

# CENTENNIAL GAZETTE

St. James Cathedral, Seattle

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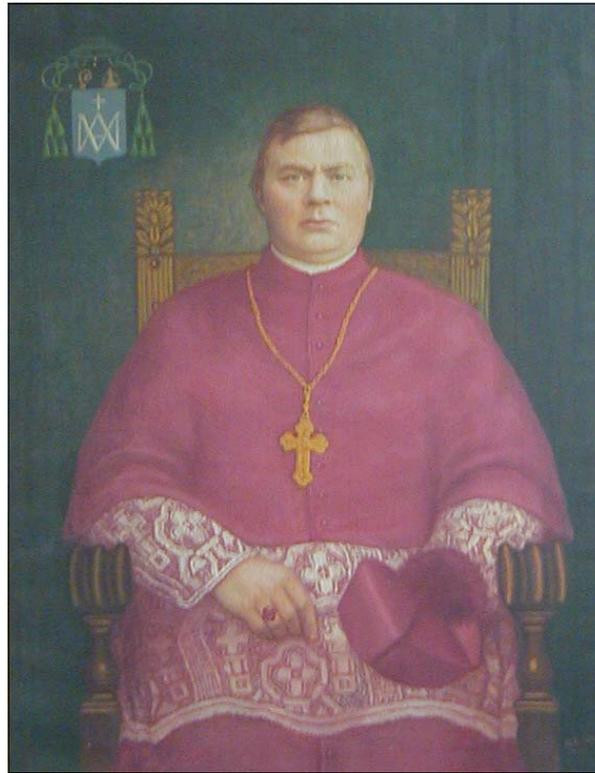
## BISHOP JUNGER AND THE RACE TO THE FINISH

Bishop Blanchet retired in 1879, to be succeeded by a very different man: Aegidius Junger, who has been described as “mild-mannered, almost diffident,” with the rotund appearance of a “jolly baker” (Schoenberg). Bishop Junger loved being among his people, especially the children.

Vancouver had outgrown the original St. James Cathedral, and in 1884 Bishop Junger commenced work on a new building. At the same time, just across the Columbia River, construction was beginning on a new cathedral for Portland. Soon both cities were engaged in a race to see which cathedral would be finished first. Father Fierens, pastor of Portland’s cathedral, entered into the race with gusto, “in the spirit of competition as for the glory of God” (Schoenberg).

Portland won: the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception was dedicated on August 15, 1885. But work had progressed sufficiently in Vancouver for the first Mass to be offered in the new St. James Cathedral the following day, August 16. The new Cathedral was dedicated on a rainy All Saints Day the same year.

But changes were on their way for both cathedrals. Portland’s new cathedral was built at Third



*Bishop Aegidius Junger, the second Bishop of Nesqually, built a new Saint James Cathedral in downtown Vancouver, Washington. The striking Gothic tower—completed in 1885—is visible from I-5.*

and Stark, in the middle of the noisy business district. It was replaced in 1925, and the old building no longer stands. Bishop Junger’s new church was destined to serve as a cathedral for an even shorter time—less than twenty years. The handsome brick building still stands in downtown Vancouver; but even as it was taking shape, miners were discovering gold in far-off Alaska—a discovery that would have a major impact on the future of St. James Cathedral.

—Corinna Laughlin

*This is the fourth in the series. Read the whole series online at [www.stjames-cathedral.org](http://www.stjames-cathedral.org)*

## MY CATHEDRAL

Share your favorite story of Saint James Cathedral during our Centennial Year. Don’t know where to start? Here are some questions to get you thinking!

- Do you remember the first time you visited St. James? What was the occasion? What details stuck in your mind from that visit?
- Has the Cathedral been part of great moments in your life? A baptism? Wedding? Or some other important moment?
- Do you have a favorite place to pray or a favorite work of art in the Cathedral?

E-mail your story to Maria Laughlin, [mlaughter@stjames-cathedral.org](mailto:mlaughter@stjames-cathedral.org) or call 206-382-4284. Your story may appear in a future issue of the *Centennial Gazette*!