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CARDINAL JAMES McINTYRE, Wall Street Helped Develop His Financial Acumen

By Patrick O'Keefe, Associated Press Writer,
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Photo by Corbis.com

Cardinal James McIntyre, Archbishop of Los Angeles

Cardinal James McIntyre abandoned a lucrative career as a Wall Street broker for the priesthood. He brought to the Church great financial and administrative acumen. In Los Angeles he is renowned as a builder of scores of churches and schools during the area's great post-

World War II population boom, which his flock more than doubled. Recent estimates list more than 1.5 million Catholics in the archdiocese.

Born in Manhattan on June 15, 1886, James Francis Aloysius McIntyre is one of the Roman Catholic Church's authentic financial wizards. Few priests came into the Church better trained in high finance.

It was in 1915 that the future cardinal took off his black derby to don the soft, black felt of the seminarian. In 16 years on Wall Street, young McIntyre had risen from a \$3-a-week messenger boy to successful stock broker, about to make his first million.

During those 16 years, McIntyre supported an invalid father, put himself through high school, College of the City of New York and Columbia University – all via night school. "I always wanted to be a priest," was his simple explanation for leaving Wall Street. He was 35 when ordained in 1921 after attending Cathedral College and St Joseph Seminary in Dunwoodie, NY.

His first two years were spent as an assistant at old St Gabriel Church on East 37th Street, whose school his father attended in the 1800s. The future cardinal's financial ability was spotted early. In 1923, he was named assistant chancellor of the huge Archdiocese of New York, a tremendous job for a priest only ordained two years. There he founded an archdiocesan bank that lent parishes money at two percent interest.

For the next 25 years, he lived in the cardinal's residence at 452 Madison Avenue. He went to Los Angeles in 1948 as archbishop.

When he was appointed cardinal in 1953, McIntyre said: "The Holy Father is not honoring me – he is honoring the City of the Angels." Cardinal McIntyre was not a priest in the usual pastoral sense. Some of his priests spoke of him irreverently as "The Bookkeeper," Others, particularly liberals, called him "a brick and mortar priest."

And he did build a new parish church at the rate of one every 66 days—and, amazingly, a new school every 26 days. A kind, ascetic man who spoke with a lisp, Cardinal McIntyre was revered by clergy and laity alike until mid-1964. But Catholics, caught up in Pope John's revolution, split on their cardinal that year.

Cardinal McIntyre was assailed bitterly—even by some segments of the Catholic press—for his long silence on the racial question. The cardinal's critics conceded that nowhere in his archdiocese was segregation practiced, but they argued that his voice should have been heard to morally influence the community at large.



Photo by the Catholic Herald

**Cardinal James McIntyre, Archbishop of Los Angeles,
Blesses the new Bishop Armstrong High School, Sacramento
In 1957**