



Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception

13/12/2015

Sligo

Temple Street - Sligo - Ireland



The Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception dominates the Sligo skyline with its tower pointing to the heavens and the chimes from its bells pealing out over the city singing the glory of God. Opened on 26 July, 1874 by Cardinal Paul Cullen of Dublin, the Cathedral was consecrated on 1 July, 1897 and dedicated in honour of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The Diocese of Elphin again had a Cathedral after a three hundred-year lapse in the wake of the Elizabethan Reformation.

The man responsible for the building of the Cathedral was Roscommon born Vincentian priest, Bishop Laurence Gillooly. Appointed Bishop of Elphin in 1858, Bishop Gillooly decided that it was time the Diocese again had a Cathedral. Since 1827 St. John's Parish Chapel, which stood near where the Cheshire Home is today, was recognised as the Pro Cathedral of the Diocese while Bishops had, for the period since the expulsion from Elphin itself, moved from place to place.

In 1859 Bishop Gillooly secured a renewable lease from Sir Gilbert King of two adjacent properties close to the Lungy one of which was known as the "Bowling Green". This was to be the site for the new Cathedral. The architect was George Goldie of London while the main contractor was Joseph Clarence of Ballisodare. Work commenced on the Cathedral in 1869.

The Cathedral has undergone extensive renovations on two occasions since it was erected. The most recent remodelling of the sanctuary was in 1974 – 75.