ashlin and Coleman. Triptych of stained glass windows undated.



**Saint Patrick's Portico at Main Entrance.** This and the statue atop its flat roof date from 1882. Stained glass windows representing Ss. Peter and Paul fitted in the 1920s.

# TIMELINE

## Saint Patrick's Cathedral of the Diocese of Ross, Skibbereen.

1826	Cathedral is built.	1951	Having been a Pro-Cathedral for many years, Skibbereen was granted full Cathedral status in 1951 following a visit to Rome by Bishop Moynihan (1941-53).
1835	Memorial plaque over the grave of Bishop Michael Collins of Cloyne and Ross (1831-32) by John Hogan (1800-1858). Commissioned in 1833.	1958	Union of the Diocese of Ross with the Diocese of Cork is created.
1836	Cathedral Bell is added.	1970	New Altar to provide for Celebrant of Mass facing the congregation installed in Sanctuary.
1840s	Three Galleries are built within Cathedral.	1989	Full oil-fired central heating system is provided.
1851	Union of Dioceses of Ross and Cloyne is dissolved.	1990	Major re-painting of interior including coffered ceiling.
1865	First-class Tracker Action Pipe Organ installed.	2004-2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Third major refurbishment is requested by Bishop Buckley (1997- ).</li><li>• Sanctuary is enlarged to provide for lay participation as required by the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965).</li><li>• Semi-circular marble steps providing free access to nave; Holy Communion Rails from 1882 divided and repositioned.</li><li>• Baptistery relocated to north transept.</li></ul>
1881-1883	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Extensive refurbishment and enlargement of Cathedral undertaken by Bishop William Fitzgerald (1877-1896).</li><li>• Eastern gable is opened; semi-circular apex is built. New High Altar under three stained-glass windows is added.</li><li>• Marian Altar and new Portico at main entrance also added.</li></ul>	2007	Art work 'Ego Te Baptiso' by Maria Safaei Ashtiani is hung over Baptismal Font.
1910	Sacred Heart Altar built at northern side of Sanctuary.		
1920s	Electric lighting installed; all windows replaced with stained-glass units.		
1950-52	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Second major refurbishment is executed by Bishop Denis Moynihan (1941-1953). All internal walls stripped to stone, battened and relined.</li><li>• Two internal porticos of glass and wood provided inside both transept entrance doors.</li><li>• New Pulpit placed within Sanctuary.</li></ul>		

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- Parish Website: [www.skibbereenandrath.ie](http://www.skibbereenandrath.ie)
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- Family History Research and Genealogy Service available at Skibbereen Heritage Centre [www.skibbheritage.com](http://www.skibbheritage.com)
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