



# Welcome to the Cathedral Basilica of Christ the King

We will have the finest church in Canada

**W**hen John T. McNally was appointed Bishop of Hamilton he recognized the need for a new Cathedral to serve the growing Diocese. Announcing the Cathedral project, he said, *“We want it beautiful, as well as useful. Blending use with beauty has great results, for a beautiful Cathedral is not only the Seat of the Bishop ruling, teaching, and dispensing of God’s spiritual gifts, but it is a great, silent, irresistible agency for the influencing of souls of people through the ministry of exalted art.”* In 1933 this exquisite Gothic structure was blessed and given the name “Christ the King” - the first Cathedral in the world with this name after Pope Pius XI instituted a feast by the same name in 1925.

## CATHEDRAL QUICK FACTS

Construction started in 1930 and completed in 1933 at a cost of \$1 million.

Seating capacity is approximately 900 persons

Height is 165 feet from the ground to the tip of the bell tower cross.

Carillon of 23 bells located in the bell tower—total weight 64,000 lbs.

## CONTACT

### **Parish Office**

714 King Street West  
Hamilton, Ontario L8P 1C7

T: (905) 522-5744

W: [www.christthekingcathedral.org](http://www.christthekingcathedral.org)

E: [basilica@hamiltondiocese.com](mailto:basilica@hamiltondiocese.com)

### **Sunday Mass**

Saturday at 5:00 p.m.

Sunday at 9:00 a.m.; 11:00 a.m.; and  
4:00 p.m.

## Some background

Welcome to the Cathedral Basilica of Christ the King. We are the “mother Church” of the Diocese of Hamilton which includes the Regions of Brant, Halton, Waterloo, Wellington, Hamilton and Bruce-Grey. As Canada’s second largest English Diocese our Cathedral, Diocesan headquarters and Bishop’s Residence are located here. The Cathedral Basilica is also a vibrant Parish community with an established history in the Hamilton community.

In 1930 construction began under the direction of the Most Reverend John T. McNally, Fifth Bishop of Hamilton. Fine materials, craftspeople and artisans from around the world contributed to the design and construction of this magnificent Church. The Cathedral was opened on December 19th, 1933 with the Very Reverend Joseph F. Ryan as its first Rector. In 1937 Bishop McNally was appointed the Archbishop of Halifax and Father Ryan was named the Sixth (and longest serving) Bishop of Hamilton.

“We will have the finest Church in Canada”, said Bishop John McNally, when he announced the construction of the new Cathedral in the early Thirties. Our Cathedral dominates the western entrance to the City of Hamilton. From its excellent location on King Street West, alongside Highway 403, the Cathedral serves as a beacon attracting parishioners, pilgrims and visitors from across the Diocese, Canada, the United States and the world.

One of Bishop McNally’s dreams for the Cathedral was fulfilled on February 25th, 2013 as Pope Benedict XVI raised the Cathedral to the status of a minor Basilica. Known

now as the “Cathedral Basilica of Christ the King” it continues to serve as the focal point of the spiritual and liturgical life of the Diocese of Hamilton.

The Cathedral Basilica measures 235 feet in length and 72 feet in width. The exterior of the Cathedral is stately, solid and serene. It is built of limestone quarried in Indiana, USofA and Georgetown, Ontario. After a devastating fire in 1981, the Cathedral was refurbished and solemnly dedicated by the Most Reverend Paul F. Reding, 7th Bishop of Hamilton, on the Solemnity of Christ the King, November 21st, 1982.



In addition to the celebrations of the liturgical year—Christmas, Lent, Easter—Sunday Masses and many of the major celebrations of the Diocese take place in the Cathedral Basilica. Each year the Mass of Chrism—during which the Oils to be used in the Sacraments are blessed and consecrated—is celebrated at the beginning of Holy Week. Ordinations to the Priesthood are also celebrated here.



### BISHOPS OF HAMILTON

Their years of service to the diocese

**Bishop John Farrell, DD**  
1856—1873

**Bishop Peter F. Crinnon, DD**  
1874-1882

**Bishop James J. Carberry, DD**  
1884—1887

**Bishop Thomas J. Dowling, DD**  
1889—1924

**Bishop John T. McNally, DD**  
1924-1937

**Bishop Joseph F. Ryan, DD**  
1937-1973

**Bishop Paul F. Reding, DD**  
1973-1983

**Bishop Anthony F. Tonnos, DD**  
1984—2010

**Bishop D. Douglas Crosby, DD**  
2010—

*The Diocese of Hamilton, established in 1856, is Canada’s 2nd largest English Diocese. It includes the regions of Bruce-Grey, Brant, Hamilton, Wellington, Waterloo and Halton.*

*There are 126 Parishes and several mission Churches in smaller communities in the Diocese.*



## A walking tour

### SANCTUARY

Upon entering the Cathedral Basilica one's eye is drawn immediately to the magnificent sanctuary with its marble floors and beautiful woodwork. In the Sanctuary one finds the *Altar* made of Carrara marble from Italy. On the West side you see the *Ambo* from which the Word of God is proclaimed during Mass. On the East side is the *Presider's Chair* ... when the presiding priest is not the Bishop. The Bishop's chair—or *cathedra*—is located in the centre of the Sanctuary. The *cathedra* is surrounded by the *presbyterium* or seating for the priests. Under the canopy or *ciborium* is the *Tabernacle*. A securely locked "house" for the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament. The windows in the apse represent the joyful, sorrowful, and glorious mysteries of the rosary.

The west side of the sanctuary is where one finds the *Baptismal Font*. It sits below a painting of Christ's triumphal arrival in Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. The east side of the Sanctuary houses the *Marian Shrine* with a mosaic of Our Lady of Perpetual Help. Above the mosaic is a painting of the newborn King being adored by the Magi with their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

### NAVE

The nave has seating for approximately 900 people. The 14 *Stations of the Cross*—depicting Christ's final steps to the crucifixion—are each carved from single blocks of Carrara marble. The windows along the nave depict different moments in the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, King of Kings. The 82 stained glass windows were manufactured by the Mayer Company of Munich, Germany. They are resplendent in their beauty. Dedication candles are placed on the four walls of the building in the Nave to indicate that the church has been solemnly dedicated for service to God and His holy people.

### NARTHEX

The narthex—or main entrance area—has a large statue of Christ the King carved by a local artisan from a single block of wood. The orb (globe) in the hand of the statue depicts Lake Ontario on whose shores the City of Hamilton rests. Near the "forward sacristy" are four statues of famous Bishops known in the history of the Church for their teaching and leadership. These statues were once located atop the former *cathedra*—prior to the 1981 fire—they have been installed in this location so that they can be more easily seen. The tower entrance provides access to the Choir gallery and auditorium known as "McNally Hall".

The blue carpet, installed as part of the renovations following the fire, has symbols of Canada's two founding nations—the French fleur de lys and the English quinfoil—as well as a crown for Christ the King. The carpet is blue in honour of Our Lady.

## Bishop Crosby

The current Bishop of Hamilton is the Most Reverend Bishop D. Douglas Crosby, OMI. Born in Marathon, Ontario in 1949, he was installed as Bishop of Hamilton on November 8th, 2010—having served as Bishop of Corner Brook & Labrador, Nfld.



## What is a Basilica?

This honorific title is given by the Pope in recognition of the ecclesial and historical significance of a Church building. On February 25th, 2013, Pope Benedict XVI designated the Cathedral of Christ the King a *minor basilica*. Symbols of this new connection with the Holy Father are the *ombrellino* or ceremonial umbrella, and the *tintinabulum* a processional bell. Both of these objects were once used in Papal processions many centuries ago and today are symbolic of a Basilica's connection with the Holy Father.

## Recent History

In February 1981 a damaging fire was lighted by an arsonist in the East side entrance of the Cathedral. The resulting fire and smoke damage necessitated major repairs to the interior of the Cathedral. The sanctuary was updated to provide a large and more fitting place for the celebration of the Sacred Liturgy—particularly when large numbers of priests and people are present. The interior was repainted and some woodwork and windows restored. On November 21st, 1982, Bishop Paul Francis Reding (7th Bishop of Hamilton) solemnly dedicated the newly renovated Cathedral.

Over the past several years the Cathedral's audio/visual abilities have been upgraded to provide a better experience for the assembly as it listens to the proclamation of the Word of God and our excellent Parish choirs. Television cameras and monitors allow those who are seated behind pillars the opportunity to see what is taking place in the Sanctuary.

## A Vision of Faith ...

**T**he year was 1930. North America was staggered by the Great Depression. Bishop McNally's announcement that he was to build an expensive Cathedral raised a storm of protest in the City, whose economic vertebrae was sagging badly. But the Bishop stood firm. And so, in the 75th year of the Diocese, work began on this impressive new Cathedral. Local architects *Hutton & Souter*, together with the *Piggott Construction Company*, set out to design and build a worthy temple to the King of Kings. Canadian and European craftsmen carefully fashioned the exquisite beauty of the place. Thirty months after construction began, the 23 bell carillon rang out and a few months later the newly installed 4000+ pipe organ poured forth its lyrical tune.

Although many questioned Bishop McNally's decision in 1930, the construction of the Cathedral provided many local jobs and opportunities for craftsmen at a time when such work was scarce. No can argue now that Bishop McNally's vision was anything but inspired as one enjoys the beauty of our Cathedral Basilica.



## Prayer for your visit to the Cathedral Basilica

*Lord, you fill this sacred place with your presence,  
and you extend your hand to all who call upon you.*

*As your word is proclaimed here,  
and your sacraments here celebrated  
strengthen the hearts of all the faithful.*

*Fill our hearts with your love,  
and strengthen our witness of faith within your Church.*

*Grant this through Our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God forever and ever.*

From the Rite of Dedication of a Church, adapted.



## CATHEDRAL BASILICA OF CHRIST THE KING

714 King Street West  
Hamilton, Ontario

T: (905) 522-5744

*Donations can be made using the visitor envelopes.*

*Income Tax receipts can be issued for donations ...*

*kindly include your complete mailing address.*

[www.christthekingcathedral.org](http://www.christthekingcathedral.org)