

## Cryin' in the Chapel

By Maxwell



The other evenin' me and Maisie and McKinley was scamperin' down the avenue when we comed upon many peoples on the steps of St. Pat's Church with candles in the night.

McKinley telled us they is called parishioners and they is not happy campers. He says the beautiful old church has been shuttered. Give your whiskers a shake! I says why ever would they want to do that? McKinley says there is plans in the works to build a new mega church. Go figure! Speakin' of figures, that's bound to cost a pretty loonie!!

One of the times I was in St. Patrick's Church was when my person went to say goodbye to a friend who was a wonderful lady. With the sunlight streamin' in them stained-glass windows it was some beautiful! The music was heaven sent! It was an ethereal experience!

Thinkin' 'bout them beautiful stained-glass windows, McKinley tells me them windows was designed by the Rault Brothers in Rennes, France and that they contains some 22,000 pieces of glass. He says they is made of true French medieval glass, the colour actually bein' in the glass. Seems there is nothin' that mouse don't know! Me and McKinley just don't understand why anyone would want to close such a beautiful old buildin'. In 2012 St. Patrick's Church will be the grand old age of 100! Now if that ain't a milestone, and cause for banners to fly and church bells to ring, I don't know what is.

McKinley says over the years he has heard stories about his great cousins Louvenia and Lucas. Louvenia and Lucas had been stowaways in a steamer trunk when their folks comed to River City from the old country.

Lucas said in them early times River City was just a baby and them hard workin' folk was in need of a church. He said it wasn't just the church mice that was poor! For many years the folks worshipped in the basement until they could afford to build the rest of the church. But them folks knowed about hard work, and with blood, sweat and tears they persevered until St. Patrick's is the lovely church that it is or was. Parish the thought!!

McKinley says his great great grandmouse hailed from bonny Scotland and she had tales of many wonderful old churches that is hundreds of years old. He wonders why people on this side of the briny is so anxious to tear down anything that is old in this young country. He says he just don't understand it. Not only is St. Patrick's Church a beautiful old buildin', it is a memory maker! There have been countless masses, burials, confirmations, christenin' and weddins over the years.

Now that them doors has been shuttered, I telled McKinley that we will be free to scamper about the beautiful old church whenever the spirit says scamper! But McKinley says it just ain't the same without the peoples. We shedded a tear along with the parishioners to whom this grand old church meant so much,

and us mouses isn't even Catholic! For the record, we is pressbyterians, but we likes visitin' all our kin in the downtown churches.

Me and McKinley would be ever so happy to see the doors of St. Patrick's reopened. Where's the fun is scurryin' about an empty church? Besides, closed doors means no more of them delicious lunches downstairs and hence no more cheese for us mouses!

McKinley is plannin' to pen a letter to some guy named Henry. I seem to recall McKinley makin' mention of Henry 8<sup>th</sup> and Henry Hudson from his schoolin' days at Meadow Lane Academy. Word has it that Henry 8<sup>th</sup> sat on a throne across the pond eons ago. Meanwhile, Henry Hudson was a country fellow and he found some pond while he was traipsin' 'round the country. Then me wondered if this Henry could possibly be related to Henry Higgins. These is the Henry's I knows, I knows. But McKinley just gived his whiskers a shake. He says sometimes he thinks me head is hollow. So I asked McKinley, "Who is this Henry guy?" McKinley telled me that he is Bishop Henry and that he is the seventh Bishop of the Diocese of Calgary. The only bishops I knowed about was the ones I seed when I visited McKinley in the country and Pa Cuthbertson and his brother, Clyde, was playin' chess by the light of the coal oil lamp on a snowy Sunday evenin'.

I has no clue what the word diocese means. McKinley is forever usin' them big words! Bein' a graduate of Meadow Lane Academy, McKinley has a thing for words. He telled me that peoples that loves words is called logophiles, so me thinks that must make McKinley a mogophile. I asked McKinley what a diocese was and he telled me he would explain later. He says I asks way too many questions.

McKinley says he will post the letter the next time Pa Cuthbertson goes into Enchant to get the mail. There is only one drawback. Ya see Sunbonnet Sue and her big yellow cat, Marigold, lives next door to the post office. Marigold is fo' ever prancin' 'bout the perimeter of the post office lookin' for lunch. Me hopes that McKinley is able to post his letter and lives to tell the tale and that Bishop Henry will reconsider, reconsider, reconsider!