

## Timeline of the Archdiocese of Seattle

Below is a timeline of events throughout the history of the Archdiocese of Seattle, from 1774 - 2005.

**1774** The first Catholic priests in the Pacific Northwest were Franciscans who were part of the Perez expedition to the Northwest.

**1775** Two Franciscan priests sailed with the Heceta-Bodega y Cuadra expedition. Rev. Benito Sierra came ashore to erect a cross with members of the crew of the Santiago.

**1793** Rev. Magin Catala, O.F.M., arrived as the resident priest for the Spanish post at Nootka Sound on Vancouver Island.

**1821** The first recorded petition for priests for Oregon Country was made by an unknown English woman from the lower Columbia Valley to the Bishop of St. Louis, Missouri. The letter reached him in 1822.

**1831** Four Native Americans from the Rocky Mountain region appeared in St. Louis looking for Catholic missionaries to return with them.

**1836** The first Catholic Church in Oregon Country was located in the Willamette Valley. It was a log structure built by Catholic Canadians anticipating the arrival of priests.

**1838** The Hudson's Bay Company granted permission for the passage of two priests to Oregon. Rev. Francis Norbert Blanchet left Montreal and arrived at Fort Walla Walla with Rev. Modeste Demers in October, and in November arrived at Fort Vancouver.

**1839** Rev. Demers preached at a mission at Ft. Nesqually that was attended by members of 22 tribes. Thirteen baptisms were recorded.

During Holy Week, Rev. F. N. Blanchet presented the Catholic Ladder at the Cowlitz mission.

**1842** The Revs. Blanchet, Demers, and Peter DeSmet, S.J., met to discuss the organization of Oregon into a diocese. Father DeSmet was sent to Europe for supplies and priests.

**1844** Rev. DeSmet arrived from Europe on the ship *Infatigable* with supplies, 4 Jesuits, 1 brother, and 6 Notre Dame Sisters. They landed first in Astoria and five days later at Ft. Vancouver.

**1846** St. James Catholic Church was built a short distance from Ft. Vancouver.

Pope Gregory XVI erected the Vicariate in Oregon into an ecclesiastical province with the 3 Sees of Oregon City, Walla Walla, and Vancouver Island. Rev. F.N. Blanchet was named Bishop of Oregon City, Rev. M. Demers was named Bishop of Vancouver Island, and Rev. A.M.A. Blanchet (brother of Francis) was named as Bishop of Walla Walla.

Rev. J.B.A. Brouillet was named Vicar General for the Diocese of Walla Walla.

**1847** Bishop A.M.A. Blanchet arrived at Ft. Walla Walla from Montreal. He was accompanied by 2 Oblates and a seminarian.

The Whitman Massacre and the beginning of the Cayuse Indian uprisings closed many missions in the interior of what is now Washington State.

**1848** The Act that established Oregon as a Territory contained a proviso confirming that religious groups with established missions on 640 acres were entitled to that acreage. St. James Mission in Vancouver was therefore entitled to 640 acres. This was challenged by the government, and the St. James Mission Claim was tried in the courts beginning in 1859. The claim was finally settled in 1905.

**1850** The Diocese of Nesqually was established. The administration of Walla Walla (as well as Colville and Ft. Hall) was transferred to the Bishop of Oregon City.

Bishop A.M.A. Blanchet took up residence at Vancouver.

**1852** Bishop Demers of Vancouver Island held the first Catholic Mass in Seattle's history in Yesler's cook house in the area now known as Pioneer Square.

**1855** Rev. Louis Rossi erected a small chapel for white settlers and soldiers at Ft. Steilacoom.

**1856** Mother Joseph and several Sisters of Providence arrived at Vancouver from Montreal and opened an asylum for the poor and a school, Providence Academy.

**1857** The first mission on the Tulalip Indian Reservation was established by Rev. Eugene Casimir Chirouse, O.M.I.

**1858** The Sisters of Providence opened the first hospital in the Pacific Northwest at Ft. Vancouver. The first patient was a woman with consumption.

**1860** The Oblates of Mary Immaculate opened a mission at Priests' Point. Rev. E. C. Chirouse, O.M.I., was appointed a provisional reservation agent.

- 1861** Rev. Chirouse was appointed the official government teacher for the school at the Tulalip Reservation.
- 1867** Rev. Francis X. Prefontaine founded Our Lady of Good Help, the first Catholic Church in Seattle.
- 1868** Sisters of Providence began teaching at a female Indian School at Tulalip. This was the first government contract school in the United States.
- 1877** Sisters of Providence arrived in Seattle and took possession of the King County Poor Farm on the Duwamish River.
- 1878** Rev. John Baptiste Boulet arrived at Tulalip to replace Father Chirouse. Father Boulet brought a printing press with him, on which he printed many items in Snohomish and English.
- 1879** Rev. Aegidius Junger was ordained second Bishop of Nesqually.
- 1880** The Sisters of Holy Names opened Holy Names Academy in Seattle.
- 1883** The Sisters of Providence built a new Providence Hospital on 5th and Madison.
- 1887** The Sisters of Providence established St. Peter Hospital in Olympia. The first patient had a leg fracture.
- 1888** A mission school for Indians, St. George's Indian Industrial School, Milton, was established by Rev. Peter Hylebos and staffed by the Sisters of St. Francis.
- 1893** The first record of the work of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Washington State, was made at Immaculate Conception Parish in Seattle.
- 1895** The St. James Mission Claim of Vancouver, WA, was argued before the Supreme Court. The Court found in favor of the government and awarded the land to the military reservation of Ft. Vancouver.
- The Benedictine Fathers opened St. Martin's College near Olympia.
- 1896** Rev. Edward J. O'Dea was ordained third Bishop of the Diocese of Nesqually.
- 1898** Seattle College (Seattle University) received its charter from Washington State.
- 1902** The first Council of the Knights of Columbus in Washington was organized.

**1903** Mother Frances Xavier Cabrini and members of her Order, the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, arrived in Seattle. They founded a home for orphans on Beacon Hill.

**1905** A bill granting the diocese \$2,500 for the cost of its buildings on the St. James Mission claim was narrowly passed by Congress.

**1906** Good Tidings, a monthly periodical printed by Father Boulet, was published. Two important items serialized in Good Tidings were F.N. Blanchet's Historical Sketches and J.B.A. Brouillet's Authentic Account of the Murder of Dr. Whitman.

**1907** The See and name of the Diocese of Nesqually were officially transferred to Seattle.

St. James Cathedral, Seattle, was dedicated.

**1909** Briscoe Memorial School for Boys, located in the Kent Valley, opened. It was staffed by Christian Brothers and the Sisters of St. Dominic.

The first "chapel car" from the Catholic Church Extension Society arrived in the Pacific Northwest.

The Society of the Sacred Heart established Forest Ridge Academy for girls in Seattle.

**1913** St. Martin's College in Lacey was dedicated.

Mother Cabrini visited Seattle a second time and purchased the property on which Sacred Heart Orphanage (now Villa Academy) would be built.

The Diocese of Spokane was established.

**1915** Mother Cabrini returned a third time to Seattle and founded a home for infants. She purchased the Perry Hotel on First Hill, which was later named Columbus Hospital, and finally St. Frances Xavier Cabrini Hospital.

**1920** Maryknoll Sisters established a Japanese mission in Seattle. The center was located on Spruce Street.

**1921** St. Martin's College in Lacey began an experimental reforestation program. Two thousand white pines were planted on college land.

**1924** Initiative 49, an anti-private school bill sponsored by the Ku Klux Klan in Washington State, was defeated by nearly 59,000 votes. The Klan had been more successful in Oregon; in 1922, the Oregon School Bill had passed into law. This anti-private school bill was declared unconstitutional by the US Supreme Court in 1924 (*Society of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary of Oregon vs. Gov. Walter Pierce, et al.*)

**1925** One of the miraculous cures accredited to Mother Cabrini occurred in Seattle at Sacred Heart Orphanage. Sister Delfina Grazioli recovered from an incurable disease after Mother Cabrini appeared to her and told her she would be healed.

**1926** St. Vincent de Paul Salvage Bureau was organized in Seattle.

Our Lady Queen of Martyrs was established as a parish for Japanese and Filipino people.

The Diocesan Council of Catholic Women undertook the care of the Newman House for the Catholic Students of the University of Washington.

**1927** Manresa Hall, the Tertianship for Jesuits in the California Province, opened in Port Townsend.

**1931** St. Edward's Seminary dedicated.

**1933** Rev. Gerald Shaughnessy was appointed Bishop of Seattle.

**1934** The first Serra Club was founded in Seattle by four businessmen. Its purpose was to promote vocations to the priesthood.

Seattle College High School officially became Seattle Preparatory School.

**1937** The Catholic Truth Society began to use St. Paul's Trailer Chapel, a Motor Mission.

**1942** The first evening Mass in the Northwest was offered for the soldiers at Ft. Lewis.

**1948** Most Rev. Thomas A. Connolly was appointed Coadjutor Bishop of Seattle.

**1950** The Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) was established in the Diocese of Seattle.

The Centennial of the Diocese was celebrated.

Most Rev. Thomas A. Connolly succeeded as Bishop of the Diocese of Seattle.

**1951** The Diocese of Yakima was established.

Seattle was elevated to an Archdiocese and Bishop Connolly to an Archbishop.

**1955** Blanchet High School, Seattle, dedicated.

**1956** A Rosary Crusade was held at the University of Washington stadium.

The Redemptorist's Retreat House for men opened in Federal Way.

Rev. Thomas Gill was ordained Auxiliary Bishop for the Archdiocese of Seattle.

The Hungarian Refugee Resettlement Office was created. Two hundred seventy-five refugees were brought to the Northwest under diocesan sponsorship.

**1957** The Visitation Retreat House for Women opened at Dash Point.

**1957** Seattle University opened a Sister Formation program on its campus.

**1958** St. Thomas the Apostle Seminary at Kenmore opened.

**1959** The first official director of the archdiocesan Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD) program was appointed.

**1960** Providence Hospital of Seattle received a grant to establish a heart center.

KOMO-TV began production of Challenge, a religious public service program.

**1962** The Archdiocese of Seattle sponsored the 47th Liturgical Conference, covering many issues that would be discussed at Vatican II.

**1964** The Josephinum, a residence for retired men and women, opened in downtown Seattle.

The Catholic Interracial Council was established.

**1968** John F. Kennedy High School in Burien dedicated.

The first Spanish-language Mass was celebrated at Immaculate Conception Parish, Seattle.

**1969** An Ecumenical Officer was appointed for the Archdiocese, responding to some of the issues of Vatican II and local needs.

- 1971** Forest Ridge Convent School moved from Capitol Hill, Seattle, to a newly constructed facility in Bellevue.
- 1975** The Most Rev. Raymond G. Hunthausen was installed as Archbishop of Seattle.  
The Most Rev. Thomas A. Connolly retired.
- 1976** Nicholas Walsh appointed auxiliary bishop.
- 1983** Bishop Nicholas Walsh resigned.
- 1985** Donald W. Wuerl was appointed auxiliary bishop as part of an apostolic visitation investigating administrative and pastoral practices.
- 1987** The Most Rev. Thomas J. Murphy was appointed coadjutor archbishop of the Archdiocese.
- 1988** Rev. Donald W. Wuerl was installed as Bishop of the Diocese of Pittsburgh.
- 1991** The Most Rev. Raymond G. Hunthausen retired, succeeded by the Most Rev. Thomas J. Murphy.
- 1997** The Most Rev. Alexander J. Brunett was installed as Archbishop of Seattle.
- 2000** Rev. George L. Thomas ordained auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese.
- 2004** Rev. George L. Thomas appointed Bishop of the Diocese of Helena.
- 2005** Auxiliary Bishop Eusebio Elizondo and Auxiliary Bishop Joseph Tyson ordained for the Archdiocese of Seattle.

*Sources:*

- *Schoenberg, Wilfred, S.J., A Chronicle of the Catholic History of the Pacific Northwest 1743-1960, Gonzaga Preparatory School, 1962*
- *Schoenberg, Wilfred, S.J., A History of the Catholic Church in the Pacific Northwest 1743-1983, Pastoral Press, 1987*