

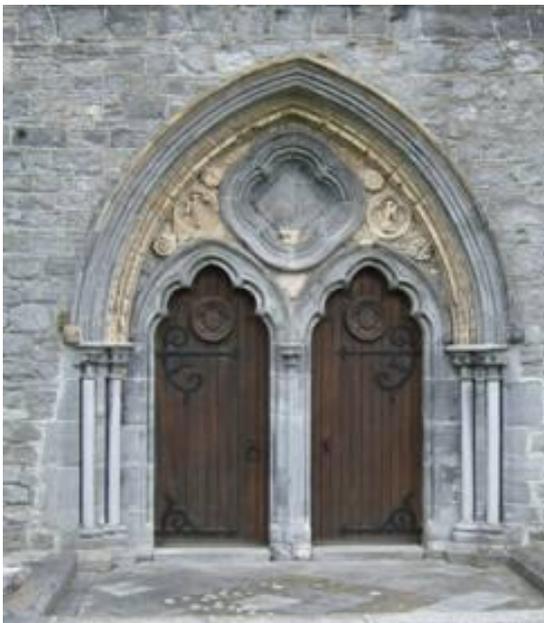
St. Canice's Cathedral

This building is dedicated to Cainneach, also known as Saint Canice, or Kenny. The city of Kilkenny takes its name Cill Chainnigh from this saint. After the Norman invasion of Ireland,



Hugh le Rous became bishop of Ossory and began the building of a cathedral. There had been an older cathedral on the site, but this was taken down to make way for the new building. Work began early in the 13th Century. The first parts to be built were the choir and transepts. The nave was built a good deal later. It was common at the time

for the building of a great cathedral to take a very long time, and it was about fifty years before the building was finished. In the meantime the completed part of the building could be used for worship.



The west door of the cathedral is very beautiful. In 1332 the belfry, over the crossing of the church collapsed, and had to be rebuilt. The church was repaired and restored in the 19th Century.



There are many old tombs in the cathedral. Some have beautiful carved images of saints, some have effigies of the nobles and gentry buried in the tombs. Some are very old – dating back to the 13th Century.

2 Medieval Churches

Beside the Cathedral is a round tower. This was already there when the cathedral was built. The tower is about thirty metres high and the door is about two and a half metres above the ground. When the tower was new, it would probably have had a conical cap, but, as with most Irish round towers, this cap is missing.



Quite near to the cathedral is the Bishop's Palace. The earliest part of this building dates from the 14th century, but it was added to and reconstructed many times over the centuries. Until very recently the Church of Ireland Bishop of Ossory lived here, but it is now owned by the Heritage Service. Before work could begin on restoring the palace, there had to be an archaeological investigation.

Above you can see the front of the palace with the plaster stripped from the stone walls. In the lower picture we can see the result of the restoration of the palace. The building looks like a Georgian house of the 18th Century, but the bottom part here is probably the remains of the 14th Century palace started by Bishop de Ledrede.

