

SACRAMENTO DIOCESAN ARCHIVES

Vol 5

Father John E Boll

No 39

Monsignor Patrick McTague

Native Son of Drumcroman, Ballinamore, County Leitrim, Ireland

Priest of the Diocese of Sacramento

Pastor Emeritus of Saint Joseph Parish, North Sacramento

April 2, 1902 – October 14, 1981



Patrick McTague, son of James McTague and Mary Kate Gilheany, was born on April 2, 1902 in Drumcroman, Ballinamore, County Leitrim, Ireland. He was baptized the next day at Saint Brigid Church, Corraleihan. His brothers are Hugh, Joseph, Michael, James, Francis and Stephen.

HIS EDUCATION BEGINS

Patrick began his education at Ardmoneen elementary school in Drumcroman from 1909 to 1915 and then high school at Saint Patrick's College, County Cavan, Ireland from 1915 to 1919. He transferred to All Hallows National University of Ireland from 1919 to 1922 where he received his BA degree. He then entered All Hallows College, Dublin, for his theological education from 1922 to 1926.



Photo from "The Missionary College of All Hallows 1842-1891" by Kevin Condon, CM
All Hallows Seminary College, Dublin, Ireland

ORDAINED A PRIEST FOR SACRAMENTO

Patrick was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Sacramento on June 20, 1926 in the seminary chapel of All Hallows College, Dublin, by Bishop John F Norton, Bishop of Bathurst, Australia. Father Patrick was incardinated as a priest of the Diocese of Sacramento in September 1926.

BEGINS MINISTRY

Newly ordained Father McTague arrived in Sacramento in 1926 to begin his life of ministry. His first appointment was as assistant priest of Saint Patrick Church in Sonora from November 1926 to November 1928. Sonora was part of the Diocese of Sacramento until 1962 when the dioceses of Oakland, Stockton and Santa Rosa were created by the Vatican.

NEXT ASSIGNMENT, SUSANVILLE

Father Pat was next assigned as assistant priest to Sacred Heart Parish in Susanville, helping Father Patrick J McCarthy, pastor, from November 1928 to November 1929.



Photo by John E Boll

Sacred Heart Church, Susanville

FOUNDING PASTOR OF HOLY FAMILY PARISH, PORTOLA

In November 1929, Father McTague received his first pastorate as the founding pastor of Holy Family Parish in Portola, serving as pastor until September 1935.

In 1934, Father McTague received a letter from Bishop Robert Armstrong inquiring if he would be interested in moving to Broderick. Father Pat sent the following reply to Bishop Armstrong:

Portola, Plumas Co., California
December 16, 1934

Right Rev Bishop R.J. Armstrong
Sacramento, California

Dear Bishop,

I received your letter regarding Broderick yesterday and I wish to thank you for thinking of me and my long residence in the mountains.

Though conditions up here may not be ideal in many ways they do not worry me too much. Being young and strong and healthy (Deo gratias) little things like cold and mud and snow do not bother me. I flatter myself by thinking that I have the confidence of the people, some of these people who would hardly look at me when I came here first. Though a man is a poor judge in his own case, the cause of religion among the people has improved and the debt on our church is coming down gradually.

Broderick would have its advantages, I'm sure, but anyway it's all in the same cause, and if it's agreeable with you, I wouldn't mind staying a little longer with the new parish you started me off on in 1929.

Very respectfully yours,
Patrick McTague



Photo by John E Boll

Holy Family Church, Portola

FOUNDING PASTOR OF SAINT JOSEPH PARISH, McCLOUD

Having served as founding pastor of Portola, Father McTague was next sent to McCloud to become the founding pastor of Saint Joseph Parish in September 1935. McCloud was a mill town with a large sawmill which employed most of the people in town who were mainly Italian. Father Pat went on to serve the Catholic community of McCloud for 15 years until November 1950. On January 8, 1948, Bishop Armstrong appointed him Dean of Siskiyou County.



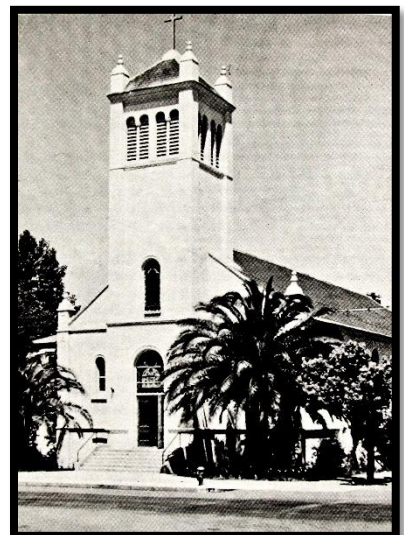
Photo by John E Boll

Saint Joseph Church, McCloud

NAMED PASTOR OF SAINT JOSEPH PARISH, REDDING

After fifteen years as pastor of McCloud, Father Pat was asked by Bishop Armstrong to serve as administrator of Saint Joseph Parish in Redding beginning on November 8, 1950. On March 15, 1951, he was named pastor of Redding and served only two years until May 1952.

Photo from the Saint Joseph Parish Archives



Saint Joseph Church, Redding, in 1951
This church was destroyed by fire in 1964

APPOINTED PASTOR OF SAINT JOSPEH PARISH, YREKA

In May 1952, Father McTague was called on to become pastor of Saint Joseph Parish in Yreka where he served in that role until November 1957.



Photo by John E Boll

Saint Joseph Church, Yreka

In October 1957, Bishop Joseph McGucken who succeeded Bishop Armstrong when he died on January 14, 1957, wrote Father McTague to see if he would be willing to become pastor of Saint Joseph Parish in North Sacramento. Father McTague responded to Bishop McGucken in the following letter:

**Saint Joseph's Church
314 Fourth Street
Yreka, California**

October 14, 1957

My dear Bishop,

In answer to your letter of Friday, I was pleasantly surprised by your splendid offer to me and I am so grateful to you for remembering me. Before deciding I would like to have a few days to consider.

A few years ago I had a touch of the blood pressure – the kind you go over suddenly with – and I have great respect for this. City life is something altogether unknown to me and I am much impressed by it. So in fair play all round, I believe I should have a medical check-up to see if I am able to stand up to the steady alertness demanded by a city.

I'm going for this check-up on Tuesday – if the doctor says I can do it, I'll be most happy to be your man for Saint Joseph's; but if he recommends that I continue as a country man, I presume the wise thing would be to stay with the country.

Yours gratefully,
P. McTague

P.S. I'll let you know the doctor's ideas by Friday at latest. Hoping this is O.K. PMcT

APPOINTED PASTOR OF SAINT JOSEPH PARISH, NORTH SACRAMENTO

Evidently, the doctor gave the green light to Father Pat because on November 7, 1957, he was appointed pastor of Saint Joseph Parish, North Sacramento where he served in this role until his retirement on September 1, 1977, twenty years later.



Photo by John E Boll

Saint Joseph Church, North Sacramento

Father Pat asked Bishop McGucken if he could dispense with the Ceremony of Installation as pastor. He wrote the following letter to the bishop:

**Saint Joseph's Church
314 Fourth Street
Yreka, California**

October 31, 1957

Dear Bishop,

If you don't mind, I'll be most happy to use the dispensation from the Ceremony of Installation. I am reminded of the preacher who ascended the pulpit elatedly and came down deflatedly to whom it was said, "If you went up as you came down, you would have come down as you went up" and therein is a moral.

**With best wishes, respectfully,
P McTague**

Bishop McGucken granted Father McTague's request by dispensing with the Ceremony of Installation as pastor.

ELECTED TO THE DIOCESAN BOARD OF CONSULTORS

Father Pat received a letter from Bishop McGucken informing him that he had been elected to the Diocesan Board of Consultors. That letter follows:

October 8, 1961

**Reverend Patrick McTague
St. Joseph's Church
1717 El Monte Avenue
North Sacramento, California**

Dear Father McTague:

I am very happy to tell you that, at the meeting of the Board of Consultors yesterday, you, along with Monsignor Daniel Twomey and Father Patrick McHugh, were nominated and elected members of the Diocesan Board of Consultors. You can take the oath at some convenient time in the future – perhaps before the next meeting of the Board.

I wish to assure you that I will be glad to have the benefit of your advice and counsel and the frank expression of your views on what is good for the Diocese and its priests.

With best wishes and praying God to bless you, I am,

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Joseph T. McGucken
Bishop of Sacramento

NAMED MONSIGNOR

On February 3, 1962, Pope John XXIII appointed both Fathers Patrick McTague and Patrick McHugh Domestic Prelates. The Ceremony of Installation of the new Monsignors was held on March 19, 1962 in the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament by Bishop Joseph T McGucken.



Photo from the Holy Spirit Parish Archives

**Bishop McGucken shows Fathers Patrick McHugh and Patrick McTague
the document from Rome appointing them Monsignors**



Photo from the Holy Spirit Parish Archives

**Investiture Ceremony for the new Monsignors McHugh and McTague
March 19, 1962**

*The Right Reverend
MONSIGNOR PATRICK McTAGUE
cordially invites you to his
INVESTITURE AS A DOMESTIC PRELATE
OF HIS HOLINESS, POPE JOHN XXIII
at the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament,
Sacramento
on St. Joseph's Day, March 19th, 1962, at 4 p.m.
The Most Reverend Joseph T. McGucken, S.T.D.
Archbishop-designate of San Francisco
Officiating*

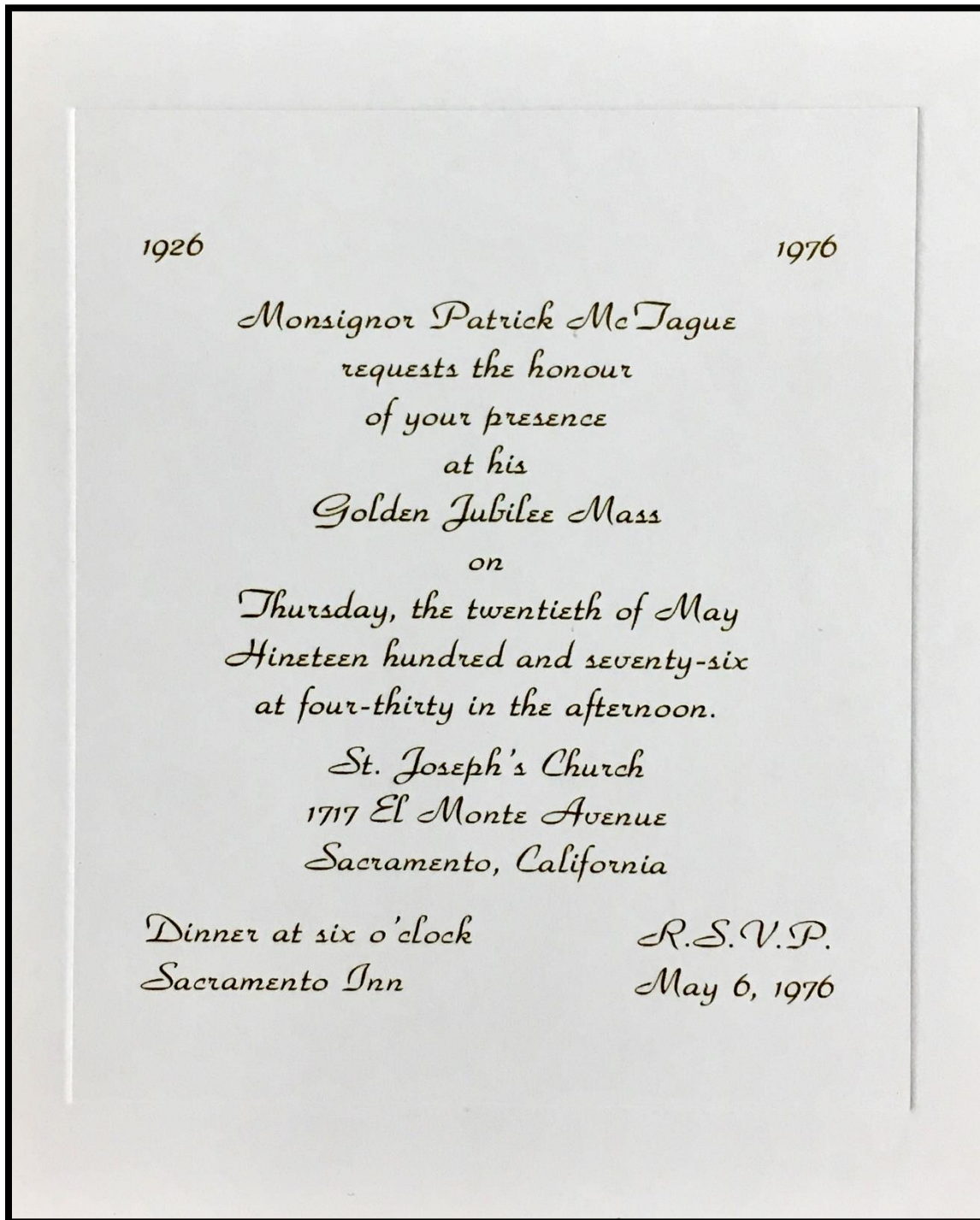


Photo from the Holy Spirit Parish Archives

The Newly Installed Monsignor Patrick McTague

CELEBRATION OF 50 YEARS AS A PRIEST

Monsignor Patrick McTague and Monsignor Maurice O'Connor celebrated their Golden Jubilee of ordination on June 20, 1976. Monsignor McTague held a special concelebrated Mass of Thanksgiving in Saint Joseph Church followed by a reception for the parishioners in the parish hall. The following Sunday, he celebrated a special Mass with the priests of the diocese.



Invitation to Monsignor McTague's Golden Jubilee Mass and Dinner

RETIREMENT

After twenty years as pastor of Saint Joseph Parish, Monsignor McTague stepped down from his role as pastor into retirement at the age of 75 and was named Pastor Emeritus of Saint Joseph Parish, North Sacramento, on September 1, 1977. As was the custom of that era, he continued living in residence at Saint Joseph parish rectory. Succeeding him as pastor of the parish was Father William Broderick.

DEATH COMES TO MONSIGNOR McTAGUE

As time passed, Monsignor McTague's health began to fail him. He was stricken with strokes and lingered at Mercy Convalescent Hospital in Sacramento where he died on Wednesday, October 14, 1981 at about 6 PM.

FUNERAL MASS

A Vigil was held for Monsignor McTague in the parish hall of Saint Joseph Parish in North Sacramento for the parish community and his many friends. The hall was crowded that evening.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated at the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament in Sacramento. Some 175 priests concelebrated the Mass with Bishop Francis A Quinn, Bishop-Emeritus Alden J Bell, Bishop-elect Alphonse N Gallegos and Monsignor Hugh McTague, brother of Monsignor Pat.

The music at the Mass was joyful and highlighted Christian hope in the resurrection. Monsignor Cornelius O'Connor, pastor of Our Lady of the Assumption Parish in Carmichael, was the homilist. In his homily, Monsignor O'Connor praised the love Monsignor McTague had for his parishioners and for his fellow priests. Bishop Quinn, speaking at the end of the Mass, paid tribute to Monsignor McTague's dedication to serve his people in the many parishes he had ministered during his 51 years of active priesthood.

Bishop Bell led the prayers of the Final Commendation for Monsignor McTague and at the conclusion of the liturgy, his body was laid to rest in the Priests' Section of Saint Mary Cemetery in Sacramento.

IN MEMORIAM

Patrick McTague arrived on the shores of America as a young, energetic priest who grew up on the Isle of Ireland. He spent many years serving the people in the far recesses of the Diocese of Sacramento and said he did not mind the cold, the snow, and the mud of the winter. When asked by the bishop to take a parish closer to Sacramento, he was hesitant since he was accustomed to life in his mountain parishes. He finally came to Sacramento to be pastor of Saint Joseph Parish in North Sacramento where he served for 20 years.

When asked how he felt after serving 50 years as a priest, he said, "I feel lonesome that I am unable to do what I used to do. But this is normal and natural. We get old and we have to slow down." When asked if he had his life to live over again, what would he do differently, He said,

“Probably, I wouldn’t. There might be a few small things I wouldn’t do. But I had a very happy life and received nothing but kindness from people and the Lord. The people are great – Catholic people. And the Lord is great too.”

In response to a question about how he would advise a young priest starting out, he said, “Say your prayers – not only say them but think them too – and depend on the Lord.” And what are your plans for the future? “I want to stay with the people and the priests. I’ll spend the rest of my days shuffling around like I’ve always done.”

Monsignor Patrick McTague was a kind and loving priest. He touched the lives of many. Now he has departed and takes his rightful place with the People of God in the joy of the Kingdom of God.



*Lord, bring your Servant
Monsignor Patrick McTague*

*Home now to the place you have
Prepared for all who love you.*



*May his soul and the souls of all the
faithful departed rest now in peace.*

Amen