

PROSPECTS FOR A PARISH IN CALISTOGA TOOK AN UNEXPECTED CHANGE FOR THE BETTER IN 1914 WHEN **FATHER MICHAEL O'SHEA** CAME TO CALISTOGA IN HOPES THAT THE CLIMATE WOULD HELP HIM RECOVER FROM TUBERCULOSIS.

THE LOCAL CATHOLICS SOON PREVAILED UPON HIM TO OFFER MASS FOR THEM AND TO SERVE AS THEIR PRIEST. SOON A PETITION WAS MADE TO THE ARCHBISHOP OF SAN FRANCISCO TO ESTABLISH SAINT ALOYSIUS AS A PARISH WITH **FATHER O'SHEA** AS PASTOR.

**ARCHBISHOP RIORDAN** DIED IN THE MEANTIME BUT THE AUXILIARY BISHOP, SOON TO BE **ARCHBISHOP, EDWARD J. HANNA** , GRANTED THEIR REQUEST AND IN JANUARY 1915, THE PARISH OF CALISTOGA CAME INTO BEING. FATHER O'SHEA, IN SPITE OF HIS ILLNESS, WAS TO SERVE THE PARISH FOR NEARLY FIVE YEARS UNTIL HIS DEATH IN ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL, SAN FRANCISCO ON DECEMBER 19, 1919.

WHEN **FATHER O'SHEA** BECAME PASTOR, THERE WAS NO RECTORY AND FOR THE FIRST YEAR HE LIVED IN THE CALISTOGA HOTEL ON LINCOLN AVENUE WHERE THE HOWARD BUILDING IS NOW LOCATED.



HE DID NOT WANT TO BUILD A PRIEST'S HOUSE ON THE PROPERTY BEHIND THE CHURCH. IN A LETTER TO THE ARCHBISHOP HE WROTE, " THE PRESENT PROPERTY IS IN THE DAMPEST AND MOST UNHEALTHY PART OF TOWN IN WINTER." HE FURTHER DESCRIBED THE NAPA RIVER BEHIND THE CHURCH AS A " MOSQUITO-LADEN CREEK." A WOMEN'S COMMITTEE FROM THE PARISH BEGGED **FATHER O'SHEA** NOT TO BUILD A HOUSE BEHIND THE CHURCH.



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CONSEQUENTLY, **FATHER O'SHEA** ASKED THE ARCHBISHOP TO PERMIT THE PARISH TO BUY THREE LOTS ON RAILROAD AVENUE ( NOW FAIR WAY ) FOR \$1000 FOR A FUTURE CHURCH AND RECTORY, POINTING OUT THAT IT WAS IN A BETTER PART OF TOWN, AN AREA WHERE FUTURE GROWTH WAS MORE LIKELY.

NOTHING EVER CAME OF THE REQUEST, PROBABLY FOR FINANCIAL REASONS, AND THE PRIEST'S HOUSE WAS BUILT IN 1916 BEHIND THE CHURCH AND WAS TO SERVE AS SUCH FOR THE NEXT 25 YEARS. AN INTERESTING EXAMPLE OF THE FINANCIAL CONDITION OF THE NEW PARISH CAN BE DEDUCED FROM A LETTER FROM **ARCHBISHOP HANNA** IN 1915 TO **FATHER O'SHEA** PROMISING TO SEND THE PARISH \$25 A MONTH TO SUPPORT THE PRIEST UNTIL THE PARISH WOULD BE ABLE TO DO IT.