



St. George Chapel circa 1933

History of St. George's Parish

1842

Waimanalo had its first Catholic chapel as far back as 1842, making it one of the oldest parishes on Oahu's windward side. A priest, journeying from the mother church of [St. Ann](#) in Heeia (Kaneohe), visited the community with some regularity, instructing, baptizing and administering the sacraments.

1861

The chapel was replaced in 1861 and was blessed by Bishop Louis Maigret on April 21 of that year. Five years later, Brother Victor Bertrand was sent to make urgent repairs and completed his work on December 1, 1866. From that time on, Fr. Martial Jan, SS.CC. (Congregation of the Sacred Hearts), in charge of the Koolau district, journeyed to Waimanalo every month to celebrate Mass. The local Hawaiians had formed a choir and sang so well that Fr. Martial gave them the joy of singing each time he celebrated Mass in Waimanalo.

On December 12, 1870, a brand new bell, imported from France, was mounted in the tower of the chapel.

1878

In 1878, the [Waimanalo Sugar Company](#) was started with most of the labor imported from the Philippines and Portugal. With the arrival of these workers, the Catholic community grew.

1930

By the early 1930s, the chapel had become so weather-worn and termite-eaten that it had to be torn down. The Waimanalo Sugar Company offered a labor clubhouse where services could be held once a month.

Fr. Patrick Logan, SS.CC., who had been assigned to Waimanalo, asked if the plantation would be willing to relinquish a piece of land, situated opposite the public school, that the plantation leased from the Territory of Hawaii. The soil there was poor for sugar cane cultivation, and plantation manager George

Chalmers had no objections. The Territory was more than willing to exchange this property for a piece of Church-owned property in the Honolulu area.

At the blessing of the new church in 1933, Fr. Logan explained to the congregation -- which included Chalmers -- that the new church would be dedicated to St. George in appreciation of the plantation manager's help. St. George was attached as a mission to [St. Anthony of Padua](#) Parish in the neighboring town of Kailua.

1847

In 1947, the Waimanalo Sugar Company closed its doors. Many of the laborers stayed on in Waimanalo as farmers and worked the land that was formerly sugar cane fields.

1954

Bishop James J. Sweeney proclaimed the community of St. George an official parish in 1954 and appointed Fr. Eugene Morin, SS.CC., pastor. Fr. Morin erected a small rectory and was succeeded by Fr. Louis Boeynaems, SS.CC., in 1956. Fr. Boeynaems began to make plans for a new church for the growing community.

1959

The present church building was completed in 1959. Utilizing some of Hawaii's natural resources, the front façade of the church was constructed of black lava rock; the sanctuary wall was constructed of white limestone. Bishop Sweeney blessed the new church on December 6, 1959 and the old church building became the parish hall.

An **Edict of Toleration** was decreed by King [Kamehameha III](#) of [Hawaii](#) on June 17, 1839, which allowed for the establishment of the [Hawaii Catholic Church](#).¹³ The religious traditions of [ancient Hawaii](#) were preferred by Kings [Kamehameha](#) and [Kamehameha II](#), with the [Roman Catholic Church](#) being suppressed in the [Kingdom of Hawaii](#). Later, during the regency of [Kaahumanu](#) and the child king [Kamehameha III](#), the [Congregational church](#) was the preferred [Christian](#) denomination. Kamehameha III issued the edict under the threat of force by the [French government](#), as the French were seeking to protect the work of the [Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary](#). The [1840 Constitution](#) later enshrined religious liberty. Under the threat, King Kamehameha III paid the \$20,000 in compensation for the deportation of the priests and the incarceration and torture of converts.