



Most Rev. Patrick Barry

Born: November 15, 1868, County Clare, Ireland

Educated: Mungret College, Limerick; Royal University of Ireland; and St. Patrick College, Carlow

Ordained: June 9, 1895

Named Bishop of St. Augustine: February 22, 1922

Episcopal Ordination: May 3, 1922, St. Augustine

Died: August 13, 1940, Jacksonville



The man who became the diocese's fifth bishop had much in common with his predecessor, Michael J. Curley. They both grew up in large Irish Catholic families (Barry was one of 18 children), and trained in the same seminary where they were recruited by Bishop John Moore for the mission field of Florida. But Patrick J. Barry's path was quite different.

Barry arrived in Florida in 1895 and was assigned as assistant pastor of Immaculate Conception Parish, under Father William Kenny, who would soon be named bishop.

Barry was sent to minister to the growing mission in Mayport. He traveled there by bicycle and slept on a cot in the wooden chapel. He would hear confessions in the morning, celebrate Mass, and teach the catechism in the afternoon. He made a good impression by paying off the mission's debts, a practice for which he would become known.

Barry also volunteered in 1898 as a chaplain with Gen. Fitzhugh Lee's army corps in the Spanish-American War.

In 1903, Bishop Kenny sent him to Palatka to minister to the growing congregation of St. Monica Mission. He opened a Catholic school, which was popular in the rural area with Catholics and Protestants.

In 1913, his old seminary classmate, Bishop Michael Curley asked him to start a new parish in South Jacksonville. The Church of the Assumption of Our Lady began with

“Our religious tradition is a priceless heritage. It is ours to hand unimpaired to future generations.”

Bishop Patrick J. Barry, shortly before his death

140 families, and within three years, the new building was paid off, and a fund started for a school.

In 1917, Bishop Curley named his old friend rector of his cathedral in St. Augustine, as well as vicar general.

When Barry was named bishop in 1922, the state was experiencing a land boom. People were arriving by the thousands, lured by cheap real estate and the promise of getting rich. They encountered difficult terrain, heat, humidity, mosquitoes, and in 1926, a hurricane. The storm that swept the southern part of the diocese, from Miami to Fort Lauderdale, killed almost 400 people and left southern Florida in ruins. Bishop Barry organized a statewide fundraising campaign to help with the relief effort.

Bishop Barry's financial prowess was put to the test by the Great Depression, which brought the nation's economy to a



The siblings of Bishop Barry pose with a portrait of their late brother in 1954 at Barry College in Miami. From left, Father Joseph Barry of County Clare, Ireland; Mother Mary Gerald Barry, mother general of the Adrian Dominicans (1933-1961); Father William Barry, founding pastor of St. Patrick Parish, Miami Beach; and Father Joseph Barry, brother of Sisters Marie Joseph and Kathleen Marie.

standstill in 1929. Bishop Barry had borrowed heavily before the stock market crash that October, but he was able to bring the diocese out of its financial crisis.

One way he found was to promote the church's heritage in St. Augustine by establishing an annual pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of La Leche at Mission Nombre de Dios.

He also joined forces with two of his siblings – Mother Mary Gerald Barry, prioress general of the Adrian Dominicans, and Msgr. William Barry, pastor St. Patrick Parish in Miami Beach – to establish a Catholic women's college, Barry College in Miami Shores in 1940.

Bishop Barry died of a heart attack before it opened.