

the log church under the patronage of Saint Paul the Apostle. The Mass was attended by the Canadian Catholics, many of whom had taken Indian wives, and their families. Fr. Blanchet recorded 24 marriages and 74 baptisms. He concluded the mission on February 4.

During Holy Week beginning on March 17, 1839, Father Blanchet devised the Catholic Ladder at the Cowlitz mission (near Toledo, Washington) while teaching the Indians from various tribes. He devised a square stick with 40 marks representing the 40 centuries before Christ, 33 points followed by a cross representing Our Lord's life, 18 marks and 39 points representing the years that followed, giving Father Blanchet the opportunity to explain the history of salvation. Later, this information was transferred to a pictorial chart.

Father Blanchet returned to St. Paul in May along with Father Demers. Fr. Demers had to return to Fort Vancouver because of a bad cold. Fr. Blanchet again conducted a thirty-day mission, this time using the Catholic Ladder very effectively since many neophytes could not understand French that well. It was exposed on Sundays and used to give instruction to the congregation. During his visit, Fr. Blanchet blessed the ground for a cemetery at St. Paul. This became the first Catholic cemetery in the Pacific Northwest.

In October 1839, Governor James Douglas informed Father Blanchet that the Hudson's Bay Company had removed its restrictions on the establishment of a permanent Catholic mission south of the Columbia. Father Blanchet took up permanent residence at St. Paul on October 12, 1839, thus making St. Paul the first Catholic parish in the State of Oregon. Dr. John McLoughlin had a lot to do with the Hudson's Bay Company's change of heart in London. He visited St. Paul shortly after Fr. Blanchet's arrival.

The second meeting for the establishment of a Provisional Government for Oregon was held on June 1, 1841, at the Saint Paul Meeting Hall. Father Francis N. Blanchet was chairman of the committee charged with drawing up a code of laws for the Provisional Government.

On June 8, 1842, Fathers Francis Norbert Blanchet, Modeste Demers and Pierre DeSmet SJ met at Fort Vancouver to discuss the work of the missions, the establishment of an ecclesiastical organization in the Oregon Country and the sending of Fr. DeSmet to Europe for reinforcements and supplies.

St. Joseph's College was established at St. Paul, opening on October 17, 1843, the first Catholic boys' school in the Pacific Northwest. Thirty boys registered for the opening day. It closed in June 1849, then served briefly as a hospital during a typhoid epidemic before falling into decay. Father Langlois was placed in charge.

Pope Gregory XVI established the Oregon Country as a vicariate apostolic (church mission territory with a bishop when there is no established hierarchical structure) on December 1, 1843, naming Father Blanchet as vicar apostolic. News of this did not reach Oregon until November 4, 1844.

On August 17, 1844, Fr. DeSmet arrived at St. Paul accompanied by Fr. Blanchet, several St. Paul parishioners and the "reinforcements" from Europe: four Jesuit priests, some lay brothers and six Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, the first Sisters to serve in the Oregon Country. Fr. DeSmet established the first Jesuit mission in Oregon which he dedicated to St. Francis Xavier as a motherhouse and novitiate. It was located not far from St. Paul on a bluff overlooking St. Ignatius Lake (now Connor's Lake).

The Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur opened the first academy for girls in Oregon on September 9, 1844, although construction of the new building was not completed until October. It was called "Sainte Marie de Wallamette."

Fr. Louis Verduyze SJ established a church at St. Louis on the Grand Prairie for Catholic Canadians living there in October, 1844. The log church was built