



+ BISHOP PATRICK MANOGUE

Priest of the Vicariate of Marysville 1861 - 1881

Second Bishop of the Diocese of Grass Valley 1884 - 1886

Founding Bishop of the Diocese of Sacramento 1886 - 1895

1831 -1895

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Fr John E Boll, Diocesan Archivist

Patrick Manogue was born in Desart, County Kilkenny, Ireland on March 15, 1831. When he was three years of age, both his parents died within a few weeks of each other and the little thatched cottage in Kilkenny where the family lived was a very sad place because there were seven orphaned children left behind. Michael Manogue, the eldest of the children, set off for America in the hope of improving the family situation and as he earned enough money, he sent it back to Ireland in order to bring his younger brothers and sisters to the New World, one by one. When it came Patrick's turn, he arrived in the United States in 1848 at the age of 17 and worked in Connecticut for two years. He then moved to Chicago where he attended the College of St Mary of the Lake Seminary for three years studying for the priesthood. But by the time the entire Manogue family arrived in the US, the need for money to support the family had grown more desperate. Patrick thought he could best support his family and also realize his own plans to be a priest if he went to California to work in the gold mines.

In 1854, at the age of 22, Patrick arrived in the California gold fields and went to work for three years at the little but prosperous mining camp known as Moore's Flat, about 20 miles from Nevada City on the trail leading north. This mining village, named after H. M. Moore who owned and operated a hotel and had some mining interests, had a population of about 300 at the time of Manogue's arrival. When a priest arrived in the camp from time to time to minister to the miners, it gradually became known that Patrick had been in the seminary for three years and was working in the gold fields only to make enough money to help support his family in Connecticut and then to return to the seminary to complete his studies so he could be ordained a priest.

While at Moore's Flat, Patrick did quite well in digging for gold. He lived alone in a typical windowless miner's cabin located by a creek. He cooked his food over an open fire and the standard menu was coffee, pancakes, boiled salt pork and jackrabbit, venison and quail. Most of the miners were so exhausted by their ordeal of acquiring wealth that they often went to bed without even bothering to take off their heavy boots. But the rigors of mining did not seem to deplete Pat Manogue's strength at all. At 6'4" and weighing 250 lbs, a fellow miner described him in these terms: "I never saw a harder worker. He was a young man of great frame and strength and worked tirelessly from morning to night. And yet he put in every spare moment studying."

Despite the uniqueness of his motivation for being in the gold fields and despite his recreational preference for study, Manogue's popularity with his colleagues is documented. He could be seen, the tallest man in the place, at the Miners' Union Hall, the Brewery or Piper's Opera House and his fellow miners always chose him to arbitrate conflicts between the miners. They

accepted his verdicts with grace and said he prevented many fights among the men who stood in awe of his powerful Celtic physique and personality.

The wealth Pat Manogue acquired so quickly might have sidetracked a less motivated man, but in later years, Fr Manogue reflected on the way he felt at that time in these words: "Everybody was seeking fortunes. I myself handled the sledge and the drill. It was not by rail or river that I traveled then but by rough and slow coach into the mountains to face bedrock in a tunnel, for weal or woe. Fortune smiled and my labor was rewarded with a competence. I thought that if I could become a good priest of the church, I would be the happiest man in the world."

Undeterred by the lure of gold, Manogue left Moore's Flat and traveled to Paris to complete his studies at Saint Sulpice Seminary and was ordained a priest on Christmas Day, 1861 by Cardinal Francois Morlot. He returned from Europe to his adopted homeland in 1862 and reported for duty to his Bishop Eugene O'Connell in Marysville.



O'Connell requested that Manogue take the whole territory of northern Nevada as his parish. After scouting the large territory of his new parish, Manogue decided to make Virginia City the hub of the parish. He lived with one of the old Irish families and celebrated Mass in a log cabin. Because of the great flow of gold and silver from the Comstock, by the middle of 1863, Fr Manogue had collected \$12,000, enough to build his first church. Within a few years he built a church, a school and an orphanage which he staffed with the Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul from San Francisco. The school and orphanage were the first institutions of learning in Nevada. He also began construction of St Mary Hospital in Virginia City at a cost \$45,000.

St Mary of the Mountains Church

If Patrick Manogue had looked tall in his miner's garb, he looked even taller in his black cassock. The miners said he was as "tall as a steeple." Those who had called him Pat in his gold mining days now called him *Soggarth Aroon* or their *Beloved Priest*.

Fr Manogue began a tireless and vital apostolate among his former mining companions. He had the Irish quality of being at home anywhere. Mansion or shanty, saloon or wigwam welcomed him and all who had assumed that Pat Manogue would be different now that he was a priest soon revised their assumption. Being a priest seemed somehow to enhance the vitality, good nature and charm of this giant of an Irishman.

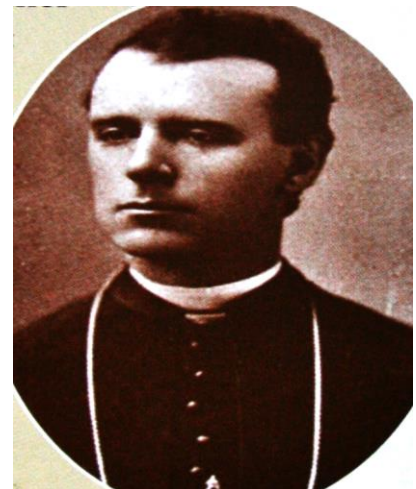
He made long trips into the wilderness by himself, sleeping along the trail or on the floor of a log cabin. On his journeys he converted many Native Indians who could always be distinguished by their Irish baptismal names. He gave gifts of crucifixes and medals to the children he baptized and those gifts became prized possessions into their adult life, gifts from their *Soggarth Aroon*. His favorite method of teaching religion to wandering bands of Indians was to gather them into the church and explain the meaning of the altar and tabernacle, the Bible, baptismal font, Stations of the Cross and the statues.

On one occasion Fr Manogue was summoned to administer the last rites to a dying woman in a remote mountain cabin. After the long and difficult journey, he was met at the cabin door by the woman's husband who brandished a gun and threatened to kill the priest if he attempted to enter the cabin. Like a man picking up a naughty puppy, Fr Manogue picked the man up in spite of the gun and left him on his backside beside the path while he went into the cabin to give the woman the anointing of the sick and viaticum.

Through summer heat and winter snows, Pat Manogue crossed Nevada on foot and on horseback, sleeping on the floor of a chief's wigwam or on a cot in the back room of the nearest saloon. He was a man of undaunted energy, determination and stamina.

After being pastor of Virginia City for 19 years, Fr Manogue was selected by Pope Pius IX to be the Titular Bishop of Ceramus and co-adjutor bishop to Bishop O'Connell of the Grass Valley Diocese. However, as a condition of his acceptance of the appointment, Manogue was adamant that the diocesan headquarters of Grass Valley be transferred to the thriving city of Sacramento. Bishop O'Connell himself had tried to secure Sacramento for the Grass Valley See but was rebuffed by both the Archdiocese of San Francisco and Rome. But before his ordination as bishop, all parties agreed to adjust diocesan boundaries and Patrick Manogue was ordained a bishop by Archbishop Joseph Sadoc Alemany on January 16, 1881 in St Mary Cathedral, San Francisco. Bishop O'Connell did not retire as bishop of Grass Valley for another three years.

The promised relocation of the See to Sacramento took five years to accomplish. Alemany's successor, Chicago priest Archbishop Patrick Riordan, reopened the question and refused to give up the state capital unless Bishop Manogue agreed to take several rural counties from San Francisco. Bishop Manogue was enraged and lashed out publicly against Riordan and also Bishop O'Connell whom he accused of trying to undermine the transfer of Sacramento. Manogue later exacted a petty vengeance on Bishop O'Connell by making the old prelate beg for his promised pension. But Archbishop Riordan prevailed in his demand. On May 16, 1886 Pope Leo XIII changed the boundaries of the diocese making Sacramento, the capital of California, the See City of the diocese, making Bishop Manogue the founding bishop of the new **Archbishop Patrick Riordan** diocese. Manogue then focused on building a cathedral for the new diocese.



Sacramento, 45 miles from the Coloma site where James Marshall discovered gold in 1848, grew rapidly and city leaders offered the state a million dollars to make Sacramento the State Capital. In 1854 it was designated as the state capital by Governor Peter Burnett, a Catholic convert and brilliant businessman. It was Burnett who donated the land on 11th and K Streets to become the site for the permanent Catholic cathedral of Sacramento.



Manogue patterned the cathedral after the Church of the Holy Trinity in Paris which was a favorite of his when he was a seminarian in Paris. The cathedral, designed by architect Brian J Clinch and built in the Renaissance style with seating for 1600, was built in memory of those who had sustained the Catholic faith during the early years of the Church in California.

The impressive life and career of California's "Gold Rush Bishop" came to a close on February 27, 1895 when Bishop Manogue died in his home. After his Funeral Mass which was celebrated in the new cathedral, Patrick Manogue was laid to rest in a simple tomb in St Joseph Cemetery, 21st and Broadway, Sacramento, as he directed "out in the graveyard among my priests."

Carved on the California State Capitol building is an inscription: "Give me men to match my mountains." Perhaps another way of saying this is: "Give me men to match Pat Manogue."

The life and example of this gifted and dynamic priest and founding bishop of Sacramento is a challenge to all Catholics of the 21st century. Can we, bishops, priests, deacons, seminarians, religious and laity match the faith, perseverance, determination, dedication, stamina, grace and love that this pioneer pastor had for the people God gave him to lead, protect, challenge and encourage to be all they could be for the Kingdom of God?

Through the intercession of Bishops O'Connell and Manogue, our founding bishops, may we become those wise and faithful leaders who match the majestic mountains of California!

PATRITIUS MANOGUE,



Dei et Apostolicæ

Sedis Gratia,

Episcopus Sacramentensis.

From the Diocesan Archives

Bishop Patrick Manogue's Coat of Arms