



DIOCESE OF HAMILTON

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Symbols of Faith: The Regalia of Bishop John Farrell



In the Roman Catholic tradition, there are several items worn by Bishops to signify their fulfillment of the Sacrament of Holy Orders: pectoral cross, episcopal ring, mitre, crozier, and pallium. The **Bishop Farrell Library & Archives** currently has on display the ring, cross, mitre, and crozier that belonged to Bishop John Farrell. Rt. Rev. Farrell was the first Ordinary of the Diocese of Hamilton, from 1856 – 1873. These stunning artifacts are beautiful symbols of a life dedicated to teaching and dispensing God’s spiritual gifts.

Bishop John Farrell was consecrated bishop in Kingston on May 11, 1856 at the young age of thirty-six. Shortly afterwards he was installed as the Bishop of the newly established Diocese of Hamilton. At the time, the boundaries of the Diocese went as far north as St. Boniface, Manitoba and Bytown (Ottawa), Ontario. There were estimated to be 28,000 Catholics in the region, with nine parishes and sixteen missions. However, there were only four priests and three Sisters of St. Joseph to assist Bishop Farrell in his ministry. Bishop Farrell was dedicated to establishing a solid separate Catholic school system. By the end of his seventeen year tenure as Bishop, twenty-six separate schools were functioning within the diocese. The Honourable John

Farrell's role as Bishop of the Diocese of Hamilton was cut short in 1873, when he succumbed to peritonitis. He was laid to rest in a vault beneath his cathedral, St. Mary's Church in Hamilton.

The pectoral cross and episcopal ring belonging to Bishop Farrell were recently discovered in the crypt beneath St. Mary's Church. The body of Bishop John Farrell was reinterred at Holy Sepulchre Cemetery in Burlington and placed alongside five of the successor bishops of the Diocese of Hamilton.

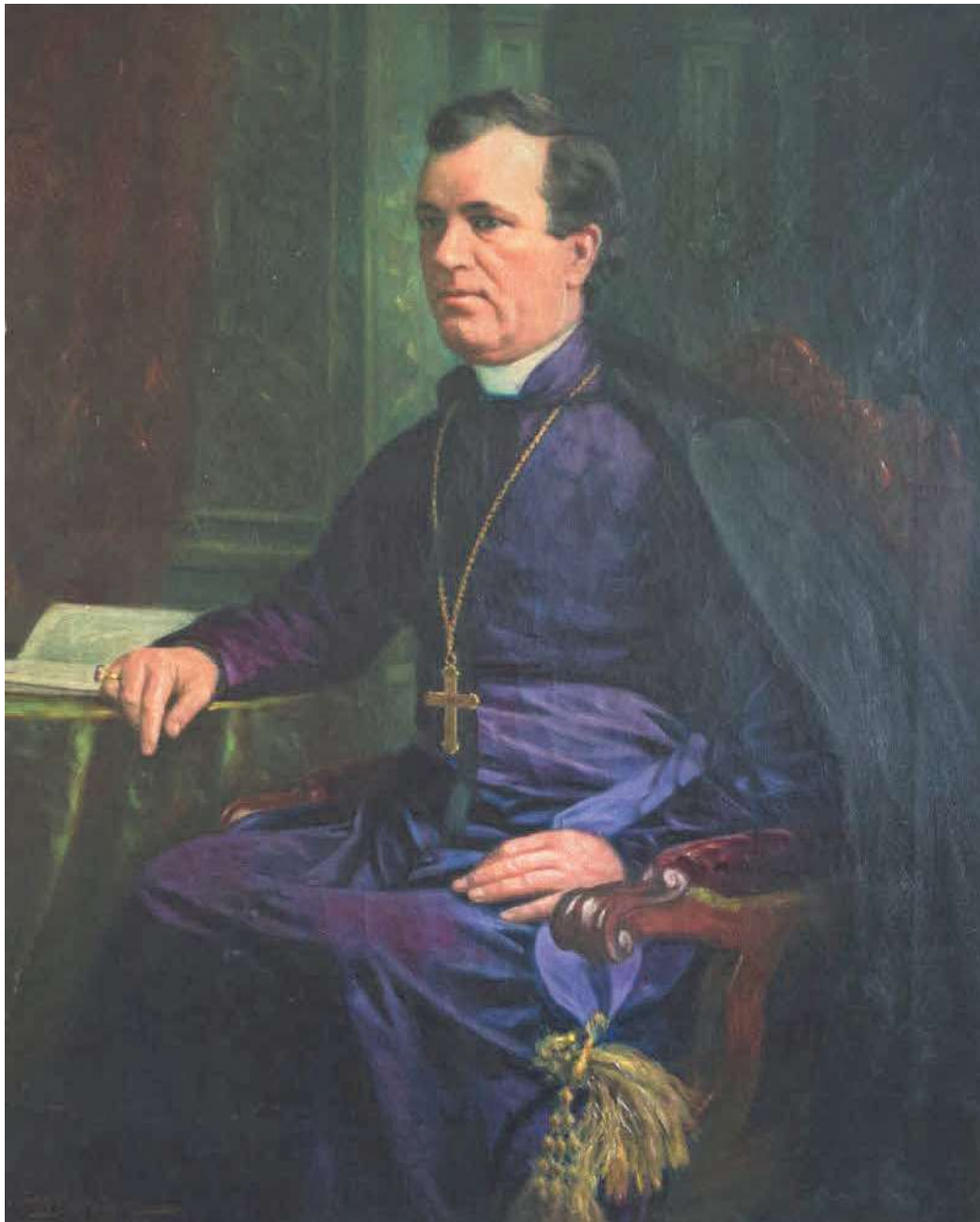


Pectoral Cross, c.1850, Silver, Gold Gilding, B1.003.004

Episcopal Ring, c.1830, Amethyst, Gold, B1.003.005

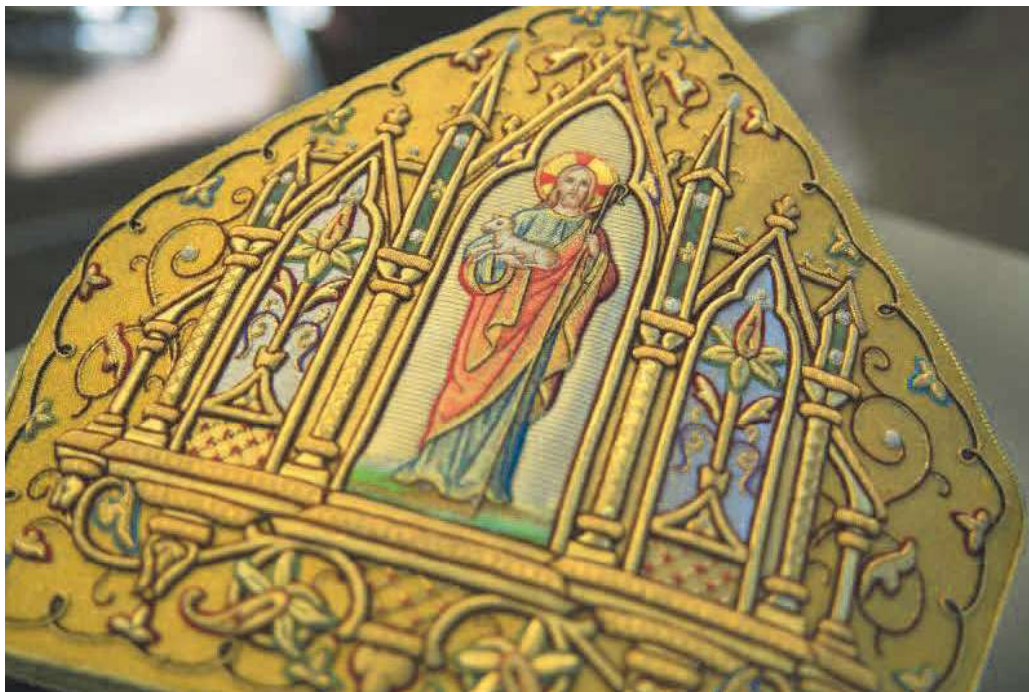
A pectoral cross is worn by the Pope, Cardinals, Bishops, and Abbots. The cross is attached to a cord and is worn over the chest, near the heart. The word "pectoral" comes from the Latin "*pectus*" meaning "abreast".

An episcopal ring is a symbol of pontifical dignity and the alliance of the bishop to the Church. Amethyst is a traditional stone for episcopal rings. Modern rings for bishops tend to be simpler than those of earlier periods and usually are wide gold bands without jewels.



George Delfosse, Portrait of Bishop John Farrell, Oil on Canvas, 1904

Bishop Farrell can be seen wearing his pectoral cross and episcopal ring in many portraits including the portrait above by Canadian painter George Delfosse.



Mitre, c. 1850, Hand-stitched, Gold Embroidery, Threading,
B.1.003.003

A mitre is a headpiece worn by bishops. It is not known when mitres became part of traditional regalia however, the first written mention of the mitre is in a bull (decree) issued by Pope Leo IX in 1049, when he grants Bishop Eberhard of Trier the mitre as a sign of authority.



Crozier, c. 1856, Brass, Gold Plate, B1.003.001

A crozier, or pastoral staff, is a symbol of Episcopal authority and the bishop's role as the shepherd of the diocese. This symbolism was customary by the fourth century. The use of croziers can be linked to the Twelve Apostles, who are believed to have carried wooden walking sticks, common to travelers at the time. Croziers can be made of metal or carved wood and they often have an ornamented top. The standard height for a crozier is from 5' – 5'8". The height of this crozier at 6' 7", reflects the stature of Bishop Farrell. At 6' 4" in height, he was described as being of "*noble form.*"



Missal, c.1850, B1.003.002

A missal is a liturgical book containing the instructions and prayers for the celebration of the Catholic Mass. This missal belonged to Bishop John Farrell, as is indicated by the inscription on the front cover. It was originally housed at St. Mary's Church in Hamilton; the first Cathedral and the seat of Rt. Rev. Farrell as the Bishop of the Diocese of Hamilton.

Symbols of Faith: The Regalia of Bishop John Farrell will be on display at the Bishop Farrell Library (698 King St. West, Hamilton)

January 2, 2018 – April 30, 2018.