

# SACRAMENTO DIOCESAN ARCHIVES

Vol 3

Father John E Boll

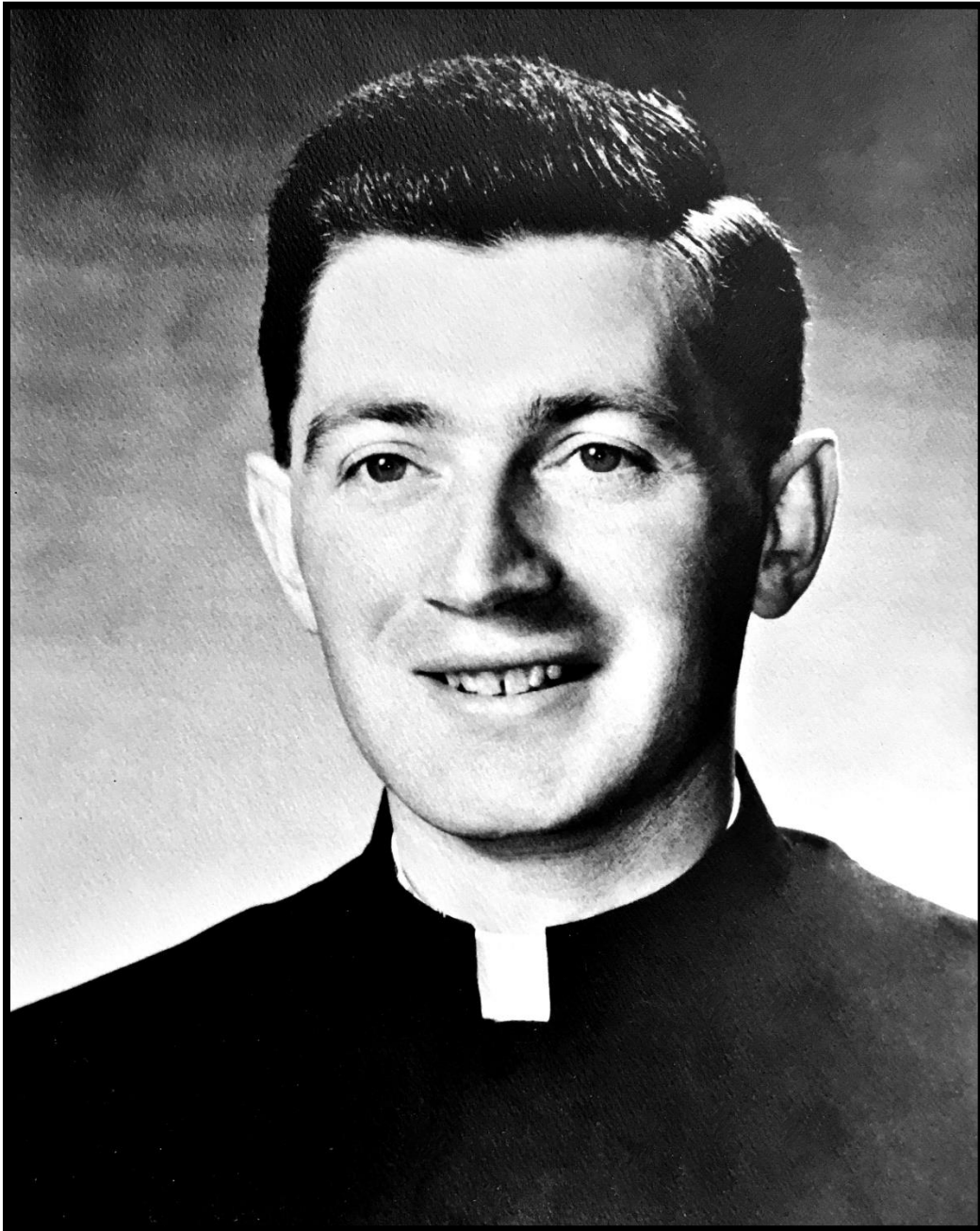
No 34

## *Father John Joseph Myles*

Native Son of Castlemaine, County Kerry, Ireland

Priest of the Diocese of Sacramento

Pastor Emeritus of Sacred Heart Parish, Maxwell



**John Joseph Myles**, son of John Joseph Myles and Eileen O'Brien, was born on August 15, 1937 in Castlemaine, County Kerry Ireland. He is the fifth child of seven born to the Myles family. The seven children of John and Eileen Myles are Michael Vincent, Sheila (Sister Saint Michael), Margaret, William, John Joseph, Robert and Charles. In the ensuing years, three of the Myles children have died, Michael, Margaret and Robert.



**John and Eileen Myles**

### **JOHN BEGINS HIS EDUCATION**

John began his education in the National School at Castledrum. After his primary education, he transferred to the College of Mount Saint Joseph Abbey in Roscrea, County Tipperary.



Photo from St Joseph Abbey Website

### **College of Mount Saint Joseph Abbey, Roscrea, County Tipperary, Ireland**

From the moment a missionary priest visited John's second grade class and asked him what he wanted to be in life, John's response was immediate and clear: "I want to be a priest!" he said, "even though I didn't know what it was to be a priest. It was a calling from God that was already in my heart."



## **BEGINNING OF SEMINARY TRAINING**

John transferred to Mount Melleray Seminary in County Waterford and then to All Hallows College, Drumcondra, County Dublin, to complete his theological studies.



Photo from Mount Melleray Seminary Website

**Mount Melleray Seminary, Waterford, Ireland**



Photo from Diocesan Archives

**All Hallows College, Dublin, Ireland**

**ORDINATION TO THE PRIESTHOOD**

John Joseph Myles was ordained a priest on June 21, 1964 in the All Hallows Seminary Chapel in Dublin, Ireland by Bishop Patrick Dunne for the Diocese of Sacramento.



**Father Myles' 1964 Ordination Class**



## **JOURNEY TO SACRAMENTO**

After spending some time with his family after ordination, Father John Myles began his journey to California to begin his life of ministry in the Diocese of Sacramento. His goal upon arriving in Sacramento was to convert people to Catholicism.

Father Myles soon learned that it was safer in California to drive on the right side of the road than on the left as in his native town of Castlemaine, County Kerry. But in the ensuing years, he would learn an even more important lesson. As he said on his fortieth anniversary, “Priests came from all over Ireland to convert people, but I think people converted priests. There is so much goodness in the laity in today’s church.”

## **FATHER MYLES BEGINS HIS LIFE OF MINISTRY**

Father John’s first assignment was to Saint Joseph Parish in Auburn where he served as assistant pastor to Father Patrick Sheehy from September 15, 1964 until October 18, 1966.

Joyce Polansky, a member of Saint Joseph Parish, said she had no doubt Father Myles made a wise vocation decision. “Father Myles is like somebody you knew all your life. He was often a guest in her very active household of twelve children. “He always had time for us and stood for what was right,” she said.



Photo by John E Boll

**Saint Joseph Church, Auburn**

## **APPOINTMENT TO SAINT ROSE PARISH, ROSEVILLE**

After his first two year assignment at Saint Joseph Church in Auburn, Bishop Alden J Bell next appointed Father John to Saint Rose Parish in Roseville to assist the pastor, Father James Corcoran, from October 18, 1966 to October 21, 1970.

In 1970, the population of Roseville was about 18,000. Over the next fifty years, Roseville grew to a population of 120,000 as it is today in 2019.



Photo by John E Boll

### **Saint Rose Church, Roseville**

### **SAINT JOSEPH CHURCH, LINCOLN**

In his third assignment, Father John moved only ten miles north of Roseville to Saint Joseph Parish in Lincoln where he served as assistant to Father Arnold Schaffer from October 21, 1970 to September 5, 1978.

Lincoln's population in 1978 was about 3800 people. The parish was in a rural setting and had two mission churches, Saint Daniel Church in Wheatland and Saint Boniface Church in Nicolaus. In the 1990s, the Del Webb Corporation created a senior community for recently retired people. The Lincoln community began to surge in growth and today Lincoln has a population of 50,000 people. Saint Joseph Parish relocated from 5<sup>th</sup> and D Streets to a fifteen acre parcel in East Lincoln donated by the Ferrari family. A new church accommodating 1000 people was built on this property. A parish hall is being constructed next to the church at this time and will be dedicated in November 2019. Lincoln is now a major city in Placer County.





Photo by John E Boll

**Original Saint Joseph Church and Rectory, Lincoln**



Photo by John E Boll

**New Saint Joseph Church, Lincoln**



## **FIRST PASTORATE, SAINT ANTHONY PARISH, MOUNT SHASTA**

After serving as an assistant for fourteen years, Bishop Alden Bell appointed Father Myles to his first pastorate at Saint Anthony Parish in Mount Shasta. His uncle, Father Michael V Myles, had served as pastor of Saint Anthony Parish from 1955 to 1970 when he retired after fifty years as a priest.

Father John Joseph Myles served as pastor of Mount Shasta from September 5, 1978 to May 17, 1993. His fifteen years in Mount Shasta were happy ones and he remembers with joy and gratitude the many wonderful people of Siskiyou County. Another joy for him was living close to magnificent Mount Shasta which soars to a height of 14,162 feet in elevation.



Photo by John E Boll

### **Majestic Mount Shasta**

Saint Anthony parishioner Woody Wood who served Mass for Father John almost every day said Father Myles seemed to be everyone's friend. "He knows everyone by their first name and always calls you by your first name," Woody said. "His goodness and prayers for my wife when she was sick kept her going."

While pastor of Saint Anthony Parish and in his following assignments, Father Myles logged many miles and had unforgettable moments driving to rural churches in the wintertime on icy roads. "A few times when I was traveling on black ice, I knew I had a guardian angel," he said. He remembers skidding into the backyard of a residence on his first snowy trip in Mount Shasta.





Photo by John E Boll

### **Saint Anthony Church, Mount Shasta**

#### **NEXT UP, SAINT JOHN PARISH, QUINCY**

After fifteen years of pastoring the Saint Anthony Parish community in Mount Shasta, Father John was named pastor of Saint John Parish in Quincy on May 17, 1993 by Bishop Francis Quinn. He served as pastor of Quincy and Saint Anthony Mission Church in Greenwood for just over a year.

Quincy is a small parish located in Plumas County at an elevation of 3,432 feet. The city's motto is: "Heart of Feather River Country." Because of its elevation, Quincy gets snow in the winter and can be very cold. The church is small but quite cozy. There is also a mission church in Greenville which is a drive of about 60 miles each way. In the wintertime with snow and/or ice on the road, it can be a dangerous drive. Father John had close calls while driving in the Quincy-Greenville area during the winter.

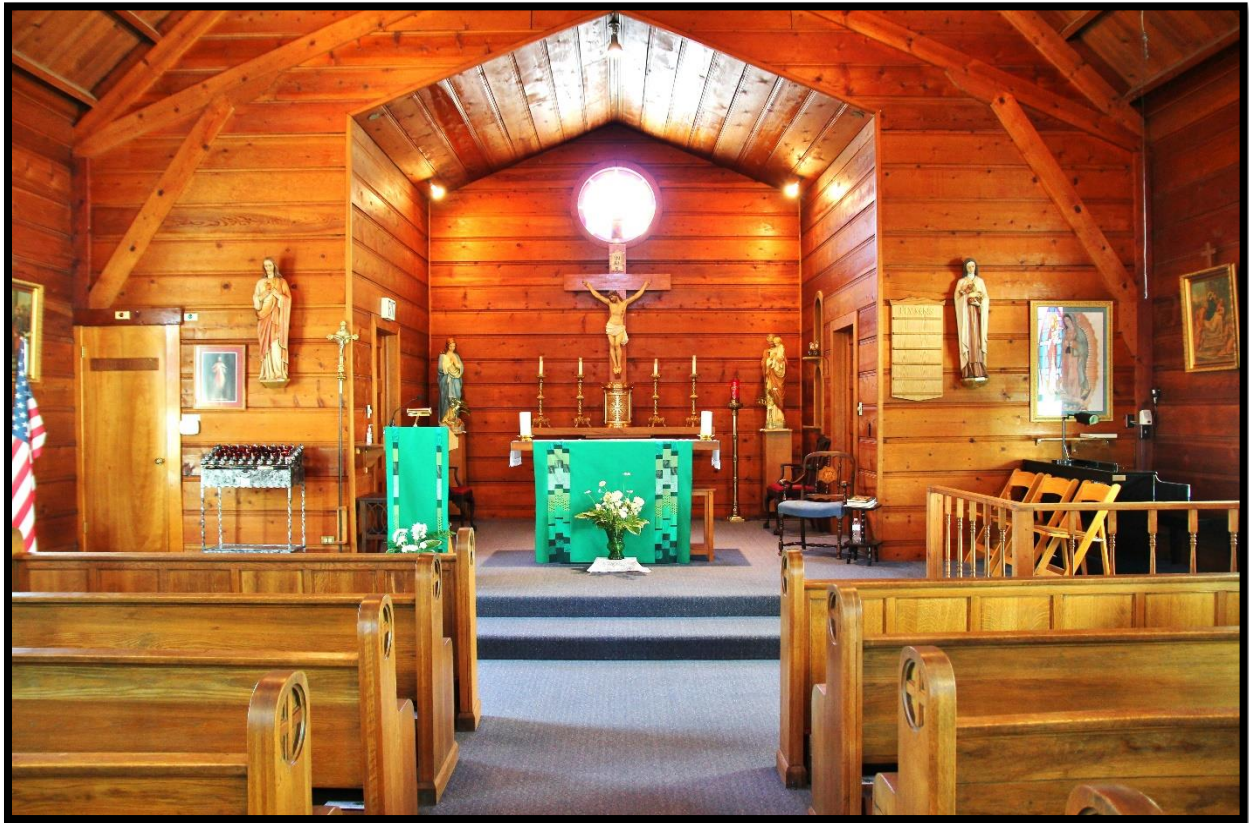


Photo by John E Boll

### **Saint John Church, Quincy**

#### **PASTOR OF DOWNIEVILLE**

On November 15, 1994, Bishop William Weigand appointed Father Myles pastor of Immaculate Conception Parish in Downieville. At this time, the parish included the communities of Downieville, North San Juan and Challenge with the priest's residence in North San Juan.

The parish in Downieville was established in 1853 to serve the many miners who streamed to the Sierra goldfields in Sierra County. Downieville is a beautiful area in the Sierras. Its elevation is about 3,000 feet and has a population of 282 people in the 2010 census.

People live in the mountainous area from North San Juan to Downieville and Sierra City. During the summer, many come to the Downieville area to camp and enjoy the beauty of the area and Mass is celebrated at St Thomas Mission in Sierra City in the summertime.

Father John had to drive many miles each week to celebrate Masses in the three churches of the parish and to visit parishioners who were spread out in the vast expanse of the Sierras.





Photo by John E Boll

### **Immaculate Conception Church, Downieville**

#### **FINAL PASTORATE, SACRED HEART PARISH, MAXWELL**

Father Myles began his final pastoral assignment on August 1, 1996 when Bishop Weigand appointed him pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in Maxwell. The Maxwell parish is challenging because it has three worship centers: Sacred Heart Church, Maxwell; Annunciation Church, Williams; and Holy Cross Church, Arbuckle.

Since there is a large Hispanic community in the parish, Masses in Spanish are celebrated each Sunday in Williams and Arbuckle. Father John lived in the rectory in Maxwell and commuted to Williams and Arbuckle to minister to these communities in the parish. He served as pastor of the Maxwell parish for eight years until September 4, 2004.

#### **FATHER MYLES RETIRES**

Father John Myles is remembered as a most welcoming pastor to all who came to the parish. He became an important part of the whole community. At age 67, he decided to retire from his pastorate and with Bishop Weigand's permission, he continued to live in the rectory in Maxwell while the new pastor, Father Francisco Hernandez-Gomez, moved into the house next to the church in Williams. Father Myles was named Pastor-Emeritus of Sacred Heart Parish, Maxwell.



Photo by John E Boll

### **Sacred Heart Church, Maxwell**

#### **RETURN TO IRELAND**

On November 1, 2007, Father John made a permanent move back to Ireland. After a year in Ireland with rain almost daily, he decided to return home to Sunny California because he could no longer deal with the cool wet weather of his native Ireland.

Upon return to his beloved Maxwell, Father John rented an apartment in town. He helped by celebrating some Masses in the parish and visited his many friends until he was stricken by a stroke in 2015. He was taken first to the hospital in Chico and later was transferred to Mercy Hospital in Sacramento where he underwent therapy. When an apartment became available at Mercy McMahon Terrace Senior Living facility on 39<sup>th</sup> and J Streets next to Mercy Hospital, he moved there and continues to live there today.

#### **STRIKEN WITH CANCER**

Father John was next diagnosed with cancer of the throat. He underwent surgery and his vocal chords had to be removed, leaving him voiceless. A tracheotomy was inserted in his wind-pipe to help him breath.



Father John is a friendly, gregarious and talkative person so losing his ability to speak has been very frustrating for him. As he says: "God has been good to me. I love to talk but now I must listen, something I never did before."



Photo courtesy of Fr John Myles

### **The Seven Myles Children**

**William, Charles, Margaret, Fr John Joe, Sr St. Michael, Robert, Michael**

### **FINAL THOUGHTS**

Father John Joseph Myles was ordained for service to the missions. He followed his Uncle, Father Michael V Myles, and his sister, Sister Mary Saint Michael Myles, RSM, to the Diocese of Sacramento where he has served as a priest for fifty years. He is by nature and grace an outgoing, friendly and hospitable person. Wherever he has served as a priest in the diocese, he was always welcoming to the people he met. As he said when he first arrived in Sacramento, "My goal was to convert people to Catholicism, but people converted me by their kindness and goodness."

We are grateful for Father Myles' ministry among us as he touched the lives and hearts of so many through his friendship and kindness. We wish him a happy and glorious future as he journeys with us on our way to the fullness of life in the Kingdom of God.

Fr. John Joseph Myles  
50th Anniversary  
Celebration



**1964-2014**

**All Hollows  
Seminary  
Dublin, Ireland**

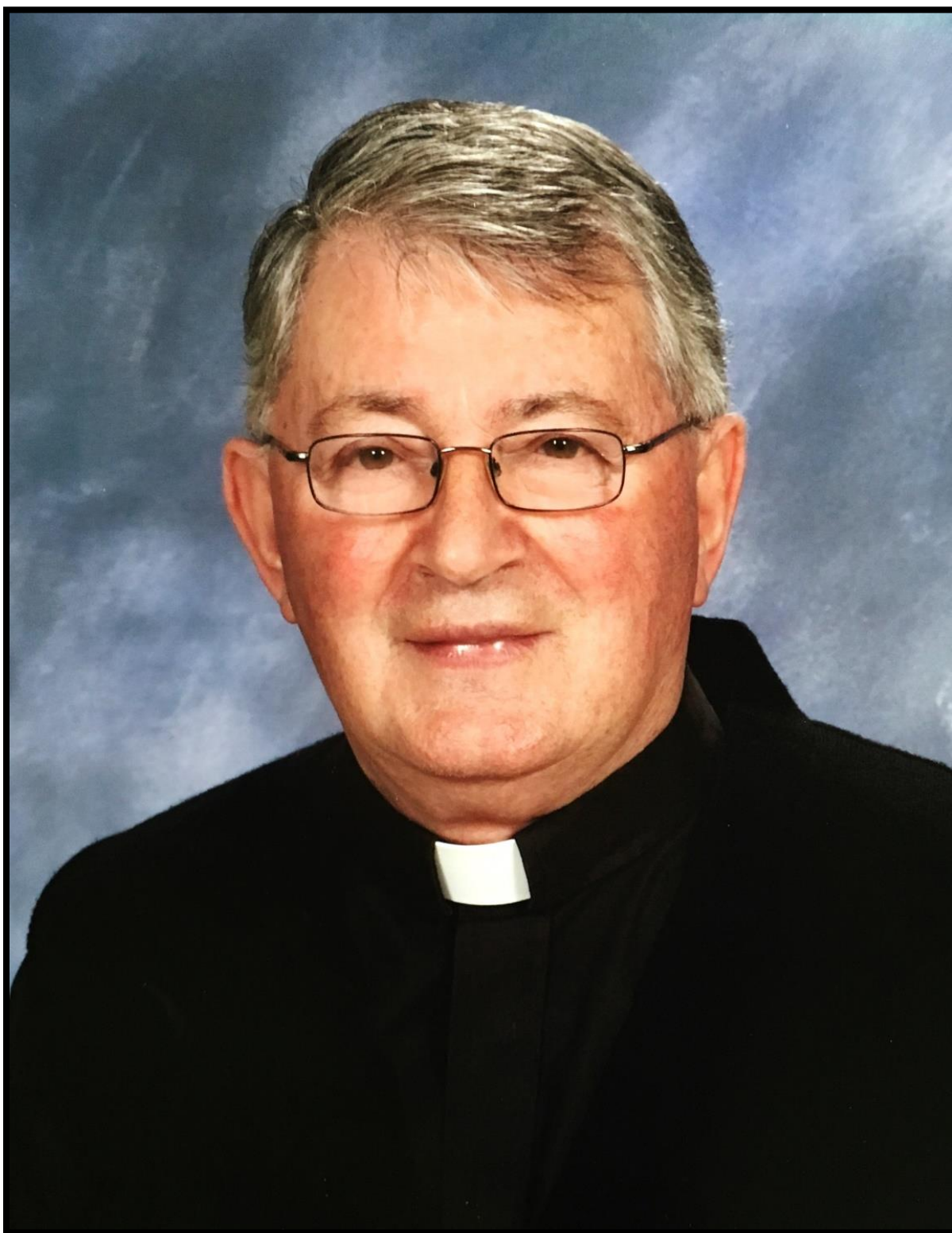
**June 18, 2014  
Maxwell, CA**





Photo courtesy of Fr John J Myles

*Ad Multos Annos!*



*Father John Joseph Myles*