

SACRAMENTO DIOCESAN ARCHIVES

Vol 5

Father John E Boll

No 19

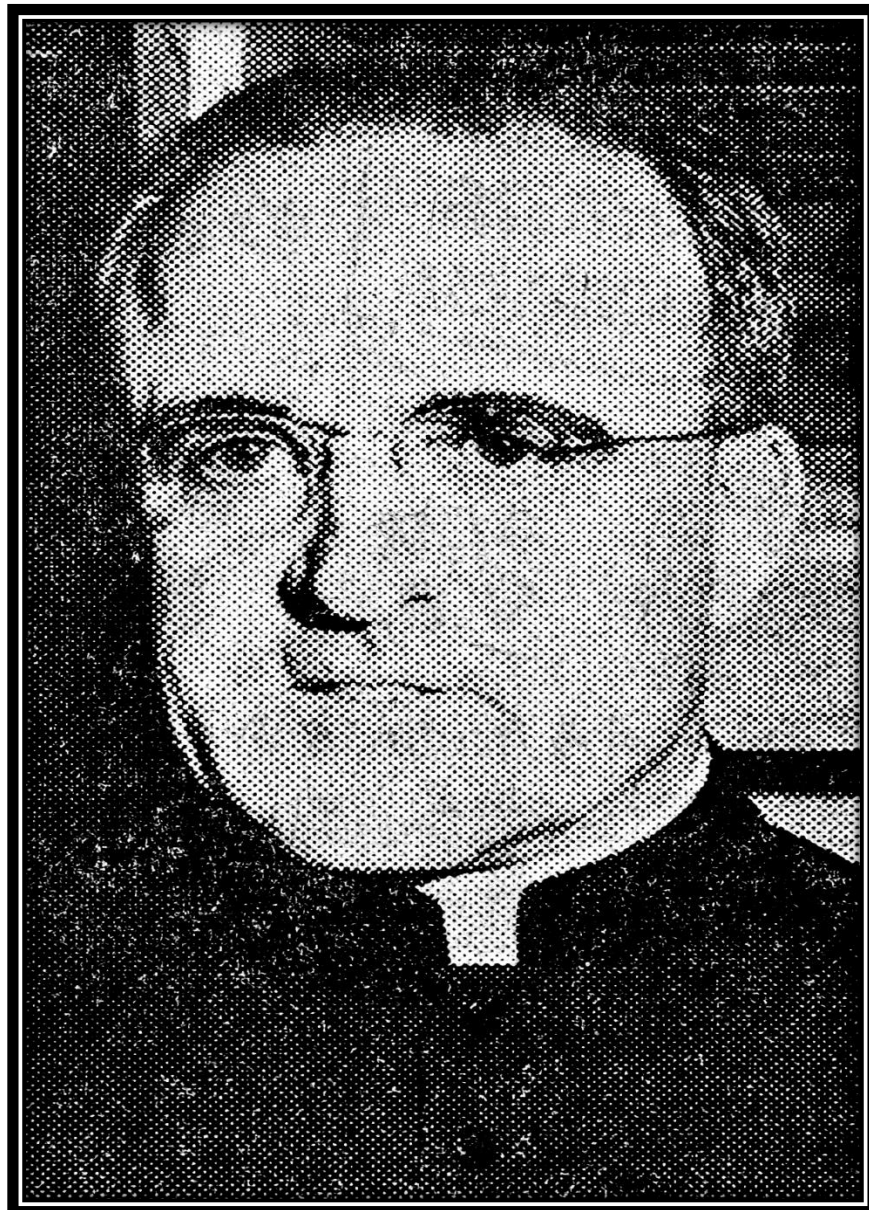
Father Joseph M Hanrahan

Native Son of Loughryan, County Tipperary, Ireland

Priest of the Diocese of Sacramento

Pastor Emeritus of Saint Patrick Parish, Placerville

September 2, 1895 – December 26, 1964



Joseph M Hanrahan was a native of Ireland, born in Loughryan, County Tipperary, Ireland. He received his education at the Christian Brothers College in Tipperary and then on to the Cistercian Abbey of Mount Melleray in County Waterford, Ireland where he spent six years. He became a novice and took simple vows as a Cistercian. He later made his solemn vows and profession as a Cistercian and was promoted to sub-diaconate and then deaconate.



Photo from the Abbey Website

Mount Melleray Abbey, County Waterford, Ireland

BROTHER JOSEPH LEAVES THE CISTERCIANS

About this same time, according to a letter written by Abbot R.M. O'Phelan, Brother Joseph began to feel that the Cistercian way of life and the silence was too severe for him and he received permission to leave for some time to live outside the monastery. He then decided to make application for acceptance in a diocese to become a diocesan priest.

BISHOP KEANE ORDAINS FATHER HANRAHAN

Abbot O'Phelan went on to say that because Brother Joseph had not devoted himself to regular study for some time, he would require some additional time for study in a seminary to prepare for promotion to priesthood.

Joseph Hanrahan was accepted by the Diocese of Sacramento and came to Sacramento in 1923. Bishop Patrick J Keane ordained him a priest for the Diocese of Sacramento in the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament on December 22, 1923.

FIRST ASSIGNMENTS

Father Hanrahan's first year as a priest was spent at the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament. According to Catherine Hanrahan, Father Hanrahan's sister, during that year, her brother saved Richard Dwyer from drowning at an altar servers' outing. Father Hanrahan's next assignment was to Saint Joseph Church, Marysville for a year and then on to Assumption Church in Ferndale.



Cathedral, Sacramento



Saint Joseph, Auburn



Assumption, Ferndale

NAMED PASTOR OF SUTTER CREEK

Father Hanrahan was appointed to his first pastorate in 1930 at Immaculate Conception Parish in Sutter Creek. He served in that pastoral role for the next 20 years.



Photo by John E Boll

Immaculate Conception Church, Sutter Creek, California

PASTOR OF SAINT CHRISTOPHER PARISH, GALT

In 1950, Bishop Robert J Armstrong named Father Hanrahan pastor of Saint Christopher Parish in Galt. He served Galt only two years when he was assigned to Saint Patrick Parish in Placerville.



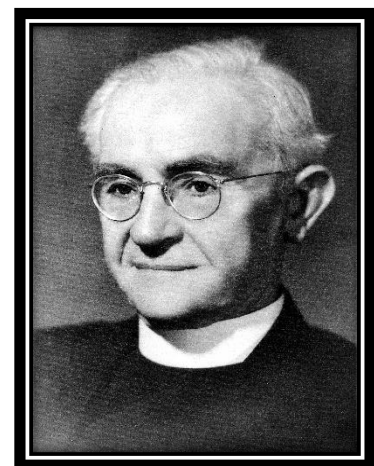
Photo by John E Boll

Saint Christopher Church, Galt

NAMED PASTOR OF PLACERVILLE

Father Hanrahan's appointment to Saint Patrick Parish in Placerville came after the death of Monsignor Thomas J Hayes who died on February 19, 1952. Monsignor Hayes was a much loved pastor and greatly esteemed by both Catholics and Protestants in Placerville.

Father Hanrahan was a quiet man but dedicated in his ministry to the people of the Placerville parish. He had a great love of photography and excelled in it. He made a present of his Weston professional light meter to one of his Mass servers who was also interested in photography. That Mass server is John Boll who is a priest of the Diocese of Sacramento.



Monsignor Thomas J Hayes



Photo by John E Boll 1950s

Saint Patrick Church, Parish Hall and Rectory in Placerville

FATHER HANRAHAN'S HEALTH BEGINS TO FAIL

In 1959 while in Ireland, Father Hanrahan developed an eye disorder. Bishop McGucken assigned Father John J Kyne to Placerville to serve as assistant. In July 1960, Father Hanrahan began to have blackout spells and at times became very unsteady and nervous. This was the beginning of Parkinson's disease. Because of his failing health, Father Hanrahan had to step down as pastor of Placerville and was taken to Auburn Lodge Nursing Home in Auburn. He received good care there but his health continued to decline.

Father Patrick Nolan became Father Hanrahan's guardian to take care of his affairs. Bishop Alden Bell thought it best that Father Hanrahan be moved to Mercy Nursing Home in Sacramento where he could receive additional medical attention. He was moved from Auburn to Sacramento on January 15, 1964. After nearly four years of suffering, Father Hanrahan died at 12:20 PM on Saturday, December 26, 1964, at the Mercy Nursing Home in Sacramento at the age of 69.

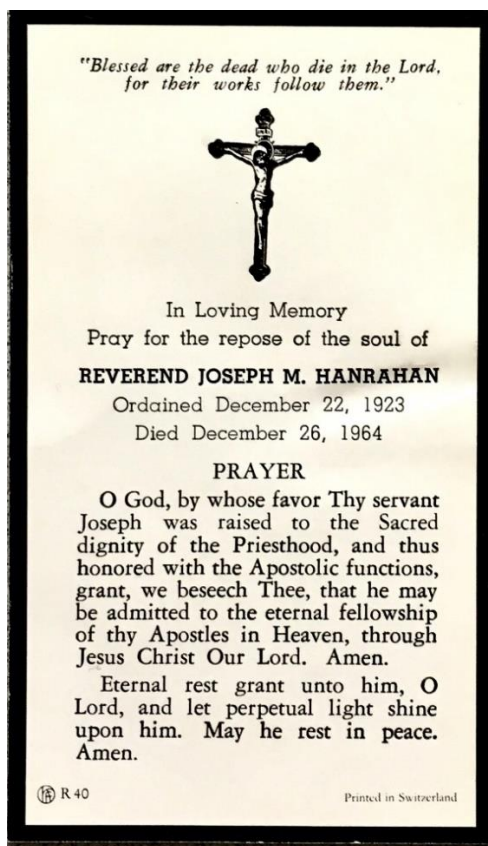
FUNERAL MASS

A Solemn Requiem Mass was celebrated for Father Hanrahan in the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament by Father Cornelius F O'Connor, pastor of Placerville, with Bishop Alden J Bell

presiding. Father Richard C Dwyer, pastor of Rancho Cordova, served as deacon and Father Michael Cormack as sub-deacon; Father Leo McAllister was the master of ceremonies and the homilist was Monsignor Patrick A McHugh, pastor of Holy Spirit Parish in Sacramento.

At Father Hanrahan's request, his body was buried at Saint Patrick Cemetery in Jackson, next to his sister who is buried there as well. The cemetery is not far from Sutter Creek which was Father Hanrahan's first pastorate. Funeral arrangements were handled by W F Gormley and Sons Funeral Home in Sacramento.

Father Hanrahan was survived by his sister, Catherine Hanrahan of Oakland.



Father Joseph M Hanrahan's Memorial Card



Headstone of Father Hanrahan's sister at the Catholic Cemetery in Jackson, CA

ARCHIVIST'S COMMENT

Father Hanrahan was my pastor in Placerville during my youth. I served Sunday Mass for him regularly and on Tuesday evenings, the Mother of Perpetual Help devotions followed by Benediction. Father Hanrahan was faithful to his ministry and always arrived at church well ahead of every liturgy.

I remember him as a good preacher and a real gentleman. He was quiet in personality but always a faithful and compassionate pastor who was ready to help his parishioners. I learned a lot from Father Hanrahan, more from his example than anything else.

I was a seminarian when Father Hanrahan died the day after Christmas. I was on Christmas vacation and was able to attend his Funeral Mass at the Cathedral in Sacramento.

As a good and faithful servant of the Lord, Father Hanrahan left his homeland in Ireland to come to Sacramento to serve the church in California's Mother Lode. We are grateful for the personal sacrifices he made for the sake of sharing the Gospel of Christ in this diocese.



**Headstone of Father Joseph M Hanrahan
Catholic Cemetery, Jackson, California**



Photo by John E Boll 2017

Catholic Cemetery in Jackson, California

Buried here between Father Hanrahan and his sister is Monsignor Michael J Kearney



*May Father Joseph M Hanrahan
Abide now in the Joy and Peace of God*