

JUNE 2008

The spire was removed from atop the burned out cathedral on June 12-13, 2008.

On Thursday, June 12th, the uppermost part of the spire was removed. Preparations for the removal began about 5:00 am, with work on the actual move beginning at about 7:30. The weather was threatening – as it had been on so many recent days. The spire reached the ground in late morning. Not more than two minutes later, it began raining; and shortly thereafter the flags in the area were standing out straight in heavy winds. The Lord was very good to us in giving us favorable weather for just as long as we needed for the removal.

Just the upper section of the spire is 62 feet high. In its place atop the steeple, it does not look that tall. It is quite striking to see it sitting in the parking lot – the height of a six-storey building.

On Friday, June 13th, the lower half of the steeple was brought down. Because the floor beneath the cathedral bells had been burned away in the fire, the bells were secured to the spire itself, and had to be left in place as that part of the spire was lowered. That was a heavy payload! Once on the lower section of the spire was on the ground, the bells were freed and the spire lifted off them to a new location.

Apart from the stones of the cathedral themselves, two of those bells are the most ancient elements surviving in the cathedral. (A third bell was a recent addition.) The bells are being shipped to the Verdin Bell Company in Cincinnati for refurbishing. They will be reinstalled in the new cathedral.

Inscriptions on the Cathedral Bells

On the front of the largest bell:

DONAVIT HANC CAMPANAM
IN
HONOREM BEATÆ VIRGINIS MARIÆ
AD
ECCLESIAM ST. RAPHAELIS ARCHANGELI
CIVITATIS, MADISON, WISCONSIN.
MENSIS MARIÆ, 1882.
P. F. PETTIT, PAROCHUS.

Translation:

He gave this bell
in
honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary
to
the Church of St. Raphael the Archangel
of the City of Madison, Wisconsin.
In the month of Mary, 1882.
P. F. Pettit, Parish Priest.

On the back of the largest bell:

MCSHANE BELL FOUNDRY
HENRY MCSHANE & CO.
BALTIMORE, MD.
1882.

Around the top of the second bell, front:

CAST BY J. G. STOCKSTEDE.

Back:

S^I LOUIS M^O 1863.

(Also ornamented with crucifix on one side and small decoration on the other.)

The smallest and newest bell is without markings.