



## Episode 9: Cathedral of Our Lady of Guadalupe

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We know you've been waiting for this one- the Cathedral Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe! Join us for episode 9 as we stop downtown at the heart of our diocese!

Today, The Cathedral Shrine of the Virgin of Guadalupe, serves one of the largest cathedral congregations in the country, second only to St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York."<sup>1</sup> It is the "The Bishop's Church" meaning it contains the seat or "cathedra" of the Bishop, which symbolizes his authority as Shepherd of the Diocese of Dallas. Before the current cathedral, the first bishop of Dallas, Bishop Brennan, designated the Church of the Sacred Heart in Dallas to be the Pro-Cathedral, or temporary cathedral, as there wasn't one at the time of the diocese's founding.<sup>2</sup>

The first priest to be ordained in Dallas and by Bishop Brennan in the Pro-Cathedral was Irish immigrant, Father Jeffrey Harnett, the "martyr priest." "In February 1899, in the midst of a bitter coldspell and blizzard that left both the Trinity and the Brazos rivers frozen over, a call for a priest came from Parkland Hospital where...a dying smallpox patient had asked for a minister and, when none could be found, the cathedral was called... Father Hartnett walked to the hospital to minister to the patient and baptized him. In so doing, he contracted smallpox himself and died on March 7."<sup>3</sup>

A bit over a year after the passing of Father Harnett, the cornerstone was laid for a new Sacred Heart Cathedral which is the cathedral building we have now.<sup>4</sup> It was

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<sup>1</sup> [Prologue](#), 63

<sup>2</sup> [Prologue](#), 17

<sup>3</sup> [Prologue](#), 17

<sup>4</sup> [Prologue](#), 23

later finished and dedicated in 1902<sup>5</sup> and includes a stained glass window of Father Harnett's picture<sup>6</sup>. "Dedication of the cathedral was a grand event. A special feature was the splendor of more than 1,000 electric lights outlining the vault above the sanctuary. At a time when electricity was still relatively rare, the cathedral lights required so much power that the electric company requested they be notified before the lights were turned on. Newspaper coverage of the event speculated that the brilliantly lighted cathedral "might have been the 'most well lighted' church in America."<sup>7</sup>

As Dallas residents began moving to the suburbs, the Catholic population in the city began to dwindle and it was decided to close the nearby Mexican church of Our Lady of Guadalupe, merging its community with that at the Sacred Heart Cathedral in 1965.<sup>8</sup> It was also decided at that time to change the name of the Sacred Heart Cathedral to the Cathedral Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe.<sup>9</sup> The iconic finishing touches on the cathedral building, the bell tower and steeple, were added in 2005.<sup>10</sup>

The patronage of the Cathedral Shrine to Our Lady of Guadalupe is particularly meaningful to the Mexican Catholic community of Dallas, as "Our Lady of Guadalupe" is the title given to a miraculous apparition of Mary, the Mother of God, to St. Juan Diego in 1531 in an area outside of Mexico City.<sup>11</sup> At the time, the Aztec Indians (who worshipped pagan gods and practiced human sacrifice) and the Catholic Spaniards (who violently brutalized the Aztecs ) were on the brink of war. Thanks to the instruction and intercession of Our Lady of Guadalupe, the war did not happen and within 7 years, it is reported that 6,000,000 Aztecs converted to Christianity.<sup>12</sup> Our Lady of Guadalupe has been titled the Patroness of Mexico as well as all of the Americas, the Protectress of the Unborn, Star of the New Evangelization, and now, the Patroness of the Diocese of Dallas.

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<sup>5</sup> [Prologue](#), 24

<sup>6</sup> [Prologue](#), 18

<sup>7</sup> [Prologue](#), 24-25

<sup>8</sup> [St. Ann School Landmark Nomination](#), 18

<sup>9</sup> [Prologue to the Future](#), 51

<sup>10</sup> [Prologue to the Future](#), 58

<sup>11</sup><https://www.vaticannews.va/en/church/news/2018-12/our-lady-of-guadalupe-feast-day-mexico-america-s.html>

<sup>12</sup><https://www.archbalt.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/gTHE-STORY-OF-OUR-LADY-OF-GUADALUPE.pdf>