



## The story so far

- In the 7th century St Fin Barre came from Gougane Barra and built a monastery near where St Fin Barre's Cathedral is today. He set up a school in the year 606.
- St Fin Barre died in the year 623 and he is remembered on that anniversary: 25th September.
- What sort of buildings do you think that monastery and its church were? What were they made of? (Probably timber - oak - covered with reeds).
- This monastery and church overlooked the River Lee and the marsh (*Corcaigh*) where the city of Cork began to grow.
- Throughout the years there have been a number of cathedrals on this site.
  - > The medieval cathedral; if you visit the south side of the cathedral churchyard you can do some detective work and discover the stone doorway to that cathedral which is now a gateway out onto Dean Street.
  - > Elizabeth Fort is nearby. During the Siege of Cork in 1690 a cannon was fired from the Fort. It hit and shook the cathedral steeple. That cannonball was found in 1865 and if you visit the cathedral you can see it hanging in the cathedral today: more detective work!
  - > By 1734 that cathedral was in a bad condition and everything except the spire was taken down.
  - > A new cathedral was built attached to the old spire and it was consecrated in 1738.
- The bishop in those days was Bishop Peter Brown. He also built a house outside the city in what became known as Bishopstown, as well as Saint Anne's Church, Shandon.
  - > The entrance gates to today's cathedral were the entrance gates built for that cathedral. Many people did not like that cathedral. Some even described it as "unsightly".
- The story of today's cathedral:
  - > In 1861 the decision was made to build a new cathedral.
  - > It was to be on a "grand scale".
  - > There was to be a competition:
    - It should cost no more than £15,000.
    - It should seat 700 people.
    - It should have a room and a vestry.
    - The competition was won in 1863 by a man called William Burges. He was so excited that he wrote in his diary 'Got Cork!'.
  - > The foundation stone was laid on 12th January 1865 by the Bishop: Bishop John Gregg.
  - > What do you think it would have been like doing that work without using the machines and equipment we use today?
  - > The cathedral was ready for use and was consecrated on 30th November 1870.
  - > 30th November every year is Saint Andrew's Day.
  - > **But the building wasn't finished.**