

History of the Catholic Church in New Zealand 1828 – 1850

- 1828 Thomas Poynton, the first Catholic settler, made his home at Totara Point, Hokianga, North Auckland. He asked Bishop Polding, Sydney, on several occasions for a priest for New Zealand. Bishop Polding made his request known in Rome.
- 1835 Pope Gregory XVI established the Vicariate of Western Oceania which included New Zealand.
- 1836 Right Rev. John Baptist Francis Pompallier consecrated Bishop of Maronee in Rome, June 30. With seven companions of the Marist Order he sailed for the Vicariate, December 24. The Society of the Propagation of the Faith, then newly established, provided funds for the Mission.
- 1838 Bishop Pompallier, Father Servant, S.M., and Brother Michael, landed at Hokianga, January 10. First Mass was celebrated in Mr Poynton's house, January 13. The missionaries studied the language and within six months were able to instruct the Maoris.
- 1839 Fathers Baty, S.M., Epalle, S.M., and Petit, S.M., also three Brothers arrived in June. In December arrived Fathers Chevroh S.M., Petitjean, S.M., Viard, S.M., and Comte, also Brother Attale. The headquarters of the Mission were moved to Bay of Islands (Kororareka).
- 1840 Bishop Pompallier was present at the meeting at Waitangi when the Treaty was read. He asked for and obtained from Captain Hobson, R.N., a statement of the principle of religious freedom given under British Rule.

From February to May, Bishop Pompallier accompanied by Father Viard, S.M., visited the tribes in the Tauranga District, Matamata and Waikato. In July, Fathers Pezant, S.M., and Tripe, also two Brothers arrived. From September, 1840, till March, 1841, Bishop Pompallier with Fathers Comte, Pezant, made a visitation of the East Coast of both Islands. First Mass in South Island was celebrated at Akaroa. The Bishop celebrated first Mass in Otago and at Port Nicholson (Wellington). Port Cooper (Lyttelton), Moeraki and Mahia Peninsula were also visited.

- 1841 In June there arrived Fathers Seon, S.M., Borjon, S.M., Garin, S.M., Rozet, S.M., and Rev. Roulleaux, S.M. (first priest ordained in N.Z., July), five Brothers and Mr Yvert, a lay helper. At end of July, the Sancta Maria, with the Bishop, five priests, several catechists, visiting chiefs and natives, sailed from the Bay of Islands. Auckland, Coromandel, Maketu, Opotiki, Matamata and Rotorua were all visited in turn.

A meeting of Catholics in Auckland, presided over by the Bishop, decided to build church and priest's residence on site granted by Governor Hobson. Father Seon left at Matamata, Father Borjon at Maketu, Father Rozet at Opotiki. At Mahia, Father

Baty was left to await the return of the ship in a month's time, but at Akaroa the Bishop received news of the martyrdom of Saint Peter Chanel (April 28, 1841), and the Sancta Maria sailed to the Islands and the priest was left for about six months. He travelled to Wairoa and inland to Waikaremoana, instructing and converting the Hawke's Bay natives.

- 1842 In May, Fathers Forest, S.M. , Reignier, S.M., Grange, s.m. and Lampila, s.m. arrived. (Ordained Purakau, Holianga on Christmas Day 1842). Father Borjon and Brother Deodat were drowned off East Cape, en route for Port Nicholson. Father Petitjean became first resident priest of Auckland and opened the first school in the capital. The missionaries suffered greatly through want of funds. Bishop Pompallier returned from Islands, August 26.
- 1843 Fathers Bernard, S.M., Moreau, S.M., and Chouvet, S.M., arrived in February. Father O'Reilly, the pioneer priest of Wellington, arrived as chaplain to Hon. Mr H. Petre.
- 1844 In February, the Bishop, after having paid several pastoral visits in the Far North, started out on a comprehensive tour of the whole country. He was accompanied by Fathers Lampila and Comte. The former he stationed at Whakatane, and the latter at Port Nicholson, to care for the natives especially. The Bishop also visited Kapiti Island and Nelson.
- 1845 Hone Heke's rebellion and sack of the town of Kororareka. The mission buildings were spared. (Bishop Pompallier's house still stands).
- 1846 Father Viard, S.M., was consecrated by Bishop Polding, in Sydney, January 6, and became Coadjutor Bishop to Dr Pompallier, who on April 16 set out for Rome in order to render an account of his ten years' stewardship.
- 1847 First Catholic school opened in Wellington. Sir George Grey's Educational Ordinance provided for a State-aided denominational system of education throughout the Colony. Bishop Colomb, S.M., consecrated at Kororareka.
- 1848 Auckland and Wellington were made separate Vicariates. Otago was settled chiefly by members of the Free Church of Scotland.