

# SACRAMENTO DIOCESAN ARCHIVES

Vol 5

Father John E Boll

No 73

## *Father Patrick F Keane*

Native of Lixnaw, County Kerry, Ireland

Priest of the Diocese of Sacramento

October 1, 1905 – January 20, 1961



**Patrick F Keane** was born to Mr. and Mrs. James Keane in Lixnaw, County Kerry, Ireland, on October 1, 1905. He came from a large Catholic family of eight children.

Patrick attended Saint Patrick College Seminary in Carlow for his theological training and was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Sacramento on June 14, 1931 in the Seminary Chapel at Carlow.



Photo from the Web

### **Saint Patrick College, Carlow, Ireland**

After spending some time with his family after his ordination, Father Keane boarded the Cunard ocean liner docked at Cobh Harbor, Ireland and set sail for New York. The fare for crossing the Atlantic on the Cunard was \$152.50 with a \$50 embarking port fee. From New York, he traveled by train across the United States and arrived in California to begin his new life of ministry in the Diocese of Sacramento.

### **FATHER KEANE BEGINS HIS MINISTRY IN AUBURN**

Father Patrick received his first assignment in the Diocese of Sacramento from Bishop Robert J Armstrong to serve as assistant priest to Father Richard Vereker, pastor of Saint Joseph Parish in Auburn. Father Vereker served as pastor of Saint Joseph Parish, for 29 years, from 1911 to 1940, until his death on March 8, 1940.

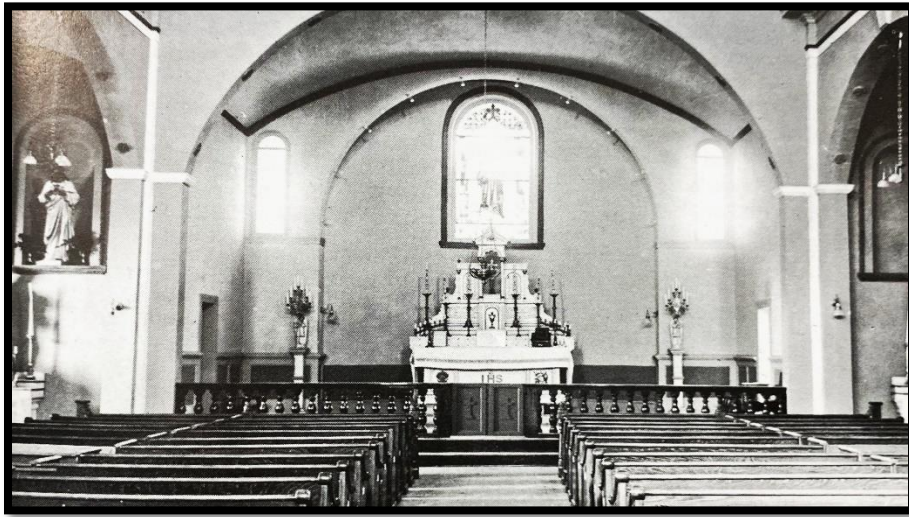


Photo from St Joseph Parish Archives

**Saint Joseph Church, Auburn, Built in 1911**

**NEXT ASSIGNMENT, SACRED HEART PARISH, ALTURAS**

In 1940, Father Keane was sent to Sacred Heart Parish in Alturas as pastor for one year. Alturas is one of the older parishes in the Diocese of Sacramento, established in 1883 by Bishop Eugene O'Connell a year before he resigned as bishop of the Diocese of Grass Valley on March 17, 1884.

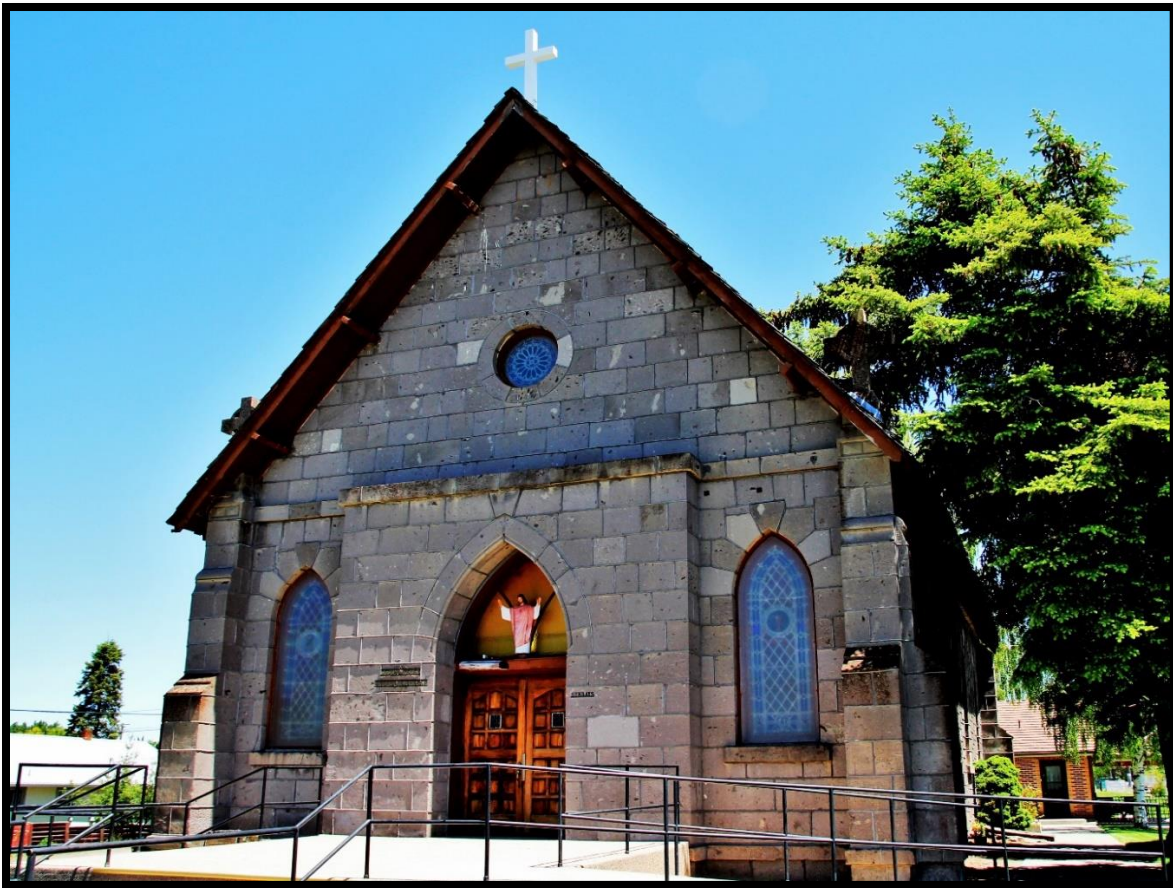


Photo by John E Boll

**Sacred Heart Church, Alturas**

## **ON TO CLARKSBURG**

In 1941, Father Keane succeeded Father William O'Toole as pastor of Saint Joseph Parish in Clarksburg but only served there until 1942. The original church of Clarksburg was literally built on the Levee of the Sacramento River. The area was heavily Catholic due to the large influx of immigrants from the Azores. During his two years serving the Clarksburg parish, Father Keane spoke to his parishioners in English since he did not speak Portuguese.



Photo by John E Boll

**Saint Joseph Church, Clarksburg**

## **ADMINISTRATOR OF SAINT JOSEPH PARISH, YREKA**

Father Keane was then appointed administrator of Saint Joseph Parish in Yreka, effective on January 23, 1947, where he served for two years, succeeding Father Michael O'Connor who had been pastor in Yreka from 1931 to 1946. Father Keane's successors were Father John McGoldrick from 1948-49, and then Father John O'Connor who served the Yreka parish for three years, 1949 to 1952. Father O'Connor was then appointed pastor of Saint Joseph Parish in Redding where he served for the next 28 years until he retired in 1980.



Photo from the Diocesan Archives

### **Saint Joseph Church, Yreka**

#### **OFF TO HUMBOLDT COUNTY**

In 1948, Humboldt County was part of the Sacramento diocese and Bishop Armstrong appointed Father Keane to be pastor of Saint Patrick Church in Scotia on October 18, 1948. Scotia was a company town owned by Pacific Lumber Company. The sawmill was the largest redwood sawmill in the world, harvesting redwood timber for the open market.

Just across the Eel River from Scotia is the town of Rio Dell. A few miles north-west of Scotia and Rio Dell was the first diocesan minor seminary named Saint Pius X. The seminary was established in 1955 by Bishop Robert Armstrong to begin training local native young men for the priesthood in the Diocese of Sacramento. Bishop Armstrong chose the Society of the Divine Savior, the Salvatorians, to staff the seminary. The seminarians who attended Saint Pius X Seminary in Rio Dell have a fond place in their hearts for the time they spent in the Rio Dell seminary located near the Eel River and among the Giant Redwoods of Humboldt County.

Father Keane served Saint Patrick Parish in Scotia and its mission churches for only two years but no doubt those two years were as memorable for him as they were for the seminarians studying for the priesthood at the seminary in Rio Dell.



Photo by John E Boll

### **Saint Patrick Church, Scotia**

#### **THE LAST PARISHES FATHER KEANE SERVED**

Father Keane served at Saint Philomene Parish for a time and then on April 24, 1957, Bishop McGucken transferred him to Our Lady of the Assumption Church in Carmichael founded in 1950 to work with Father Thomas Bannon, the founding pastor. He also served Saint Peter Church in Sacramento and Saint Patrick Church in Placerville. When Father Keane was hospitalized at Mercy Hospital in Sacramento, he was assistant pastor of Saint Patrick Parish in Placerville.

He had been ill for some time when he entered Mercy Hospital in Sacramento where he died on Friday, January 20, 1961 at the age of 55.

#### **THE FUNERAL FOR FATHER KEANE**

On Monday evening, January 23, 1961, the diocesan clergy and friends of Father Keane gathered at Sacred Heart Church in Sacramento to pray the Office of the Dead. On Tuesday morning, the Funeral Mass for Father Keane was celebrated in Sacred Heart Church. Bishop Joseph T

McGucken presided at the Mass and Father Jeremiah Keane, the brother of Father Patrick Keane, was the celebrant at the Mass. Father Patrick Sheehy, pastor of Saint Joseph Parish in Auburn, spoke at the Mass about the life of Father Keane. After the final Prayers of Commendation were offered for Father Keane, his body was taken in procession to Saint Mary Cemetery for burial. The prayers of the Rite of Committal were offered and Father Keane's body was lowered into the grave as his brother priests sang the "Salve Regina."



Photo by John E Boll

**The Headstone of Father Patrick Keane  
Saint Mary Cemetery, Sacramento**

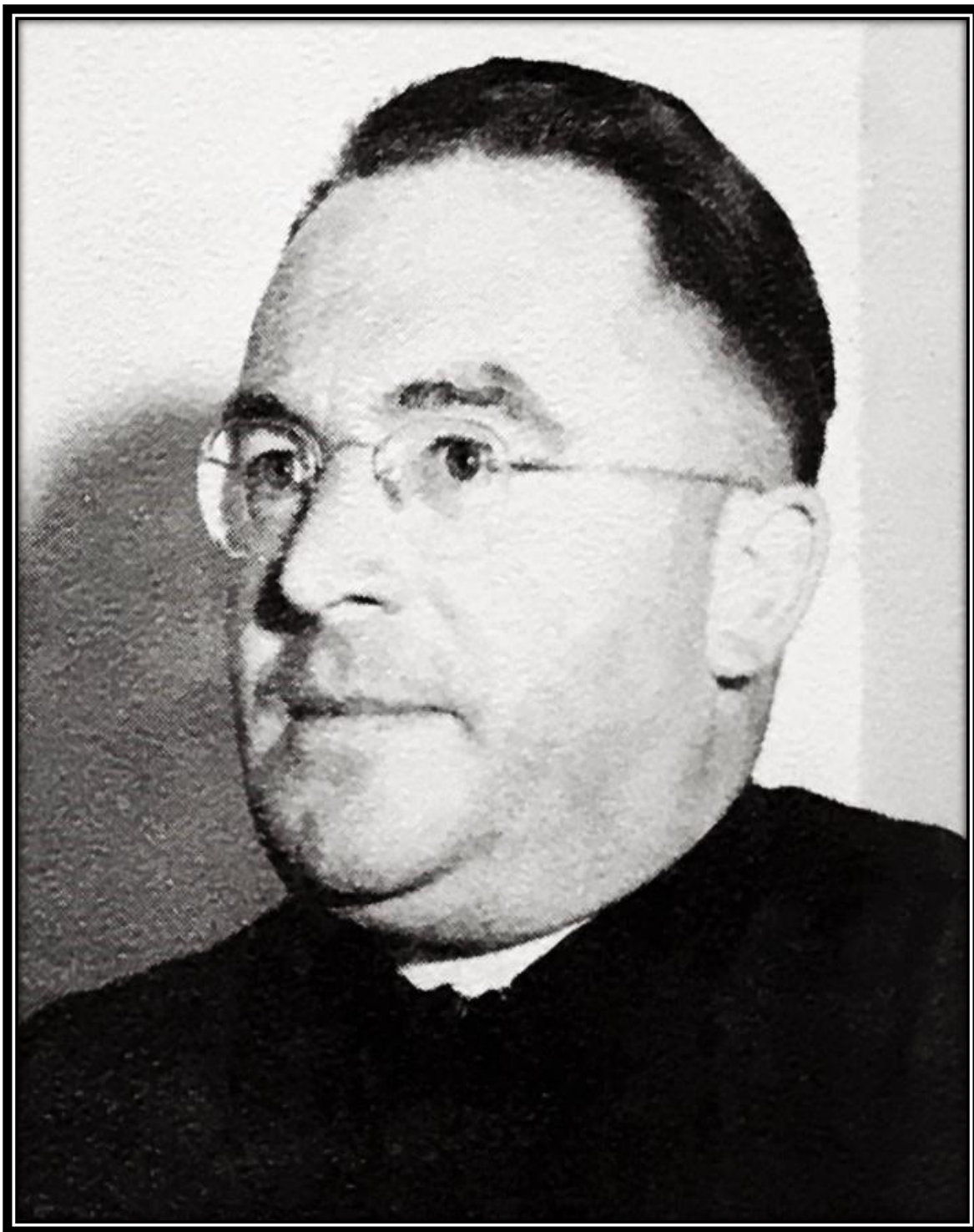
**THE FAMILY MEMBERS OF FATHER KEANE**

The family members who mourned the death of Father Patrick Keane were his mother, Mrs. James Keane of Listowel, County Kerry; Father Jeremiah Keane, brother, who was pastor of Santa Rosa Church, Lone Pine, CA; his sister, Mother Gabriel Keane of Presentation Convent, Lixnaw, and his other brothers and sister living in Listowel, Ireland: John, James, William, Michael and his sister, Mrs. John Carey.

**FAREWELL TO FATHER KEANE**

Father Patrick F Keane came from a strong Irish Catholic family. Of the eight children in the family, two became priests and one sister became a member of the Presentation Sisters in Ireland. Father Patrick willingly served in the far recesses of the diocese from Alturas to Yreka and Scotia. When the bishop moved him from one parish to another, he willingly went where he was needed.

Because of illness, he died at the age of 55. But God, who is Lord of all, called Father Patrick home to the Kingdom of Joy, Peace and Glory. May he be fully alive now in the joyful Trinitarian life of God!



*Father Patrick F Keane*