

Cheyenne: diocese of cheyenne (Cheyennensis) <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/03651a.htm>

Wyoming <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/15724b.htm>

The Diocese of Cheyenne and the State of Wyoming

The Diocese of Cheyenne is coterminous with the State of Wyoming. The official bull of Leo XIII that erected the diocese of Cheyenne, defined the limits of the diocese “ad orientem Status Dakota et Nebraska, ad occidentem Status Utah et Idaho, ad meridiem Status Colorado et Utah, ad septentrionalem Status Montana.” In area, the diocese covers close to a hundred thousand square miles, about the size of the United Kingdom of England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. Of course, if one were to measure land by surface, a state with at least seven major mountain ranges, flattened out, would be very much larger. In contrast to size, the population of a hard, cold, windy, dry land, has struggled for more than a century to be numbered at almost half a million souls. The official census of 1990 gave as the population of the state of Wyoming ***; the *Official Catholic Directory of 1997* gave ***as the number of Catholics in the diocese.

The diocese and state cover lands astonishing, boring, big, remote, largely untouched and unknown, even now, and sparsely populated, where seven, or ten great mountain ranges leap like rams, their peaks forcing the incessant west wind to shower down the rivers that clap their hands, rushing down gorges and through timber and meadows to the dry, weary sage brush plains, without water, that surround them like the vast ocean out of which they once rose anew, an empty and cleansed Atlantis.

Remote, it seems to me, best describes the area of the diocese of Cheyenne, remote from the world, towns within remote from each other. The experience of such a remoteness may expand the heights, and deeps, length, and breadth of feeling in the inner self and evoke tranquillity in the heart of a soul when one views alone a landscape in Wyoming. And remote, indeed, were those statesmen who made a history for Wyoming and ended by created a uniquely square state. The straight line boundaries of Wyoming attests to the circumstances of its creation in history by statesmen deliberating in palaces and drawing rooms many thousands of miles away, across the Ocean and over five centuries, who had never seen nor intended to see the country, but whose task it was to make the unexplored far western territories into definable states of manageable size. In the end, it appears that Wyoming was founded because the surrounding territories were too big, or perhaps that the peculiar nature of the top of the triple watershed might warrant a separate territory of its own. Though these straight line boundaries lack the wonderful precision that centuries of experience in the Old World produced such nicely drawn ecological-political units, still the boundaries of Wyoming make sense because they enclose that part of the Sierra Madre where the range spreads out and provides both the only watered pass through the Rockies and the remotest headwaters of three great rivers of the West, the Missouri, the Colorado, and the Columbia. One might observe that in the end, the straight line boundary is not too obtrusive, except perhaps where it goes right through the middle of the Black Hills.

Even the name, “Wyoming,” came from a place as remote as Pennsylvania, from a language that had nothing to do with any language spoken here. It is said that the word referred to a country

that produces water, and meant, “Old little waters,” a fitting name for a state that the historian Bancroft suggested should have been named, “Fontana.”

The Territory of Wyoming, organized 1868 by the U.S. Congress, with its capital in Cheyenne immediately became famous in the world because the first territorial legislature in 1869 established legal equality for women, giving women the right to vote and hold office in Wyoming. This right was embodied in the state constitution upon the admission of Wyoming to the Union in 1890. Hence, the title “Equality State.” It has always seemed to me providential that almost the last political state to be established as a new state in the world would be the first to give women legal equality. A second event that became famous was the establishment of the first national park in 1872, Yellowstone National Park. Yellowstone was followed by the establishment of Grand Teton National Park in ***.

The region of Wyoming was so remote that although it was included in ecclesiastical and royal legislation from 1493, no known European ever got to it until the eighteenth century. After the call of “Manifest Destiny” which started the great westward migration along the Oregon Trail to the Pacific country, Wyoming was a place to get through as quick as you could. For the Oregon Trail emigrants during the years 1840 to 1867, the key to a safe trip through the Rockies was to get over South Pass before the snow came; all knew the story of the Donner party which got over too late. Normally travelers should spend less than four weeks traversing Wyoming, leaving little “besides ruts, names-and dates on trailside cliffs, a few place names and some graves.” Some fifty thousand people who crossed Wyoming in search of new homes and opportunities in Oregon, California and Utah were not tempted to establish homes here. The wind alone kept them going or kept them out, for as the poem goes, “in Wyoming, when it blows, it blows, and blows, and blows.”

Diocese of Cheyenne and State of Wyoming 3

Explorers and *Voyageurs*
Fur Trappers and Traders
Mountain Men and Hunters

Two official approaches to the limits of the known world of the time almost reached Wyoming around the turn of the nineteenth century. The first was the little known exploration of Fray *** de Escalante, sent in 1776 by the viceroy of New Spain to find an overland route between Santa Fe and Monterey in California. The other was the more celebrated Lewis and Clark expedition, sent by President Thomas Jefferson of the United States in *** to find an overland route to the Pacific Ocean.

Fray Pedro*** de Escalante, O. F. M., went north from Santa Fe in 1776, “discovered” the Green river, which he named Rio San Buenaventura because they discovered it on St. Bonaventure’s feastday, July 14, 1777. Escalante came closest to Wyoming in 1777 when he turned west, discouraged from proceeding further up the Green river by the lateness of the season and the

frightening sheerness of the escarpment and narrow gates of Lodore. Besides inquiring among the Indian nations encountered if there were any who wished to be baptized, Escalante was looking for a land route to California. Only in 1699 had the Jesuit Father Kino proved that California was not an island, as had been thought, by discovering the outlet of the Colorado River. Fray de Escalante, turned back from Lodore, proceeded to Lake Utah (Timpanogos), followed the fresh-water river, which the Mormons call the Jordan river, to the dead sea of the Great Salt Lake. Escalante contemplated the desert, and concluded that a land route to California was impossible because of desert and canyons. So they returned to Santa Fe, spending about a month crossing the Grand Canyon, and California continued to be ruled by sea. Escalante's was the last attempt of the three century old effort of the Spanish viceroys to expand towards the north, for after 1789 revolution and war engulfed the world and toppled the old regime forever.

The Meriwether Lewis and William Clark expedition, 1804-1806, went up the Missouri river to its source, then crossed to the Snake which they followed down to the Columbia, thence down to the Ocean. President Jefferson was happy to add this exploration to the claims arguing for annexation of the Oregon country to the United States. Lewis and Clark just missed the northwest corner of Wyoming on their trip. But one of the Lewis and Clark expedition, John Colter, did come back and got into some real or legendary trouble around 1807 when he discovered "Colter's Hell" in the Yellowstone Park district. Although the name "Colter's Hell" has been applied to the whole park and sometimes attributed to the thermodynamics of the place, Father Michael Shine suggested that it was a very particular place, a kind of a tar spring near the mouth [sic, did he mean source?] of the Stinking Water river. The great showman and founder of Cody, Wyoming, later renamed the "Stinking Water" river, the "Shoshoni" river," so as not to scare off tourists because of the name.

The sons of Pierre Gauthier Varennes, Sieur de la Vérendrye, were the first Europeans certainly known to have entered the present state of Wyoming. On their expedition to the Rocky Mountains from Fort La Reine (Portage la Prairie, Manitoba) in 1742-1743, the *voyageurs* were at the foot of the Big Horn mountains and near the Tongue river in January, 1743. Perhaps other wandering Europeans came and went in this mountain country before the nineteenth century, but any did, they left no trace or never returned to tell a tale.

Furs brought adventurers into Wyoming. The American Fur Company, founded by John Jacob Astor to compete with Hudson's Bay Company in the newly claimed region of Oregon, sent to found a post near the mouth of the Columbia river, in 1811-1812, Hunt's "Astoria Party" of sixty men, of whom forty were French Canadians. They passed through Wyoming to get to Astoria. The Hudson's Bay Company is perhaps the oldest joint stock company in existence, having been founded in 1688, and still in operation. American competition appeared in the formation of the Missouri Fur Company, the Rocky Mountain Fur Company, and the American Fur Company, who sent innumerable expeditions and trading caravans to Fort Laramie and to the Green River Rendezvous. Since the fur bearing animals were unfit to trap from the middle of June to the middle of September the trappers went to the Rendezvous for trade and supplies and fun. As long as the fashion for beaver hats and fur coats reigned supreme in Europe the trade flourished. After 1823, when the Rendezvous system became established, among the famous trappers and traders in Wyoming were Thomas Fitzpatrick (from 1823 to 1852) and Stephen Provost, a Frenchman,

along with Jacques LaRamie, Glen Ashley, Jim Bridger, the Sublette brothers, Andrew Drips, Henry Vanderburgh, Lucien Fontanelle, Robert Campbell, and a host of other noted characters who have left their names on the map here and there.

The era of the fashionable hunting trip to Wyoming began in 1833, when Captain Sir William Drummond Stewart, a baronet from Perthshire, Scotland, accompanied by Dr. Benjamin Harrison (also later President?***), son of the American General William Henry Harrison (***) later elected President in 1840, “Tippicanoe and Tyler too!” and then died in 1841 after a month in office) were on a hunting trip in Wyoming. The visit by railroad*** of President Chester Alan Arthur to Yellowstone National Park in *** further encouraged the rich of the East and of Europe to make the grand western tour. Later in the century Buffalo Bill Cody was able to arrange hunting parties in the grand style for a number of notables, including Prince Albert*** of Monaco (***) and the young Grand Duke Alexis Alexandrovich of Russia, son of Tsar Alexander II*** (***). Theodore Roosevelt was another avid visitor of Wyoming, although he later settled on the Little Missouri as his particular favorite.

Fort Laramie, its name derived from the name of the trader, Jacques LaRamie, was built as a trading post around 1834-1835. Fort Laramie was the first permanent white settlement in the present state, and later became a military post and an important station on the Oregon Trail. Migration along the Oregon Trail continued from ***1849 until the completion of the Union Pacific railroad in 1869. It is estimated that during these years *** people passed through Wyoming on their way to Oregon, Utah, or California. Notable passages were the early trip of Dr. and Eliza Whitman, ***, the unfortunate Donner party in 18****, the Mormons in ***1846-1847, and the raucous “Forty-niners,” the California gold hunters of 1849.

Explorers and *Voyageurs*, et al 3

“Blackrobe” Father DeSmet
La Messe de la Prairie
July 5, 1840

Father DeSmet wrote: “On Sunday, the 5th of July, I had the consolation of celebrating the holy sacrifice of the Mass *sub dio*. The altar was placed on an elevation, and surrounded with boughs and garlands of flowers; I addressed the congregation in French and in English, and spoke also by an interpreter to the Flathead and Snake [Shoshone] Indians. It was a spectacle truly moving for the heart of a missionary, to behold an assembly composed of so many different nations, who all assisted at our holy mysteries with great satisfaction. The Canadians sang hymns in French and Latin, and the Indians in their native tongue. It was truly a Catholic worship. . . . This place has been called since that time, by the French Canadians, *la prairie de la Messe*.”

How had this Mass come to be celebrated? Peter Jan DeSmet of the Society of Jesus was the first known Catholic priest to actually make it to Wyoming, and typically he was on his way somewhere else. In 1840 Father DeSmet was sent by Bishop Joseph Rosati of St. Louis and his provincial to the Flathead Indians around present day Missoula in answer to one of the repeated Indian requests for “blackrobes” to teach them the Catholic faith.

Indian missions passing through Wyoming to St. Louis began in 1831, when a delegation of four Nez Percè Indians, from the Flatheads, passed through on their way to St. Louis to ask for a “blackrobe” to come and instruct them. Two members of this delegation, Narcissus and Paul, died in St. Louis and were buried there by Fathers Saulnier and Roux; the other two, “Rabbit Skin Leggins” and “No Horns On His Head” embarked in May, 1832, on the steamboat “Yellowstone,” but died after reaching the mouth of the Yellowstone River. Again, in 1837, another ill-fated mission led by Ignace La Mouse, Sr., an Iroquois, and including three Flatheads and a Nez Percè were noted to have arrived at Fort Laramie on their way to St. Louis to ask for a “blackrobe.” All were shortly afterwards killed by Sioux at Ash Hollow, Nebraska. But, finally we read that in November, 1839, Peter Gaucher, an Iroquois, returned through Wyoming from St. Louis with the good news that a “blackrobe” would come the following spring. The Christian names of the Iroquois must mean that they were certainly acquainted with Jesuits in Canada, but how they came to the Flatheads is something to wonder at. Captain *** Bonneville, who spent considerable time wandering around Wyoming as the leader of an exploring and fur trading expedition on his own account in the years 1832-1833, left some remarks about the religious observances of the Nez Percè Indians who had been made acquainted with Catholic practices by the French traders and the Catholic Iroquois Indians who had drifted west from Canada and New York. Perhaps these Iroquois were lay evangelizers whose mission bore fruit.

In 1840 DeSmet departed from St. Louis for Westport (the future Kansas City) where he joined the party of the members of the American Fur Company who were preparing to depart on the annual caravan to the Green River Rendezvous in western Wyoming to trade with the Indians. Under the leadership of Captain Andrew Drips of St. Louis, the American Fur Company caravan began the journey over the Oregon Trail on April 30, 1840. Their first destination was Fort Laramie at the junction of the Laramie and North Platte rivers where the travelers rested and replenished their supplies. Continuing west, Father DeSmet left a famous description of Independence Rock as “the great register of the desert: the names of all the travelers who have passed by are there to be read, written in coarse characters; mine figures among them, as that of the first priest to reach this remote spot.” A hundred miles further west, up the North Platte and Sweetwater rivers is the easiest pass through the continental divide, approached “through a broad valley of gentle slopes, at an elevation of 7,500 feet, known to travelers as ‘South Pass’.” On the other side they reached the Green River valley and the site of the Rendezvous late in June. A delegation of the Flathead tribe came to the Rendezvous to welcome Father DeSmet and guide him to their land. The Jesuit took advantage of the festive occasion to offer the memorable first public Mass celebrated in Wyoming, of which DeSmet left the account quoted above and which is now commemorated annually with a Mass at the site. After the “Mass on the Prairie,” DeSmet continued with his guides on the further eight day journey to the land of the Flathead Indians in Montana. DeSmet stayed with the Flatheads, ministering to their spiritual needs until August, 1840, when he returned through the Yellowstone country and took a boat down the Missouri to St. Louis where he rejoined his Jesuit brothers on New Year's Eve, 1840.

DeSmet worked tirelessly to recruit priests and lay brothers who would be willing to go among the Flathead Indians and bring them the Gospel. He succeeded in enlisting two priests, Fathers Point and Mengarini, and three lay brothers for the proposed mission, of which DeSmet was named superior. Following the same route DeSmet had taken, they departed for Flathead country

on May 10, 1841, arriving September 24, 1841, and founded the Rocky Mountain Mission at St. Mary's near present Missoula. DeSmet went to St. Louis to report and to brief more Jesuits who were to go to the Flatheads. DeSmet returned north in 1843, with Jesuit Fathers P. Devos and Adrien Hoecken, who were followed in 1844 by Fathers Zerbinati and Joset and Brother Magri. The history of the Rocky Mountain Mission does not concern us beyond noting that as superior of the mission DeSmet expended his energies in efforts to place the mission on a sound basis and on another far ranging trip, DeSmet founded a mission in the Willamette valley of Oregon, then visited the Blackfoot confederacy near Fort Edmonton, Alberta, in 1844. In 1845 DeSmet was recalled to St. Louis. In 1847, Father DeSmet was at Fort Laramie on his way to St. Louis from Oregon and, in 1849, Father DeSmet was among the Sioux Indians in eastern Wyoming near the northern boundary of Nebraska where he baptized many Indian children. His last missionary journey, in 1870, was to establish a mission among the Sioux. During the next twenty years DeSmet traveled widely in the United States and Europe to recruit priests, religious brothers and sisters, and to collect funds for buildings and supplies for the missions. Father DeSmet was also called upon seven times in those twenty years to assist the commissioners of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the officers of the United States Army in their peace negotiations with the Indians in spite of the frustrations that attended such efforts. In spite of the fact that he never lived with the Indians for any length of time nor ever spoke their languages, he was always welcome in their midst, having gained a reputation of having an extraordinary rapport with the Indians; who trusted him. A measure of that trust may be seen in the fact that in 1864 he alone was allowed to enter the camp of Sitting Bull.

DeSmet and *La Messe de la Prairie*, July 5, 1840 3

**“Blackrobe” Father DeSmet
The Big Smoke at Horse Creek
September, 1851**

Officials of the Bureau of Indian Affairs requested DeSmet to support the government in initiating a peace policy in 1851. Specifically, D.D. Mitchell, Superintendent of Indian Affairs with headquarters in St. Louis, asked the Jesuit to use his good offices in negotiating with the Indians in a general council of representatives of the western tribes east of the Rocky Mountains. The council was to be assembled at Fort Laramie on September 1, 1851. After accepting that invitation, DeSmet left St. Louis by boat on June 7, 1851, moved up the Missouri river on his way to Fort Union, near the confluence of the Yellowstone and Missouri rivers in Dakota Territory. DeSmet arrived at Fort Union on July 14, 1851, met with the representatives of a number of tribes and proceeded overland to Fort Laramie. In an account of the journey in one of his letters, DeSmet wrote: “We numbered thirty-two persons; the greater part were Assiniboins, Minnestares and Crows, who were repairing to the great Indian Council to be held in the vicinity of Fort Laramie, and by the same route that we had chosen, which was scarcely less than 800 miles in length. . . . The four vehicles were in all probability the first that had ever crossed this unoccupied waste. There is not the slightest perceptible vestige of beaten track between Fort Union and the Red Buttes, which are on the route to Oregon and 161 miles west of Fort Laramie.” In the course of this journey DeSmet later recorded: “We arrived quite unexpectedly

on the borders of a lovely little lake about six miles long, and my traveling companions gave it my name.”

The party reached Fort Laramie in September, 1851, only to learn that the meeting of the Great Indian Council had to be assembled at Horse Creek near the Nebraska border because there was not enough grass around the fort for the horses of the ten thousand Indians who came to take part in the council. When DeSmet was not needed in the meetings he used every available occasion to evangelize the Indians, ministered to the “half-bloods,” and baptized a considerable number of the “little ones” among the Cheyennes, the Brules and the Osage Sioux. The message of the United States government to the Indians, of the “Great Father” to “his Red Children,” was given by Commissioner Mitchell: “Your condition is now changed from what it formerly was. . . . Now, since the settling of the districts West of you by the white man, your condition is changed, and you Great Father desires you will consider and prepare for the changes that await you.” Specifically, the Indians were to keep peace among themselves and with the whites and the bad whites were to be punished solely by the United States; the Indians were to select one among them as “Chief of the Whole Nation” through whom all government business was to be transacted with the “Great Father”; and annuities were promised to those Indian nations who entered into treaty with the United States. After he returned to St. Louis, DeSmet drew a map of the Indian country of the upper Missouri and Platte rivers which was used in the council and later sent to Washington, D.C.

DeSmet reflected the optimism of the Great Council when he wrote: “It will be the commencement of a new era for the Indians -- an era of peace. In future, peaceable citizens may cross the desert unmolested and the Indian will have little to dread from the bad white man, for justice will be rendered to him.” The dedicated friend of the Indians must have been saddened as the hope for peace generated by the agreements of 1851 was shattered by news of the series of wars and broken treaties that followed. DeSmet entered Wyoming territory from time to time after 1851, but left no further permanent trace of his presence there. Father DeSmet is remembered annually at the Mass at Daniel and memorialized by the enduring presence of the lake that bears his name.

DeSmet at Horse Creek, September, 1851 2

Succession of *de jure* Ecclesiastical Jurisdictions 1493-1851

Which ecclesiastical jurisdictions were set up that encompassed or touched the present diocese, if only in a vague *de jure* way. Which statesmen, ministers, diplomats, princes, emperors, priests, bishops, and popes concerned themselves to apply the normative legal principles of jurisdiction established in the Old World to this New World wilderness? Let us use our historical imagination and cast the eye of our minds back to the secular and ecclesiastical roots of our universal polity founded on Roman law and carried on by the traditions of the Holy Roman Empire and the Roman Church.

Seville became the patriarchal see for the Indies after 1503, the first seat of the ecclesiastical metropolitan of the country now included in the diocese of Cheyenne, or Wyoming. The establishment of Seville was the logical solution to the problem of how to organize the Church in the New World because it was decided that all communications with the new lands should pass through Seville, and its choice followed as a consequence the famous bull of donation, or demarcation, of 1493. At the time of the birth in European consciousness of the idea of a New World, Pope Alexander VI published the bull *Inter caetera* ["Among other things . . ."], dated 4 *** May 1493, in which the Spanish-born pope congratulated the Catholic Queen Isabella of Castile and Leon, and her husband King Ferdinand V of Aragon, upon receiving the startling news that Christopher Columbus had returned from the discovery of "remote and unknown mainlands and islands through the sea, where hitherto no one had sailed." Alexander praised the queen for her pious intention of bringing "the worship of our Redeemer and the profession of the Catholic faith" to their residents and inhabitants." Accordingly, the pope conceded to the queen a title to the lands in question on condition that she and her heirs fulfill their evangelizing role, and drew the first line of demarcation "from the Arctic pole, namely the north, to the Antarctic pole, namely the south." It was a line, later corrected by the Treaty of Tordesillas, 1494***, to distinguish between Castilian and Portuguese claims to newly discovered lands and islands. *** O'Boyle returned with Columbus on his return voyage to the New World in ***1494 as vicar apostolic.

Santo Domingo was the first actual diocese erected in the New World, in 1511, a part of the implementation of the provisions of the bull *Universalis ecclesiae* ["Of the Universal Church"] published by Julius II (28 July 1510) which conferred the *Patronato* on the kings of Castile and Leon. Patronage of the Church meant that only the Catholic kings had the right to say who would go to serve the Church in the Indies. An ecclesiastical state was set up parallel to the secular state, following the injunctions of the Theodosian Code (450) which laid down the rule that the offices of the Church must be established in an order corresponding to the hierarchy of secular offices in the cities of the empire. Therefore, in Mexico City, the viceroy and the metropolitan archbishop balanced each other; in other states, captains-general and governors shared power with bishops. Since the government of the state had already been conceded to Isabella as Proprietress of Castile, and to her heirs in perpetuity, in 1493, the concession of Julius II in 1510 of the government of the church in the Indies by right of patronage sealed the legal foundation for the dual regime that was set up in the kingdom of New Spain, and it lasted for three and one half centuries. When, in 1821 the royal Spanish regime collapsed in Mexico, the ecclesiastical regime was hamstrung because clerics born in Spain were exiled, or fled, and those who remained could not be replaced because Ferdinand VII would not give up his right as patron of the Church. By the time he died in 1835, there almost ceased to be bishops in Mexico.

Religious orders, especially the Franciscan and Dominican friars, were charged with the task of evangelizing America. So the regent, the Franciscan Cardinal Ximénes and the young king, Charles of Habsburg, desired. And so Leo X ruled that the friars were to be the ordinary evangelists permitted to go to America. Pope Adrian VI (I 522-1523), as Cardinal Adrian of Utrecht, a former regent of Spain after the death of Cardinal Ximénes and tutor of the teen-aged king-emperor Charles V, he did some important legislation regarding the orders of friars. Members of the aristocratic military orders, which still flourished at the end of the *Reconquista*,

had a place in the New World, principally by providing administrators for the governments erected there. About the status of the highest military order, Santiago de Compostela, one can see in the portraits hanging in the Castle of Chapultepec the faces of the sixty-two viceroys of New Spain (**1535-1821) with the red Gothic cross insignia of the order of Santiago adorning the jackets of most of the somber, black-velveted viceroys of the Habsburg era and, after 1700, decorating many of the bright waistcoats of the bewigged Bourbon viceroys of New Spain. Communities of monks were not allowed to go to Spanish America because the emperor preferred the active evangelizing ways of friars, and their poverty, and perhaps because the emperor sought to avoid the establishment in the New World of great and often sovereign estates that the monks had built up in the Old World, particularly in the Holy Roman Empire. Nevertheless, Benedictine monastic communities were founded in Brazil later in the century, even while King Philip II of Castile was also king of Portugal. The Society of Jesus, approved by Paul III in 1540, was only allowed into America in the 1570s, and for two centuries the Jesuits were among the most active and successful missionaries, educators, and state-builders in the Indies, equally at home as teachers, preachers, and confessors in the cities as they were brave and persistent missionaries on the pagan frontiers.

Mexico, formerly Tenochtitlán, fell to the army and allies of Cortés in 1519, was established as the capital of the kingdom of New Spain, and created the seat of a diocese in 1530 by Clement VII at the request of Charles V. Fray Juan de Zumárraga, O.F.M., the first bishop figured in the story of the appearances of Our Lady of Guadalupe at Tepeyac. Mexico was raised to a metropolitan see in 1546 by Paul III. The archdiocese of Mexico included all of the kingdom of New Spain and, in terms of future evangelization, extended beyond the north-west frontier of the kingdom (along the line: Vera Cruz-Mexico-Michoacán-Guadalajara) to include all of Chichimeca, a generic term for “barbarian country,” evidently to the Arctic Pole. Mexico remained the distant metropolitan see for all of Wyoming until the French claimed Louisiana in 1682, but continued for the western side of the continental divide until the Mexican cession of those lands to the United States in 1848. During these three centuries Mexico actively directed the evangelization of the northern peoples. But by the beginning of the eighteenth century missionary efforts had reached only as far as New Mexico (Villa de [Nuestra Señora] de Santa Fe founded by Franciscans in 1610, the only permanent capital founded in the seventeenth century by the Spanish) and Arizona. After 1699, San Xavier del Bac near Tucson was founded by Father Eusebio Kino, S.J. 1718 saw the establishment of Chihuahua and Texas by the Spanish, and by the French, New Orleans; no doubt the impetus for these enterprises was stimulated by the end of the fifteen year long War of the Spanish Succession (1700-1715). Baja (Lower) California and Arizona became a special field for Jesuit missions until the members of the Society were expelled by the Bourbon King Charles III in 1768. The expulsion of the Jesuits was ruinous for many missions, and many never recovered despite the energetic efforts of Dominicans and Franciscans to fill the places forcibly vacated by the blackrobes. At the same time, the last great missionary enterprise of the old regime was led by Fray Junipero Serra, O.F.M., and his companions and successors, extending from 1769 to 1823 the centuries-old mission system into Alta (Upper) California, our present state of California.

Michoacán, Guadalajara, and Durango were the seats of three successive dioceses detached from the metropolitan see of Mexico and established along the northern Chichimec frontier. All were

suffragan to metropolitan Mexico, which always directed the evangelical enterprise. Michoacán, the first of these suffragan dioceses, was created in 1536 in the highly civilized Indian kingdom of the Tarascans, who had been allies of the Spaniards against the Aztecs in the recent war. The see city was first located in the Tarascan capital, Tsintsuntzan, 1537-1540, then moved to Pátzcuaro, 1540-1580, and finally to Valladolid, since 1828 called Morelia, after the priest*** and revolutionary hero Morelos. Don Vasco de Quiroga, the first bishop of Michoacán, belonged to the Renaissance humanist circle of Adrian VI and Erasmus, he was a friend of St. Thomas More (author of *Utopia*) and of Charles V. Don Vasco became famous among the Tarascans and neighboring peoples for his gentle and wise rule in the evangelical spirit of the peace and justice of Christ. Preparation for evangelical work among the Indians was centered at Querétaro where native languages were taught to missionaries from Spain who would periodically depart for missions in Chichimeca. Compostela-Guadalajara (in modern Jalisco), created in 1548, was the second frontier diocese established even farther west and already the capital of a captain-general. Finally, the third see established close to the evangelical frontier in the northwest was Guadiana-Durango, erected in 1620, just as the first permanent English settlers, the Pilgrims, were arriving in New England. The bishops of Durango were famous for their support of missions over a vast and difficult land and only in 1730 did the Durango Bishop, Benito Crespo, appoint a vicar for Santa Fe, the secular priest Santiago Roybal.

Quebec, like Santa Fe, was established in 1610. It was the capital of the kingdom of New France and Cardinal Richelieu placed all the new French territories under the metropolitan archbishop of Rouen, in Normandy. In 1658 the vicariate apostolic of New France was established; the great noble, Francois de Montmorency Laval, was the first vicar apostolic, then first bishop of Quebec in 1674.>1493>20 Clement X, ignoring the protests of Louis XIV and his Gallican supporters, made the see of Quebec immediately subject to the Holy See and not subject to any French metropolitan. The territory of the diocese was to include all present and future possessions of France in the New World, which meant that the boundaries of this immense diocese extended from the Atlantic Ocean to the Rocky Mountains and even covered the Hudson Bay country. Then in 1682 the Cavalier de LaSalle sailed and rowed from Quebec up the St. Lawrence river and through the Great Lakes, then down the Mississippi to its mouth, and there claimed the entire area drained by the Mississippi for France, naming it "Louisiana" after St Louis IX, ancestor and patron saint of the reigning King Louis XIV. Thus, the diocese of Quebec was extended to include Louisiana, a jurisdiction terminated in 1763 by the Peace of Paris, which ended the French and Indian, or Seven Years War (1756-1763). France ceded Canada and Louisiana east of the Mississippi to the enemy, Great Britain; and Louis XV ceded Louisiana west of the Mississippi, with the city of New Orleans, to the ally, Spain, a disproportionate compensation for the Spanish loss of Florida to the British. In 1800, when Napoleon was Consul, the Second Treaty of San Ildefonso stipulated that Spain retrocede Louisiana back to France, receiving the promise that the province would never be ceded to any power except Spain. Nevertheless, in 1803 the Consulate sold Louisiana for cash (80,000,000 francs, ***\$20,000,000 silver dollars) to the United States.

New Orleans under the Spanish regime was placed first under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the diocese of Santiago de Cuba (founded 1522), then under that of Havana when it was erected in 1787. In 1793 the Diocese of Louisiana and the Floridas was created by Pius VI with its

cathedral in New Orleans. The city was thereafter destroyed by fire and entirely rebuilt in 1796; that is the “French Quarter” that can be seen today with its cathedral of St. Louis. The diocese of Louisiana and the Floridas stretched from the Atlantic to the Rockies, and from the Gulf of Mexico to Canada. The United States of America was recognized in 1783 and its subsequent aggressive expansion radically changed the situation in the once remote West. But the purchase of Louisiana west of the Mississippi in 1803 by the government of President Thomas Jefferson, and which included the eastern watershed of Wyoming, made no change in the ordinary ecclesiastical jurisdiction of New Orleans.

Baltimore is the senior see, both ordinary and metropolitan, in the United States and, from 1808 until the erection of the archdioceses of Oregon City in 1846 and St. Louis in 1847, was the metropolitan see for the whole United States. John Carroll was ***prefect apostolic, 1784-1789. Before that time, Maryland Catholics came under the jurisdiction of the prefect, ***or vicar, apostolic of London. Created a diocese by Pius VI in 1789, Baltimore was raised by Pius VII in 1808 to the rank of a metropolitan see that included the whole United States until 1846. John Carroll, himself a former Jesuit, and took care that after their suppression the property of the Society was preserved and put to good use for the Church. Maryland, named for St. Mary, had been founded in 1634 on the principle of toleration, particularly toleration for Catholics. John Carroll, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, strongly supported the principle of toleration for all religions; his position was maintain both in the Articles of Confederacy and as the First Amendment to the Constitution of 1789. Regarding the West, Archbishop Carroll was as solicitous as he could be and encouraged efforts to develop the Church by supporting priests and sisters to go there and to found institutions. It was the Seventh Provincial Council of Baltimore (1849) which petitioned Rome to establish new dioceses in view of the vast new areas recently annexed to the United States and open to settlement.>1493>new23b

St. Louis, founded 1764 at the confluence of the Missouri and the Mississippi, and created a diocese for the Missouri county in 1827, covered all of the former diocese of Louisiana north of the southern boundary of Arkansas. By 1827 St. Louis had become the major point of departure for the far West and center of the flourishing fur trade which was bringing an increasing number of Europeans into the headwaters of the great rivers to trap beavers. And it was the first bishop, Joseph Rosati, who sent Father DeSmet in 1840 on the first of many of the Jesuit's missions to the Indians. St. Louis became an archdiocese in 1847 which included in its metropolitan province most of Wyoming, then all of Wyoming when it the United States Congress created the Territory of Wyoming in 1868.

We might also mention that Monterey, in Nuevo Leon in Mexico, might be added to our list when we consider that because the territory claimed by the Texas Republic of 1835 touched a piece of modern Wyoming, and the diocese of Linares-Monterey, erected in 1777 for the eastern Sierra Madre and Texas, also somehow imperceptibly touched Wyoming. As the result of the Mexican War of 1846-1848 by the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo, 1849, Mexico ceded to the United States the great southwest, from Texas to California and from the 42nd parallel, the northern boundary of California, Nevada, Utah, and through southwestern Wyoming to the continental divide.

The apostolic vicariate of Oregon was established by Pope Gregory XVI, as early as 1843 in response to a request by the American bishops, and with the endorsement of Joseph Signay, Bishop of Quebec (***). The new vicariate included lands in Wyoming west of the Rocky Mountains and north of the 42nd parallel, a line fixed in the Florida convention of 1819; the Oregon territory had been jointly occupied by Great Britain and the United States since 1818.*** In the 1840s United States citizens, following the challenge of “Manifest Destiny,” were streaming westward in ever increasing numbers and agitation for the annexation of Oregon was expressed in the campaign slogan of the Democrats in 1844, “54⁴⁰ or fight!” But prudence and cool diplomacy, not war, set the boundary in 1846 between the United States and Canada at 49th, the line of the original grant of Queen Elizabeth of England to the London Company in ***; British Columbia was the northern half of that original “Oregon” condominium. Seeing this things, the Holy See immediately, in 1846, erected a metropolitan see at Oregon City with two suffragans at Vancouver Island and Walla Walla. Oregon City, by the very name an obvious choice for curial officials and the pope, proved to be less convenient than Portland on the Columbia, in which city the first archbishop, *** Blanchet, S.J. (***), a friend and sometime companion of Father DeSmet, fixed his residence in 1862. In 1928 Rome changed title of the see to Portland in Oregon.

The apostolic vicariate of the Indian Territory was established by Pope Pius IX on July 19, 1850, in response to another petition from the American bishops in 1849 which reflected the growing concern of the bishops for the spiritual and temporal welfare of the Indians who were being relocated in the area of the Great Plains. The apostolic vicariate of the Indian Territory covered the country between the Missouri River and the Rocky Mountains, an area which included the future states of Kansas, Oklahoma, Nebraska, Montana, the Dakotas west of the Missouri River, and Wyoming and Colorado to the crest of the Great Divide.

The vicariate apostolic of Nebraska, which included Wyoming, was established by the Holy See in 1857. This was done in response to the initiative of the first vicar apostolic, Miège, who had persuaded the bishops of the area meeting in the First Provincial Council of St. Louis in 1855 to petition the Holy See to divide the vicariate of the Indian Territory. In 1885 when the vicariate of Nebraska was erected into the diocese of Omaha, Wyoming was still included.

The diocese of Cheyenne was erected on August 2, 1887. Soon after the diocese of Omaha became a reality, the bishops of the province of St. Louis, after meeting with Archbishop Peter Kenrick on June 18, 1886, requested the Holy See to establish two new dioceses: one for the territory south of the Platte River in Nebraska, the other to include the entire territory of Wyoming. Roman authorities acted on the recommendation of the bishops of the province and established the dioceses of Lincoln and Cheyenne. The boundaries of the Territory of Wyoming defined the boundaries of the diocese of Cheyenne and thus Wyoming had its own diocese and its own bishop before Wyoming became a state in 1890. The diocese of Cheyenne remained in the metropolitan province of St. Louis, until Denver, erected a diocese in 1887, was raised to a metropolitan see in 1941 with Pueblo, Colorado, and Cheyenne, Wyoming, as suffragan sees.

So we see that in the period, 1493-1887, the area of modern Wyoming was included in *** metropolitan sees and *** ordinary dioceses. But Wyoming was too remote for any until quite

late. Seeing the picture of this succession of constitutions, really, may remind us of the universalist mind of the Church which represents one of the oldest unbroken tradition of government resting on law and divine decree.

Succession of Jurisdictions, 1493-1851 8