



Installation Homily of the Most Reverend Joseph Dabrowski, CSMA, 10th Bishop of the Diocese of Hamilton Cathedral Basilica of Christ the King – February 2, 2026

Let us joyfully bear Christ to the world around us...

Dear Brothers and Sisters, Distinguished Guests, Civic Leaders, and Friends:

I greet you all warmly on this beautiful Feast Day of the Presentation of the Lord in the Temple of Jerusalem, and I welcome you to this magnificent Cathedral Basilica of Christ the King at the beginning of my episcopal ministry among you! What a great joy it is to be here together! I see that the winter weather did not discourage you, whether you are used to our snow, or friends who have travelled all the way from sunny Australia, the Dominican Republic, and other warm places. You are truly brave—and very welcome!

I warmly greet Your Eminence, Cardinal Frank Leo, and thank you sincerely for presiding at my installation and for your fraternal support along the way. As neighbours, I am grateful for his guidance, and I promise to be a good neighbour—one who borrows wisdom often, returns it with gratitude, and only knocks on the door at reasonable hours.

I greet Your Eminence, Cardinal Thomas Collins; and thank you for your presence and welcome home. I extend a warm welcome to my brother bishops and priests, permanent deacons with their wives, consecrated women and men, seminarians, and so many of you who have come from far and wide to be with me and give thanks to God for the privilege of being part of the Church in Hamilton in this wonderful cathedral basilica, the Mother Church of the diocese.

Your Grace, Archbishop Jurkovič, your presence among us today is a living sign of our unity with the Successor of Peter, our Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV. I ask you to extend to the Holy Father my deepest gratitude for the trust he has placed in me, and for the love and

deep respect we all have for him in this diocese. Thank you for your guidance and support throughout this appointment and always. Grazie di cuore!

Aux nombreux membres francophones du diocèse de Hamilton, je vous remercie pour votre accueil chaleureux et pour tout ce que vous faites pour bâtir et fortifier cette Église locale. Je compte sur vous pour votre soutien continu et votre amitié, et je vous demande de prier pour moi alors que je commence mon ministère parmi vous.

As I begin my ministry in Hamilton, I am deeply aware of the rich legacy of faith and service that has shaped this diocese, and the tremendous contribution of so many consecrated women and men of many religious congregations and communities—both contemplative and apostolic. Many of you are present today, and I thank you for who you are and what you do for the Church. I look forward to meeting you in the coming months.

Today in particular, I thank God for Bishop Douglas Crosby, O.M.I., the Apostolic Administrator and shepherd of this particular Church, whose 15 years of devoted and generous service have been a blessing to the Diocese of Hamilton and to the entire Church in Canada. Bishop Crosby, you have truly lived out your episcopal motto *Trahe Nos*—meaning “Draw Us”—every day. You modelled for us a collaborative ministry that has borne much fruit for Hamilton and for the entire Church in Canada. You have taught us all what accompaniment and synodality means. On behalf of this entire assembly, I thank you with all my heart for all you have done for the Church in Hamilton and the Universal Church over the years. Knowing that you will remain in the diocese of Hamilton, along with emeriti Bishops Anthony Tonos and Matthew Ustrzycki, is a source of fraternal consolation for me personally. I also look forward to working closely with Auxiliary Bishop Wayne Lobsinger, who serves this local Church with great generosity and conviction.

Allow me to express, in my mother tongue, my greetings to my sisters and their families, and especially to my father, who, because of his age, cannot be here with us today but is following us through social media.

Moi Kochani! - Tato i moje Rodzeństwo ze swoimi rodzinami. Jestem głęboko przekonany, że mama jest z nami, wspiera nas z nieba i jest z nas dumna.

Na ręce Twoje, tato, pragnę wyrazić moją głęboką wdzięczność i miłość za dar życia, wiary i miłości. Moje Siostry i ja otrzymaliśmy od was wspaniały przykład chrześcijańskiego życia, zaufania Bogu i pracowitości. Dziękuję za te dary rodzinnego domu, wychowania i służby innym. Dzisiaj mogę tym wszystkim dzielić się z innymi gdziekolwiek mnie Pan Bóg posyła. Moje powołanie kształtało rodzinny dom i parafia. W tym miejscu słowa podziękowania kieruję do ks. Mariana, proboszcza mojej rodzinnej parafii. Księże Proboszcza dziękuję za Twoją przyjaźń, modlitwę i braterskie wsparcie. As you know by now, I am a priest of the Congregation of Saint Michael the Archangel. They call us "Michaelites!"

For many years, I have had the privilege of living, leading, and ministering with my brother Michaelites in the North American Vice-Province and especially in the Diocese of London.

I wish to express my gratitude to Fr. Andrew, the Superior of the Vice-Province, and to the representatives of the Superior General who came from Poland, along with brother Michaelites who have come from across the world as well as the Michaelite sisters who came all the way from Poland and Cameroon to be with us.

Drogi księże Marcinie, na twoje ręce pragnę wyrazić moją wdzięczność Ojcu Generalowi, wraz ze współbraćmi z rady generalnej.

Cieszę się z obecności i dziękuję Przełożonemu Vice - Prowincji Ameryki Północnej - Ks. Andrzejowi Kowalczykowi. Na twoje ręce składam szczególne podziękowanie wszystkim Michalitom z tej Prowincji. Z nimi kształtało się moje kapłaństwo. Bóg zapłać wszystkim obecnym współbraciom z różnych części świata.

Zgromadzenie św. Michała Archanioła to moja rodzina zakonna. Lata braterstwa, modlitwy, przyjaźni i wspólnego dobra. Razem głosimy światu: Któż jak Bóg! Kierując się w codziennym życiu Powściągliwością i Pracą.

Drodzy Współbracia - Dziękuję wam za wszystko i polecam się waszej modlitwie.

Zgromadzenie Sióstr świętego Michała Archanioła reprezentuje delegatka Przełożonej Generalnej - siostra Alicja Roś, jak również siostry z Polski i Afryki. Kochane Siostry - Wasza, często bardzo cicha i oddana posługa, siostrzana obecność, nieustanna modlitwa i poświęcenie są pięknym darem dla kościoła. Osobiście dziękuję Wam za modlitwę i wszelką życzliwość.

I greet the ecumenical and faith leaders, civil leaders, and dignitaries who have joined us today for this celebration. I appreciate your presence.

I truly value our relationships and look forward to collaborating together for the good of the people entrusted to our care, promoting social justice, and respecting and promoting the sanctity of every human life from its conception to natural death.

My family, who came from far and wide—the closest from the United States; my siblings from Italy, Germany, and Poland; and friends from the Diocese of London, Charlottetown, and Ontario. Thank you for your ongoing friendship, support, and presence.

I want to welcome and greet my faithful parishioners from the Italian parish where I was pastor for many years, and friends and community members in Italy and Switzerland.

Grazie ai confratelli della comunità religiosa, parrocchiani della chiesa di Santa Maria, quelli che sono venuti qui e quelli che ci seguono attraverso i mezzi sociali. Ai miei tanti ex parrocchiani italiani e cari amici di lingua e cultura italiana, specialmente a coloro che oggi non possono essere con me, vi ringrazio di cuore per il vostro grande affetto e amicizia. Porto nel cuore ognuno di voi e le vostre famiglie. Un abbraccio e un caro saluto unito nella preghiera.

Last but not least, I want to greet my religious community members from Latin America and the Dominican Republic who travelled to be with me, and those faithful whom I served as a priest and bishop.

También he tenido el gran privilegio de trabajar con muchas personas hispanas en mi ministerio, especialmente con muchos trabajadores migrantes y personas de muchos países latinoamericanos. Debes saber que nunca los olvidaré y los llevaré en mi corazón y en mis oraciones. Así quiero saludar a mis amigos presentes en distintas partes del mundo, de London y a los Padres Miguelitas de la República Dominicana y otra parte del mundo; a todos ellos les expreso mi agradecimiento por su amistad y constante apoyo.

A heartfelt welcome to everyone joining us via social media, Salt + Light, and all our local and diocesan platforms.

After my few words of introduction, I am wondering how much time I have left for the homily. ☺

During my brief but very fruitful ministry in Charlottetown, I grew to love the people of that blessed island, and I tried to be a bridge-builder and to form others who would build bridges with one another, with the people of PEI, and with our fellow Canadians. Together, we journeyed through the Jubilee Year of Hope, and together we built bridges and planted the seeds of pastoral renewal that will, I am confident, continue to grow in the years to come. I will always cherish the many wonderful gatherings, events, and celebrations—moments of grace when we could all proclaim together, “Hope does not disappoint” — “*Spes non confundit.*” To those of you from PEI who are with us today, and those joining us virtually, I will always carry you in my mind with a very grateful heart.

One of the central charisms of our Michaelite community is our strong commitment to minister to young people—helping them to discover God’s love and their mission in life. I look forward to continuing that vibrant ministry among the youth of this diocese, who are the hope and promise of the Church.

It is so fitting that I begin my ministry among you on this day - the Feast of the Presentation of the Child Jesus in the Temple of Jerusalem. In 1997, Saint John Paul II established this beautiful feast as a special Day for Consecrated Life. In Luke’s Gospel (2:22-38), we see a very touching scene.

Four people stand out as they embrace the new life of Jesus: the elderly and faithful Simeon, the wise prophetess Anna, and the young couple, Mary and Joseph, who faithfully offer their child to God.

Luke tells us, “When the parents brought in the child Jesus to perform the custom of the law, Simeon took him in his arms and blessed God” (2:27-28).

In that moment, Simeon prays the beautiful “*Nunc Dimittis*”, a prayer rooted in the hopes of Israel, the words the Liturgy of the Hours have us repeat daily at night prayer: “Lord, now you let your servant go in peace. Your word has been fulfilled: my eyes have seen your salvation, a light for all nations, and the glory of your people Israel” (2:30-32). Two important insights come from this beautiful Gospel scene:

When Jesus is presented in the Temple, life is going on as usual. Priests and Levites are busy with their duties. Pilgrims come and go, hoping to encounter God. Yet no one notices anything special. Jesus appears like any other child, born to simple, humble, and faithful parents. Only Simeon and Anna truly see what is happening. Guided by the Holy Spirit, they recognize in this Child the fulfillment of their long waiting.

Their patient faith is rewarded. Together with the quiet faith of Mary and Joseph, this moment shows us something very human and very real. Though Simeon and Anna are elderly, their hearts are young with hope. Their faith allows them to see God's promise coming to life before their eyes and to welcome it with gratitude and joy.

The second unique perspective of Luke's Presentation Gospel scene is that of bearing Christ to the world. If our diocesan community, our parishes, religious congregations, educational institutions, and our varied apostolic works do not bear Jesus to the world, and do not speak about him openly, then **we are not fulfilling** the mission entrusted to us by God and the Church.

Let us be very honest. We do many good and important things in our lives and in our Church. We all lead busy lives. We serve in our families, parishes, and communities. Much of our time and energy is given to the work and responsibilities entrusted to us.

Yet sometimes, in the busyness of daily life, in the thick of much congestion, we may miss what truly matters. Traffic in Ontario is unbelievable. (Oh, I miss Prince Edward Island already!) We can be so caught up in our routines and obligations that we fail to notice Jesus present among us.

Today's Gospel gently invites us to pause and look within. How do we recognize God's presence in our daily lives? Do we truly desire justice and peace, and are we attentive to the people and situations God places before us each day? Through our words and actions, do we bring hope to others? In a very personal way, we are asked: do our lives warm the hearts of those we meet? Are we bearers of light in times of darkness, reflecting joy rather than discouragement? In short, are we living the Gospel as good news that brings hope, joy, life, and light to the world?

The Diocese of Hamilton has been exemplary through its excellent collaboration with Catholic education at many levels, solid Catholic health care, lay ministries, and a vibrant outreach to the poor among us. In the diversity of your vocations and ministries—priests and deacons, seminarians and consecrated men and women, lay faithful, and families—I see a living reflection of the Body of Christ.

I will bring to my ministry of shepherding all that I am and all that I have—the spirituality and experiences that have shaped my vocation, the faith that has sustained me, and the love for the Church that gives meaning to my life. To those who are deeply involved in the life

of the Church, I look forward to meeting you, listening to you, and serving with you. To those who may feel distant or uncertain, please know that you have a place in the diocesan family. The Church is for everyone! Those powerful words of Pope Francis before the throng of young people at the World Youth Day of Lisbon in 2023: “*Todos, todos, todos!*” *ring in our ears.* “***Everyone! Everyone! Everyone!***” “***There is space for everyone,***” he said, “***and when there isn't, please, let's work so that there is.***”

Together, brothers and sisters, we will seek to be a Church that welcomes, heals, accompanies people, stands close to those in need, and lives the Gospel with authenticity and joy. I look forward to collaborating closely with my brother priests, deacons, and those involved in the life of the Church to build such a Church.

My dear friends, today I stand before you, and my name is Joseph—a name that goes back to the Old Testament. The history of ancient Israel ends with the heart-rending story of the sons of Jacob coming down to Egypt during a time of famine to get grain stored by Joseph, who, many years earlier, had been sold into slavery by his brothers, jealous over the favouritism he received from their father.

In scenes worthy of great opera, Joseph questions his brothers, who do not recognize him, about their beloved father, still grieving over the supposed death of his missing son. Joseph turns aside to weep, then reveals his identity to the trembling consternation of his brothers: “*I am Joseph, your brother.*” Joseph’s greeting to his brothers was a gentle but enduring bridge that would foster critical dialogue among his family members.

Today, trusting humbly in the Lord’s divine mercy and relying on the maternal intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mater Viventium, the patroness of the diocese and of Joseph of the New Testament, I come among you as Joseph, your brother. *Je suis Joseph, votre frère. Sono Giuseppe, vostro fratello! Ja jestem Jozef, wasz brat! ¡Soy José, vuestro hermano!*

Let us pray for one another, that we may never be afraid to joyfully bear Christ to the world around us and speak about him with conviction and joy.

Let us become light and salvation for others as we fulfill the mission entrusted to us by God and the Church, and give glory to God so that each one of us, at the end of our life and faith journey, can repeat after Simeon: “Lord, now you let your servant go in peace, for my eyes have seen your salvation.” Amen