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Above is a map of the Diocese of Louisiana and the Floridas. It was part of the Louisiana Purchase in 1803 that doubled the size of the United States. The U.S. bought the Louisiana territory which was 828,000 square miles for approximately \$15 million. Two Canadian provinces also were part of the deal, as were current-day states of Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma and parts of Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, New Mexico, South Dakota, Colorado and Wyoming.

## LA. PURCHASE

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due in part to the arrival of new immigrants, particularly Santo Domingans, Irish, Germans and former residents of other states. The percentage of free persons of color remained relatively stable, while the number of slaves, Spanish and Canary Islanders decreased significantly.

The Louisiana Purchase facilitated the New Orleans Catholic community's return to its French roots. There had always been a strong undercurrent of French culture and allegiance during the Spanish period.

The French presence was strengthened when the American government welcomed a large influx of more than 10,000 former French-speaking Santo Domingans less than a decade after the Purchase.

The arrival of Bishop

DuBourg's French clerical and religious recruits in 1817 further enhanced the French presence, as did the first diocesan newspaper, "Le Propagateur Catholique."

The diocese was governed by French-born bishops from 1835 to 1888, while the cathedral itself had a series of French pastors until the Oblate Fathers arrived from Texas in 1919. The cathedral's baptismal registers, maintained in French until 1910, switched to Latin.

New Orleans remained outside the Irish-German mainstream and controversies of the American Church until the end of the 19th century when, as historian Roger Baudier often noted, "the Americanization of the Louisiana Church" began under Dutch-born Archbishop Francis Janssens (1888-97).

Dr. Charles Nolan is the former archivist of the Archdiocese of New Orleans.

# Congratulations

Archdiocese of New Orleans

Thank you for your Christian leadership that makes our community a great place to live.

The Archdiocese has flourished and withstood the challenges of living under three different flags to influence and nourish our civic culture of the last 300 years.



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