

# SACRAMENTO DIOCESAN ARCHIVES

Vol 5

Father John E Boll

No 25

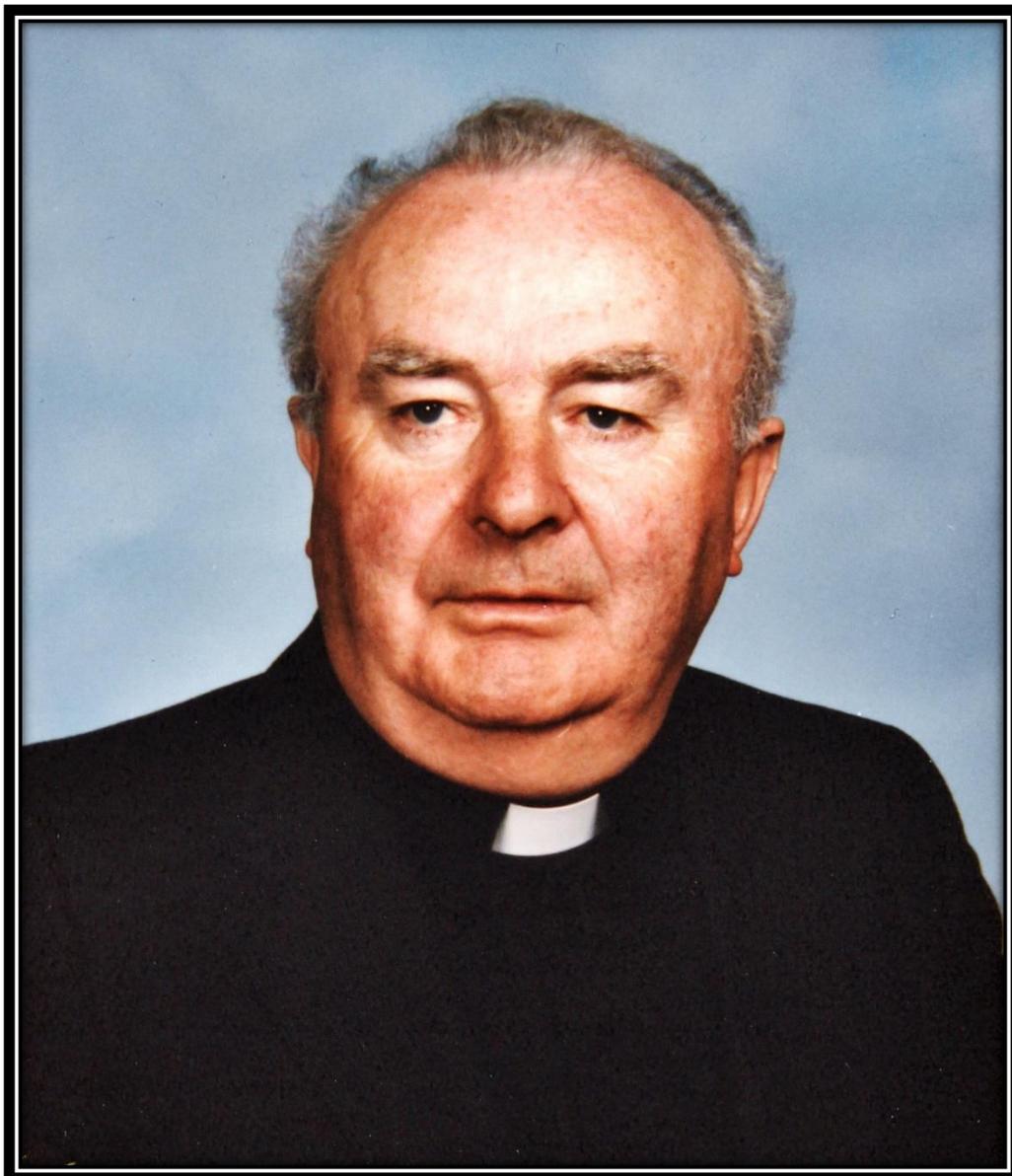
## *Father Patrick Joseph Lanigan*

Native Son of Thurles, County Tipperary, Ireland

Priest of the Diocese of Sacramento

Pastor Emeritus of Holy Spirit Parish, Fairfield, California

April 22, 1925 – May 16, 2006



**Patrick Joseph Lanigan was born on April 22, 1925** in Thurles, County Tipperary, Ireland to William Lanigan and Mary Treacy. He was baptized a week later in the parish church of Gortnahoe, Thurles, County Tipperary.

### **BEGINNING OF HIS EDUCATION**

Pat attended elementary school at Ballysloe National School in County Tipperary from 1928 to 1937. He then matriculated to Christian Brothers School, Thurles, from 1939 to 1942. He began his theological training at Saint Patrick College, Thurles, in 1944 and completed his studies in 1951.



Photo taken from the web

**Saint Patrick College, Thurles, Ireland**

### **ORDAINED A PRIEST FOR SACRAMENTO**

Patrick was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Sacramento on September 16, 1951 at the Thurles Cathedral by Archbishop Jeremiah Kinane, Archbishop of Cashel and Emily. After his ordination, he spent some time with his family and then set sail westward on his journey to Sacramento.

### **YEARS AS PAROCHIAL VICAR**

After arriving in Sacramento, Father Lanigan was appointed assistant priest of Saint Patrick Church in Angels Camp where he served from April 1952 to March 1956.

His next appointment was to Holy Spirit Church in Sacramento as assistant priest to Monsignor Patrick McHugh from March 1956 to March 1959.



Photo from the Holy Spirit Parish Archives

**Holy Spirit Church in the 1950s**



Father Lanigan's third assignment was as assistant to Saint Joseph Parish in Marysville where he served from March 1959 to September 1965. This appointment would be his last as an assistant priest.

Photo at left was taken during Father Lanigan's years at Holy Spirit Parish in Sacramento. Monsignor McHugh is standing with Fathers Tom Farrell (L) and Pat Lanigan (R) seated

### **FIRST PASTORATE, DUNSMUIR**

Father Pat was appointed to his first pastorate at Saint John Parish in Dunsmuir where he served from September 9, 1965 to October 30, 1973. This is a mountain parish nine miles south of Mount Shasta. Dunsmuir is wedged in a narrow gap between the mountains and often receives a lot of snow in the wintertime. No doubt he had to shovel his share of snow during the eight winters he was pastor there.



Photo by John E Boll

### **Saint John Church, Dunsmuir**

#### **MAT PROGRAM**

Father Pat was ordained 11 years before the beginning of the Second Vatican Council which was convoked by Pope John XXIII in 1959 and held from 1962-1965. When the USF Extension Masters

of Arts in Teaching program was offered to the priests and sisters of the Diocese of Sacramento through the tireless efforts of Father Pat McGrath, Father Lanigan was one of the first to sign up for this two year program.

Of the 35 priests and 10 religious sisters of the diocese who signed up for the master's program and attended the weekly classes from February 1972 to December 1973, Father Lanigan was the priest who traveled the farthest each week driving from Dunsmuir to the Sacramento Newman Center, a distance of 400 miles round trip. But Father Pat thoroughly enjoyed the classes and felt the sacrifices he had to make were well worth the education he received from the master's program.

As a result of the master's degree he earned through this University of San Francisco extension program, Father Pat was able to teach a course at the Solano Community College in Fairfield during his pastorate there.

### **NAMED PASTOR OF CHICO**

After eight years as pastor of Dunsmuir, Father Lanigan was named pastor of Saint John the Baptist Parish in Chico where he served from October 30, 1973 to May 18, 1976. He enjoyed his three years serving the Chico community.



Photo by John E Boll

**Saint John the Baptist Church, Chico, CA**

### **PASTOR OF HOLY SPIRIT PARISH, FAIRFIELD**

In 1976, Father Pat's was appointed pastor of Holy Spirit Parish in Fairfield and he served the Fairfield Catholic community until his retirement in 1995. When he arrived in Fairfield, he said "it was already a marvelous parish and unique because the people were very committed." He went on to said, "I just happened to be here during the years when so much renewal took place."

Many parishioners during Father Lanigan's tenure became involved in the charismatic renewal and prayer groups which he always encouraged. Many of the prayer groups are still active in the parish.

Father Michael Downey who served as assistant to Father Lanigan says, "Father Pat gave people a great deal of freedom to start things which nurtured their own spirituality. He gave them freedom because he always felt they were mature in their faith."



Photo by John E Boll

### **Holy Spirit Church, Fairfield, CA**

As a surprise to Father Lanigan, parishioners named the new parish center for him when it was dedicated in January 1994. The dedication plaque reads: "Father Lanigan, loving pastor and sincere friend, whose courage led us from the dream to the reality of our parish center."

## **PARISH WEEKEND RENEWAL PROGRAM**

During his pastorate in Fairfield, Father Pat initiated the Parish Renewal Program which was created by Father Chuck Gallagher, SJ. This program was a weekend parish renewal based on the Cursillo movement.

As pastor of the parish, Father Lanigan had to participate in a week's training with Father Gallagher and the week after he returned to the parish he spoke at all the weekend Masses encouraging parishioners to experience the program as he did during his week of training. This program renewed both Father Pat and all the parishioners who experienced the program with him.



Photo by John E Boll

### **Holy Spirit Community Center**

As the ethnic makeup of the parish changed, Father Lanigan worked to make all people feel welcomed to the parish. "We are an international church," he told The Herald in 1995, noting that he was proud of Holy Spirit's large Hispanic and Filipino Catholic communities.

Father Lanigan retired from parish ministry in 1995 and moved to his own home which he purchased in the Fairfield area. He enjoyed his retirement years very much.

## PARISHIONERS' REMEMBRANCES

Parishioner Bob King knew Father Lanigan since 1980. They played golf together every week after Father Pat retired. He said Father Lanigan was "as kind a man as you could ever imagine and a fine golfer. He had patience, kindness and intelligence," King said. "He was very bright and well-read and could quote Shakespeare and poetry at the drop of a hat. He would be on the golf course and all of a sudden would start to quote Shakespeare which made me feel peaceful."

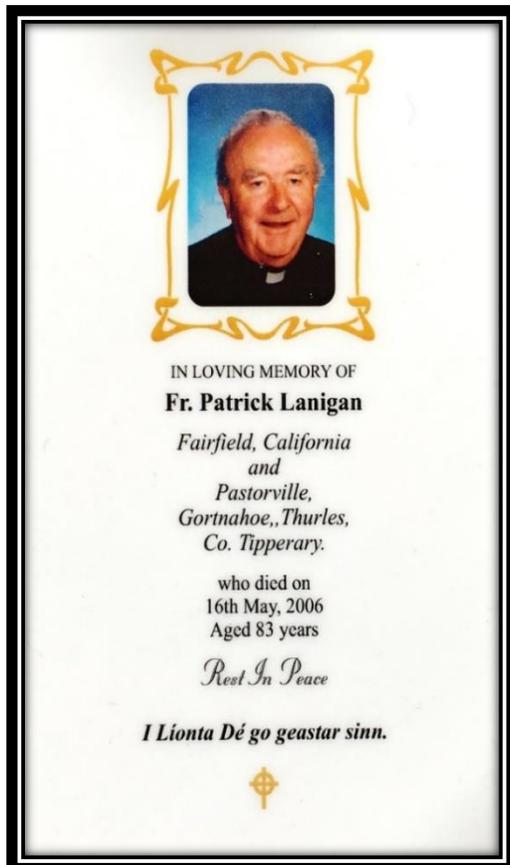
## FATHER LANIGAN'S JOURNEY

On the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his ordination in 2001, Father Lanigan stated in *The Herald* that although many demands were placed on him as a priest and he encountered "some bumps along the road," on the whole, "these were good years, they were happy years. My good priest friends were a tremendous encouragement to me," he said. "I am grateful to them and to the good people of God. The faith of parishioners was a great inspiration to me."

## OVERCOME BY ILLNESS IN IRELAND

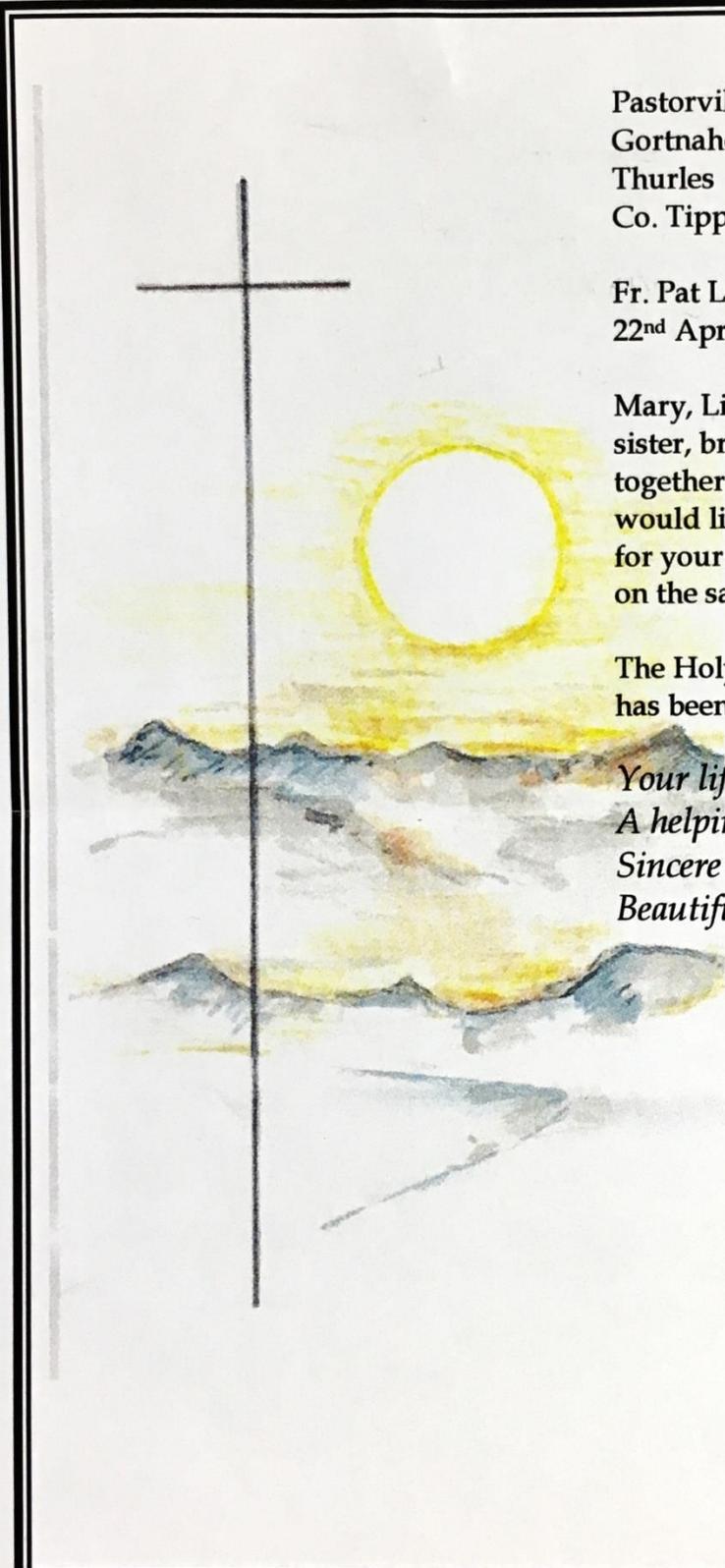
In early 2006, when Father Lanigan's brother died in Ireland, he flew to Ireland to celebrate his brother's funeral. While there, Father Pat was diagnosed with cancer. He underwent surgery but during his recuperation he died on May 16, 2006 in his native Thurles, County Tipperary, at the age of 83. A Funeral Mass was celebrated for him in Ireland and he was buried in County Tipperary, the land of his birth.

## FUNERAL MASS FOR FATHER LANIGAN



Father Michael Downey, who succeeded Father Lanigan as pastor of Holy Spirit Parish, celebrated the Memorial Mass for him at Holy Spirit Church on May 22, 2006 together with Auxiliary Bishop Richard J Garcia, Bishop Emeritus Francis A Quinn, many priests of the diocese and the parish community of Holy Spirit Parish.

In his homily, Father Downey recalled memories of his friend of many years. He had served as associate pastor under Father Lanigan from 1983 to 1989 and the two remained close friends while Father Lanigan lived in Fairfield during his retirement. "This was a man who had a lot of energy and a great passion for the church," Father Downey said. "He adapted well to the changes that took place in the church during his priesthood. He loved people, regardless of who they were or where they came from. That really helped him to be an effective pastor."



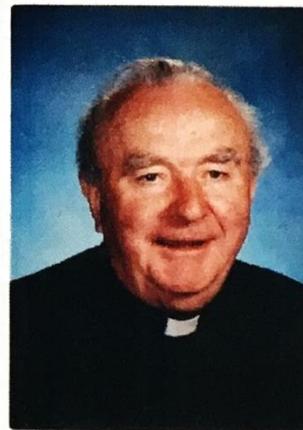
Pastorville  
Gortnahoe  
Thurles  
Co. Tipperary

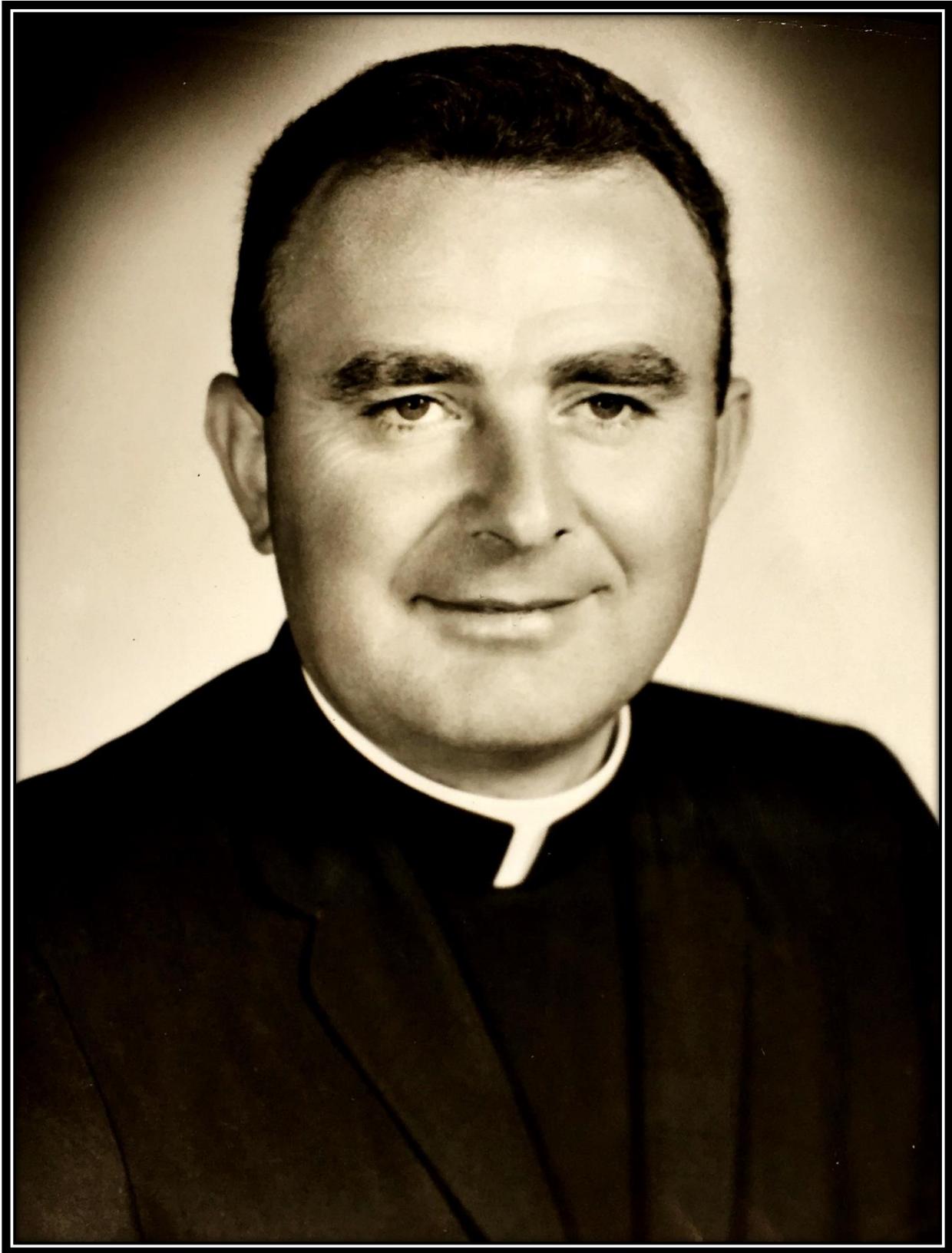
Fr. Pat Lanigan R.I.P.  
22<sup>nd</sup> April 1923 - 16<sup>th</sup> May 2006

Mary, Liam and Anna,  
sister, brother and sister-in-law  
together with his nieces & nephews  
would like to thank you most sincerely  
for your kind expression of sympathy  
on the sad loss of Fr. Pat.

The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass  
has been offered for your intentions.

*Your life was one of kindly deeds,  
A helping hand for others' needs,  
Sincere and true in heart and mind,  
Beautiful memories left behind.*





*Father Patrick Joseph Lanigan*