

Legislative
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4 CHARLES III, 2025

Bill Pr34

**An Act to incorporate the Roman Catholic Bishop of St. Catharines
as a corporation sole**

Mr. A. Dowie

Private Bill

1st Reading November 5, 2025

2nd Reading

3rd Reading

Royal Assent



EXPLANATORY NOTE

The purpose of the Bill is set out in the Preamble

An Act to incorporate the Roman Catholic Bishop of St. Catharines as a corporation sole

Preamble

The Most Reverend Gerard Paul Bergie, D.D. JCL, the Roman Catholic Bishop of the Diocese of St. Catharines, has applied for special legislation to incorporate as a corporation sole.

The special legislation seeks to vest in the corporation sole all real and personal property within the territorial boundaries described below that are currently vested in either the name of the Bishop of St. Catharines or that are in the names of corporations sole that previously operated in the territorial boundaries, being the Roman Catholic Episcopal Corporation for the Diocese of Toronto, in Canada; The Roman Catholic Episcopal Corporation for the Diocese of Hamilton, in Ontario and The Roman Catholic Episcopal Corporation for the Diocese of Kingston in Canada.

The applicant represents that the Diocese of St. Catharines was created canonically on November 9, 1958 as the Diocese of St. Catharines in Ontario and has operated since that time under the name The Roman Catholic Episcopal Corporation for the Diocese of St. Catharines, in Ontario.

The applicant further represents that the diocese has not previously been incorporated and was never a corporation sole.

It is appropriate to grant the application.

Therefore, His Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Ontario, enacts as follows:

Interpretation

1. In this Act,

“Bishop of St. Catharines” means the Most Reverend Gerard Paul Bergie, or a successor in office;

“Corporation” means the corporation incorporated under section 2;

“territorial boundaries” means those lands situate within the boundaries of the County of Welland and County of Lincoln as those boundaries existed on June 1, 2025, and which, on the day this Act came into force, were located in the Regional Municipality of Niagara and the County of Haldimand.

Incorporation

2 The Bishop of St. Catharines, the Most Reverend Gerard Paul Bergie, is incorporated as a corporation sole with perpetual succession under the name “The Roman Catholic Diocese of St. Catharines in Ontario”.

Vesting of property, Bishop of St. Catharines

3 (1) All lands, real estate, tenements and hereditaments and any other real or personal property situate within the territorial boundaries that, on the day before this Act came into force, was vested or standing in the name of the Bishop of St. Catharines is deemed to be vested in the Corporation and the Corporation may register an application on title to any such land to have title registered in its name.

Same

(2) All lands, real estate, tenements and hereditaments situate within the territorial boundaries that are granted, conveyed or devised to the Bishop of St. Catharines on or after the day this Act comes into force are deemed to be vested in the Corporation and the Corporation may register an application on title to any such land to have title registered in its name.

Trusts

(3) Property vested in the Corporation under subsection (1) or (2) shall be subject to any applicable trusts.

Vesting of property, boundaries of Diocese

4 (1) All lands, real estate, tenements and hereditaments and any other real or personal property situate within the territorial boundaries that, on the day before this Act came into force, was vested or standing in the name of the Roman Catholic Episcopal Corporation for the Diocese of Toronto, in Canada; The Roman Catholic Episcopal Corporation for the Diocese of Hamilton,

in Ontario and The Roman Catholic Episcopal Corporation for the Diocese of Kingston in Canada is deemed to be vested in the Corporation and the Corporation may register an application on title to any such land to have title registered in its name.

Same

(2) All lands, real estate, tenements and hereditaments situate in the territorial boundaries that are granted, conveyed or devised to the Roman Catholic Episcopal Corporation for the Diocese of Toronto, in Canada; The Roman Catholic Episcopal Corporation for the Diocese of Hamilton, in Ontario and The Roman Catholic Episcopal Corporation for the Diocese of Kingston in Canada on or after the day this Act comes into force are deemed to be vested in the Corporation and the Corporation may register an application on title to any such land to have title registered in its name.

Trusts

(3) Property vested in the Corporation under subsection (1) or (2) shall be subject to any applicable trusts.

Existing contracts, etc.

(4) No contract or engagement entered into or liability incurred by the Roman Catholic Episcopal Corporation for the Diocese of Toronto, in Canada; The Roman Catholic Episcopal Corporation for the Diocese of Hamilton, in Ontario or The Roman Catholic Episcopal Corporation for the Diocese of Kingston in Canada affecting real or personal property vested in the Corporation by subsection (1) or (2) shall be affected by such vesting and all such contracts, engagements and liabilities affecting the real or personal property shall devolve upon, be binding upon and be discharged by the Corporation.

Powers

5 (1) The Corporation may, notwithstanding any act or law respecting mortmain or charitable uses, subject to any trusts,

- (a) acquire and hold lands or parts of lands; and
- (b) sell, convey, lease, mortgage or otherwise deal with any lands or parts of lands that it holds.

Same

(2) The Corporation may,

- (a) borrow money in such amounts, on such terms and from such persons, firms and corporations, including chartered banks, as may be determined by the Corporation;
- (b) issue and sell or pledge bonds, debentures and obligations upon such terms and conditions as the Corporation may decide;
- (c) mortgage, charge and hypothecate its real and personal property;
- (d) pledge its general credit to secure such bonds, debentures and obligations; and
- (e) make, draw, endorse and negotiate promissory notes and bills of exchange.

Execution of documents

6 (1) The Bishop of St. Catharines is empowered to execute all conveyances, mortgages, bonds, debentures or other instruments in the name of the Corporation.

Same

(2) A declaration on the face of any conveyance, mortgage, bond, debenture or other instrument that it has been executed by the person and in the manner mentioned in subsection (1) is sufficient evidence that it has been executed by that person and in that manner.

Succession

7 Successors of the Most Reverend Gerard Paul Bergie shall be duly nominated and appointed according to the usages and rites of the Roman Catholic Church.

Vacancies

8 Upon a vacancy happening in the office of the Bishop of St. Catharines, or if the Bishop of St. Catharines becomes incapable of performing the duties of the office on account of sickness, infirmity or any other cause, the person who is appointed, according to the usages and rites of the Roman Catholic Church, to administer the affairs of the Corporation shall, during such vacancy or incapacity, have the same powers as are by this Act conferred upon the Bishop of St. Catharines.

Commencement

9 This Act comes into force on the day it receives Royal Assent.

Short title

10 The short title of this Act is *The Roman Catholic Diocese of St. Catharines in Ontario Act, 2025*.