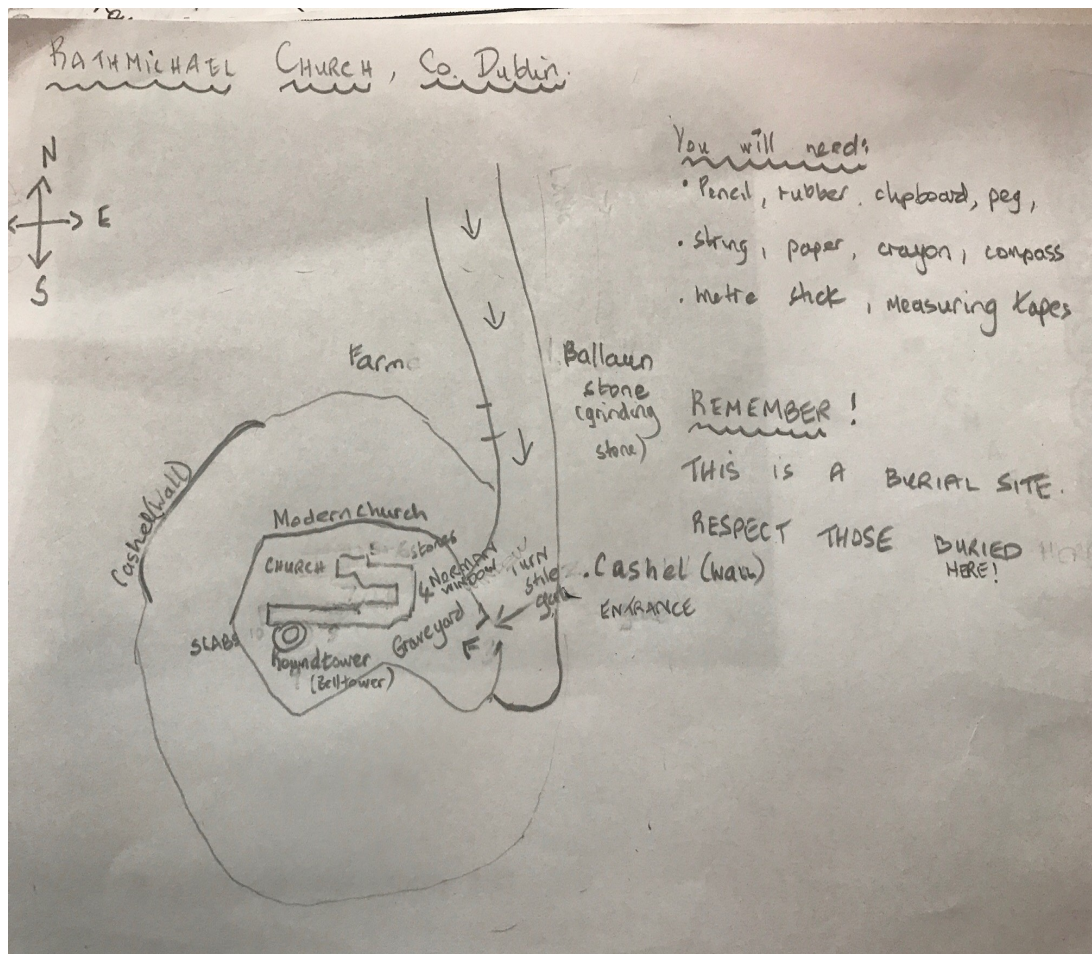


Rathmichael Church Trail





The Entrance Gate



Look at the sign on the gate. The sign is incorrect. Can anyone guess why ?

It should be called Rathmichael Graveyard because the graves are in the grounds of a church. A cemetery does not have a church.

Q1. What is the entrance gate made of ?

(a) Aluminium ☐ (b) Iron ☐ (c) Steel ☐

Q2. Are the bars on the gate:

(a) Parallel ☐ (b) symmetrical ☐ (c) vertical ☐ (d) horizontal ☐

In the olden days there was a stone arch at the entrance. Once a person entered through the arch they were in a safe holy place.

Walk slightly to the right until you reach Stop no. 2, The Well.



The Well



The old settlements were always built near water.
This well was used by people living in the area.

Q1. Can you remember the name that was given to the circular man made mound where people lived ?

(b) Fort ☐ (b) Rath ☐

This rath was one of the biggest in Ireland at the time

Q2. Where did the water in the well come from ?

(b) Sea ☐ (b) river ☐ (c) rain ☐

Q3. Why do you think the stones were placed around the well?

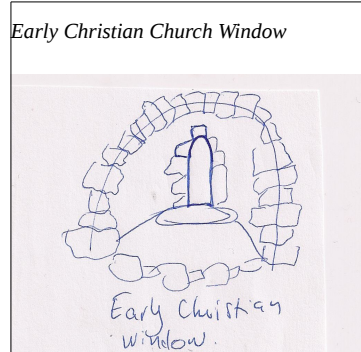
Activity

Count the number of large stones around the well.

Go left and step inside the church. Turn to face the window. This is Stop 3.



The Window



This window is Lancet shaped. It has a pointed top in the shape of a lance / spear.

Q1. Look at the inside of the window and then look at the photographs above.

Is the window ?

(c) Early Christian

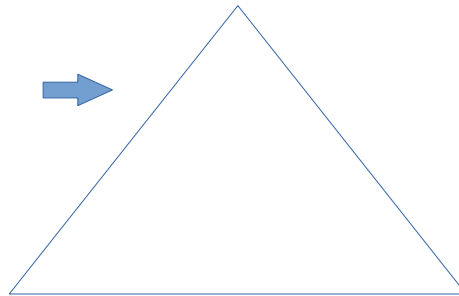
☐

(b) Norman

☐

Activity:

Draw the window in this space



Q2. Why do you think the window is much wider on the inside than on the outside ?

Go to Stop 4.



Look below the window.



Holed Stone and Quern Stones



Q1. What do you notice about this big stone under the window?

People believed that this stone had the power to cure wounds and diseases. They would push a cloth through the hole and then place it on the part of the body in need of healing.

Activity:

Try it with your friend.

Look at the stones on the window sill.

Q1. What shape are the stones?

Q2. What do you think they were used for ?

These stones are called Quern Stones and were used by women to grind corn into flour. Each woman had her own Quern stone throughout her life. When a woman died the Quern Stone was broken over her grave.



Go to Stop 5. With your back to the window, walk to the end of the church, turn left and stop at the Bell Tower.



The Bell Tower



The Bell Tower was used by monks living here.

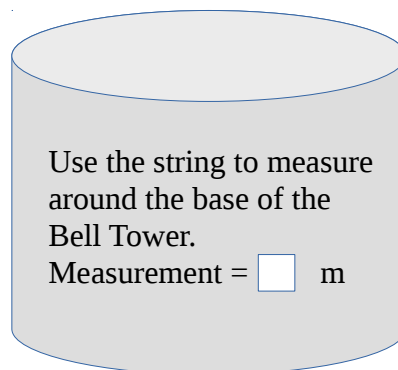
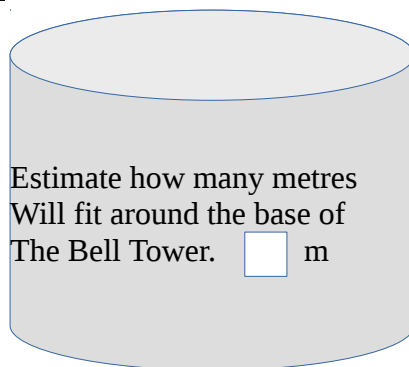
Q1. Give 3 examples of how the bell tower would be used by the monks.

(a)

(b)

(c)

Activity:



This tower is also called The Skull Tower.

Q2. How do you think it got this name ?

Hint This graveyard is a very small graveyard ! More space needed to bury people.

If you walk around the base of this tower anticlockwise three times, people believe that you will meet a stranger here !
Why don't you try it, you might get lucky !

Go to Stop 6. Use the compass to go to the South facing outside wall of the church.



Rathdown Slabs



Look at the south facing outside wall of the church.
Count how many leacts / slabs are on the wall. _____

Draw your favorite design from the leacts.

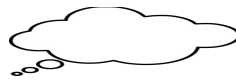
Even though many Vikings became Christians their tombstones were carved like pagan tombstones.
These slabs are called Rathdown Slabs.

Go to Stop 7
Go inside the church behind the south facing wall.



The Grave Inside The Church

Stand quietly and listen.



Think !!

What sounds can you hear ?

What sounds did people hear in this
this area when the church was built ?

Some people were buried inside the church. They believed the closer to the altar they were buried, the closer to Heaven and God they would be.

Q1. Who do you think was allowed to be buried inside the church?

Q2. Write down any of the names on these graves. What was the year of their death?

Look at the tree growing inside the church.
What is the name of the tree?

Yew trees were planted in graveyards to stop
animals from tramping over graves.
Their leaves and branches are POISONOUS !

Activity

Draw the yew leaf here.



Go to Stop 8

Turn around facing west and walk to The Celtic Cross.



The Celtic Cross with Pebbles.

Look at the Celtic Cross with pebbles.

Q1. What do you notice ?

Q2. Where do you think the pebbles came from ?



Activity 1

Make a rubbing of the writing on the cross using crayons and paper

Activity 2

Make a sketch of The Celtic Cross here.



Congratulations !

Well Done !

You have been brilliant History Detectives !!!!

Please rate our trail below. Tick the face.