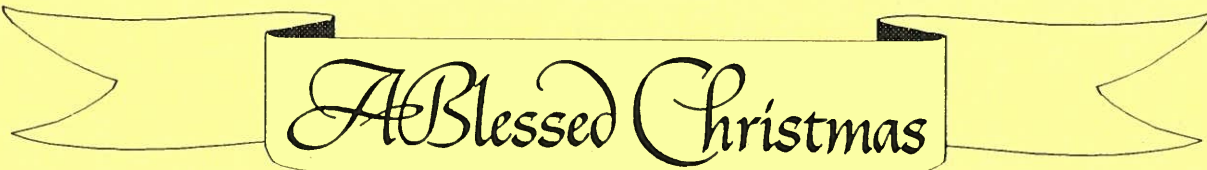

PAST FORWARD

The Newsletter of the Sisters of Providence Archives, Seattle

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A Blessed Christmas

What was Christmas like in the pioneer days of the state of Washington?

The Chronicles and ledgers of the Sisters of Providence trace early Christmas celebrations.

**Providence Academy,
Vancouver, Washington**

1893

On December 21, the pupils presented an evening of music and dramatic presentations. The proceeds were for the benefit of the orphans. While the entertainment surpassed all our hopes, we made only \$88 because of the financial crisis everywhere.

December 25, Christmas - It is always the most beautiful and solemn of feasts. A Christmas tree was placed in each of the children's departments. How our dear orphans rejoiced at the sight of the little gifts and candy treats they received! The winter was long but not very cold. Snow covered the ground during more than two months. Several of our pupils did not return after New Year's Day.

**Providence St. Amable
Olympia, Washington**

1898

Just before Christmas, the academy bazaar took place. The men with money were home from the logging camps and patronized the bazaar.

The Sisters' Christmas treats were simple and joyous. Sister Albert made favors for each Sister.

They were sleds made of cookie dough. They bore the message, "Let's take a sleigh ride to Montreal for a holiday."

**St. Elizabeth Hospital,
Yakima, Washington**

1898

At Christmas time an Episcopalian minister made us an offering of \$22.00 in the name of his congregation. This donation is made yearly.

**Our Lady of Seven Dolors
Tulalip, Washington**

1882

The month of December brought sickness. As many as 26 boys and girls were in bed with measles at one time. It was no small task to serve so many children in their beds. No one died of the illness.

A search through the expense ledgers of Our Lady of Seven Dolors mission from the years 1869 to 1887 doesn't shed too much light on the probable Christmas expenditures, but the prices, particularly for sugar and other commodities, are plain to see.

In December 1869, the Sisters purchased a keg (approximately 100 pounds) of sugar for \$7.75. Other purchases included two boxes of soap, \$2.25; snuff, 50 cents; cinnamon, \$1; and a bear skin, \$1.25.

In December 1871, the leading purchases were four tons of flour for \$260; and a barrel of molasses, \$10. According to a December 1874 entry, the

bottom dropped out of the molasses market, because in this transaction, the Sisters purchased three kegs of molasses, three times as much, for only \$12!

In December 1884, there were trousers all around for many of the student boys, judging from the

entry of \$15.75 for 13 1/2 dozen boys pants. Some received jackets: 9 jackets, \$7.65. There were also other entries for 299 pounds of beans, \$13.04; 2 1/2 barrels of pork, \$27; and 113 barrels of flour \$418.10. The final year's entry in the ledger, in December 1887, was for three dozen double iron bedsteads at \$360.



The following recipe for Pork Pie was brought to the West by Mother Joseph and the Sisters of Providence. It is a French Canadian tradition to serve this hearty entree pie, seasoned with allspice and cloves, every New Year's Day.

PORK PIE

1 pound ground pork	1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 pound ground veal	1/2 teaspoon allspice
1/2 cup water	1/4 teaspoon cloves
1 cup chopped onion	1/8 teaspoon pepper
1 pound potatoes	Pastry for 2 crust 9 inch pie

In medium sauce pan, combine pork, veal, water, and onion; mix well. Cook, uncovered, over very low heat for 2 hours. Peel and quarter potatoes. Cook in small amount of boiling salted water until tender; drain. Add potatoes to meat mixture, along with salt, allspice, cloves and pepper; mash with potato masher. Roll half of pastry to make an 11 inch circle; fit into bottom of a 9 inch pie plate. Add meat mixture. Roll other half dough to make an 11 inch circle. Adjust over meat mixture; crimp edges; make several gashes in top for steam vents. Bake in preheated 450 degree oven for 20 minutes or until pastry is golden brown. Serve hot. Note: Serve with chutney, ketchup or homemade tomato sauce.



STAFF CHANGES

FAREWELL...

In May, Margaret Gardiner, who joined the Archives staff as Assistant Archivist in October 1992, left to return to the East Coast. Margaret wrote, " The past year and a half have been exciting and productive. It has been a pleasure serving the research needs of the Sisters, Corporations, institutions, and the public."

WELCOME...

In November, Terri Mitchell, Coordinator of Religious Community Chronicles, joined the Archives staff in a part-time, temporary position. Terri is assisting with special projects. Currently, she is organizing the publications of each institution, preparing them for binding and creating inventories.

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