

CATHOLIC LIFE AND SCHOOLING IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND: A HISTORY

HAVE A LOOK BELOW FOR KEY DATES AND INFORMATION ABOUT OUR HISTORY.

1814

The formal arrival of Christianity into Aotearoa New Zealand began with the arrival of the first Protestant missionaries.

1828

Thomas and Mary Poynton, an early Irish Catholic couple arrived in Aotearoa New Zealand and settle at Totara Point in the Hokianga. They travelled to Sydney to ask the Church to send a Catholic priest to Aotearoa New Zealand.

1838

Bishop Jean-Baptiste Pompallier arrived from France accompanied by a Marist priest and brother. Arriving in the Hokianga, he went to the home of the Poynton's and celebrated the first Mass in Aotearoa New Zealand on 13 January 1838.

1840

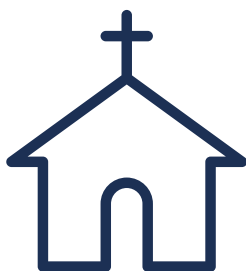
The Te Tiriti o Waitangi-Treaty of Waitangi was signed at Waitangi on February 6. Bishop Pompallier was at Waitangi for the signing. He gained a commitment from Lieutenant Governor Hobson to protect the religious freedom of Catholics, Protestants, and Māori. This addition is now referred to as the Fourth Article of the Treaty.

1841

St Mary's Auckland, the first Catholic school in Aotearoa New Zealand, opened.

1850

Bishop Pompallier invited religious congregations to establish schools throughout Aotearoa New Zealand. First to respond were the Sisters of Mercy, arriving in 1850. Other religious orders followed.



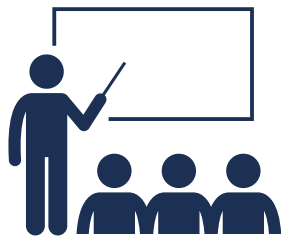
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1877

After the withdrawal of government assistance to Catholic schools in the 1877 Education Act, parishes and religious congregations under the authority of the bishop of the diocese set up a parallel system of education to the state. Religious congregations from Europe were invited to establish and staff the Catholic schools.

By the late 1950's the impact of the post-war baby boom, inflation and need to employ more lay teachers placed an ever-increasing pressure on the system. Government aid was needed urgently if the Catholic school system was to service.



By 1900 Catholic schools were staff almost entirely by members of religious congregations, who gave their lives to service, supported by their parish and the local community.

1950

1975

In 1975 the Private Schools Conditional Integration Act was passed by the New Zealand Parliament. This Act created a partnership between the State and the Church, integrating private schools into the state system of education, while preserving and safeguarding our special character.

By 1983 All Catholic schools were integrated, their running costs being met on the same basis as state schools.

1983

2025

We celebrate 50 years of state integrated schools. We have 68,000 students across 34,000 primary and 34,000 secondary schools.

2015

Catholic schools celebrated 40 years of state integrated schools.

