

# CENTENNIAL GAZETTE

St. James Cathedral, Seattle

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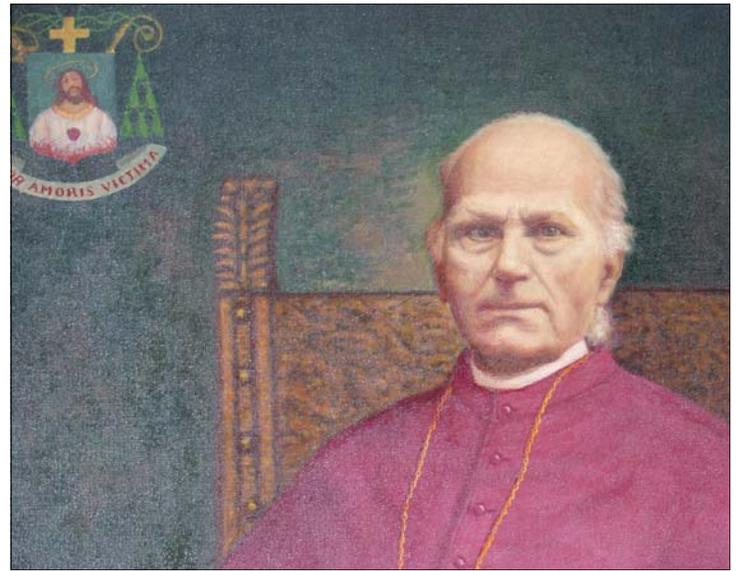
## BISHOP BLANCHET BLAZES A TRAIL

*During the coming Centennial year, watch your bulletin for this special newsletter, which will take you through the colorful history of St. James Cathedral, from the streets of pioneer Seattle to the present day.*

More than a year before the Denny party arrived at Alki Point, the newly appointed Bishop of Nesqually, A. M. A. Blanchet, took up residence in Vancouver, Washington, which was to be the seat of his diocese. The prospect was grim. Fort Vancouver was no longer the center of frontier activity it had once been. Times had changed and the California Gold Rush of 1849 had lured many settlers away; of those who remained, few were Catholic. The Cathedral was a wood-frame structure, which had been built in 1846 by James Douglas of the Hudson's Bay Company (and named in honor of his patron). It was simply furnished, and could accommodate about 500 persons. The Bishop's "palace" was even more humble: it measured 50 feet by 30 feet, possessed two doors, a fireplace, some windows, and very little else.

Nothing daunted by these difficulties, Bishop Blanchet made himself at home in Vancouver, and on January 23, 1851, the Blessed Sacrament was reserved in St. James Cathedral for the first time. "The Blessed Sacrament is placed in the tabernacle," he wrote in his diary on that day. "The church, dedicated to St. James is then, at this moment truly, the House of God, and the Gate of Heaven. We can say now, The Lord has sanctified this house which was built to establish His name here, and His eyes and His heart will always be here."— *Corinna Laughlin*

*In our next issue: Mother Joseph to the Rescue.*



## MY CATHEDRAL

Arriving here in 1955, the first Catholic church I spotted was this Cathedral. The black and gold window out front impressed me with its local touches of lumberjacks, miners, fishermen, Mt. Rainier, and with Christ blessing it all. After attending the Easter Vigil of 1957 at St. James, I decided to try becoming a priest. Entering St. Edward Seminary, a prominent feature out front was a white marble statue of Mary and her Infant. It is now here in our Archbishop Murphy Courtyard. So I like to look at it and realize: here marks where I began the journey to priesthood, and where I hope to be able to end it.

— *Father David A. Brant*

*You're part of Cathedral history, too! Do you have a favorite Cathedral story to share? Submit it online at [www.stjames-cathedral.org/centennial](http://www.stjames-cathedral.org/centennial) or e-mail [mLaughlin@stjames-cathedral.org](mailto:mLaughlin@stjames-cathedral.org). You may find your story in a forthcoming issue of the Gazette!*

## CATHEDRAL CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION SOON TO BEGIN

St. James Cathedral Parish was founded on November 13, 1904; the cornerstone of the Cathedral building was laid on November 12, 1905; and the Cathedral was finally dedicated on December 22, 1907. This coming year, 2007, marks the culmination of our centennial celebration as we mark the 100th anniversary of this house of God, this gate of heaven.

During the coming Centennial year, we will open wide the doors of the Cathedral to the entire Archdiocese of Seattle and to the broader community, inviting pilgrims from throughout the region to celebrate the beauty and the rich history of this great place. For every Catholic in Western Washington, St. James Cathedral is a spiritual home. And for 100 years now, St. James has been a gathering place for the entire city, Catholic and non-Catholic alike.

With special events, tours and visits, and a civic and Archdiocesan celebration on the feast of our patron James, July 25, 2007, we will have many opportunities to give thanks for this house of prayer and to pray that it will continue to serve as a beacon of hope in our community.

[www.stjames-cathedral.org/centennial](http://www.stjames-cathedral.org/centennial)