

# CHAPTER 1

1840-1896

*Development of  
Canadian federalism*

# PART 9

## **Role of women & Presence of the Catholic Church**

# **Role of women**

# Legal and political status of women

- In the 19th century:

- a woman's role in Québec society was that of **wife and mother**.
- an unmarried woman was under the guardianship of her father until she married. Once married, a woman was **under the guardianship of her husband** and **would take his name**.
- women had to **submit to their husband's authority**.
- married women had **no legal power** (treated as children), but they did have some influence in society.
- a woman **could not act on her own behalf**: she always needed the consent of her husband or a male guardian.
- abortion (punishable by a life sentence in prison) and contraception were illegal.

# Legal and political status of women



# Women's work

- **In the 19th century:**
  - the duty of married women was to **have children and care for the home and family**.
  - most young and unmarried women **had little education or specialized training**, they did **domestic labour**. Educated women could become teachers.
  - women were prohibited from the liberal professions (law, medicine, etc.). Women were forbidden from going to university until 1884.
  - with the advent of industrialization, more and more women took up **factory jobs** (food, textile and tobacco industries), often to supplement the income of their husbands.
  - by law, a women's salary belonged to her husband.



*Caption: "My poor husband, you complain of your ten hours of work. I've been working fourteen hours, and my day is not yet over."*

Joseph Swain, 1871

# Anglophone women's organizations

- At the end of the 19th century:
  - bourgeois Anglophone women, who were wealthy, educated and numerous, set up organizations **aimed at giving women a more equitable place in society** (e.g. to protect and defend women's labour rights).
  - Catholic women did not enjoy the same freedom of action as anglophone women.

<i>Table pg. 113</i>	<b>LATE 19TH CENTURY</b> <i>From submission...</i>	<b>TODAY</b> <i>... to emancipation!</i>
Pay scales	<i>Meagre pay, lower wages than men for similar work.</i>	<i>(Canada – in 2012) Men: \$988 / week Women: \$744 / week</i>
Working hours	<i>Long hours (60-72 hours / week)</i>	<i>(Canada – in 2012) Men: 39,6 hours / week Women: 33,2 hours / week</i>
Number of children	<i>Numerous children (10-12)</i>	<i>(Canada – in 2011) 1,7 child / family</i>
Life expectancy	<i>Women aged quickly and died earlier than women today. In 1901: 47,65 years</i>	<i>Higher than men's. (Québec – in 2010) Men: 79,6 years Women: 83,6 years</i>
Right to vote	<i>No right to vote in elections since 1849.</i>	<i>Right to vote for female citizens aged 18+.</i>
Attitude of men	<i>Generally oppressed by men, seen as 'weak and inferior'.</i>	<i>Equal in the eyes of the law. Generally seen as equals by men...</i>

# **Presence of the Catholic Church**

**Ultramontanism VS Anticlericalism**

# Ultramontanism

- A French ideology that affirmed **the pope's supremacy over the government's (state) authority** and encouraged strict religious practice ("More Catholic than the pope").
- The **goal** of the ultramontanes **was to have a presence in all aspects of society**, especially in elections, education and care for the sick and the poor.
- Between 1840 and 1900, the Catholic Church mobilized and expanded considerably in Québec. It started Catholic newspapers and magazines, published a list of prohibited books, refused the sacrament to anyone who opposed them, etc.



➤ **Leaders:** bishop Bourget of Montréal & bishop Laflèche of Trois-Rivières

*Mary, Queen of the World Cathedral was built **under the orders of Monseigneur Bourget** between 1875 and 1894.*

**A reflection of the Vatican's influence at the time, the cathedral is a scale replica of Saint Peter's Basilica in Vatican City.**



# Ultramontanism

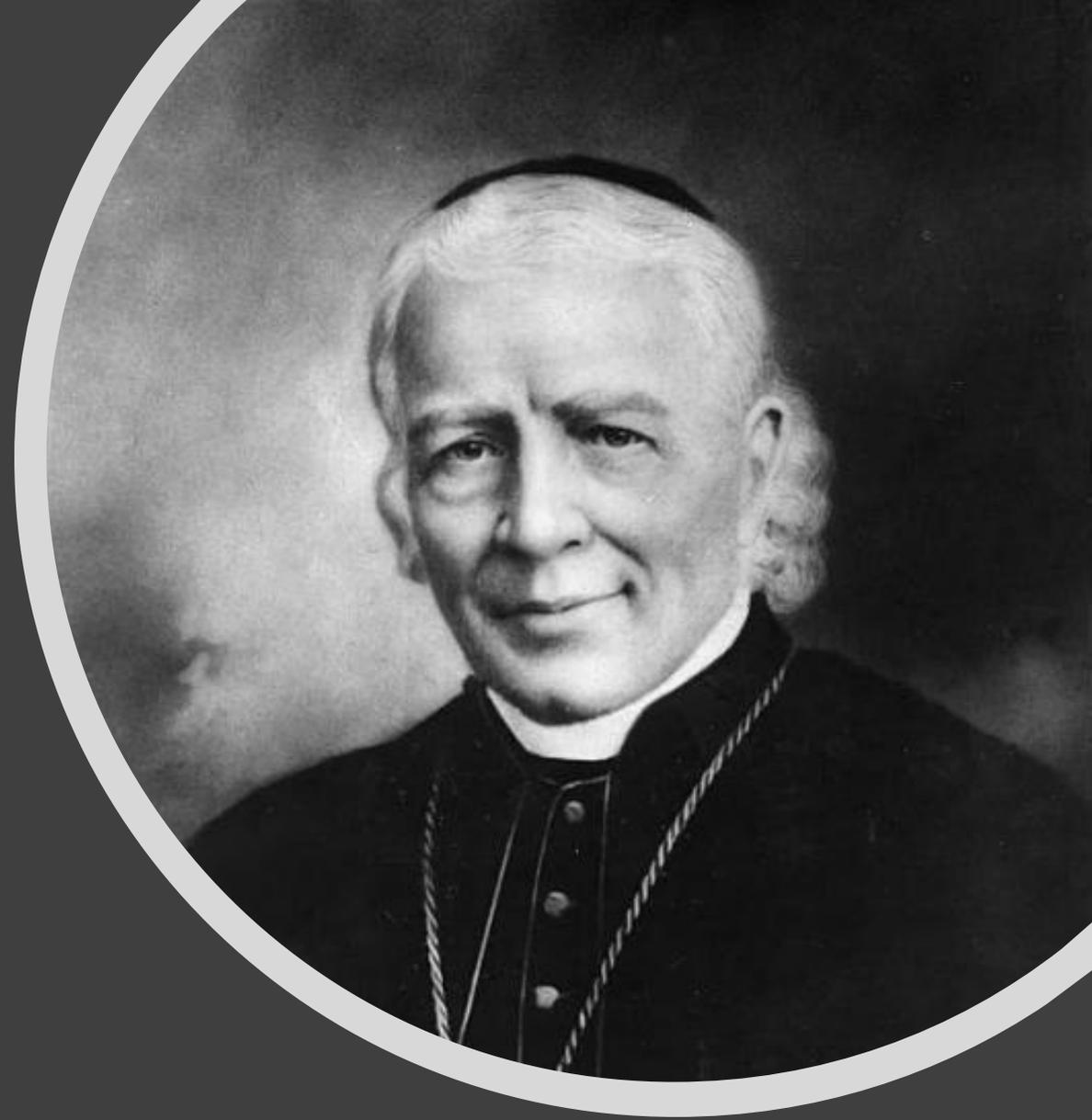
- The ultramontanes believed that only the Catholic clergy could determine what was appropriate entertainment for Catholics.
- For example, the clergy warned youths against the dangers of tobogganing because of the close physical contact.



# Ultramontanism

*“Do not read any book whose doctrine or morality have not been approved by the Church. If necessary, consult your priest. Because choosing the right books is a serious and difficult undertaking for all.”*

Excerpt from: Monseigneur Ignace Bourget,  
*Pastoral Letters by the Monseigneur and Bishop  
of Montréal...*, 1858 [translation]



# Anticlericalism

- With the rise of Ultramontanism, liberal-minded people began to **advocate for the separation of church and state (government)**.
- Anticlericalists did not want the Church to interfere in political or social aspects of life, particularly not in education – they wanted **secular education**.
- Many were members of the ***Parti rouge***. The party expressed openly its anticlerical views in newspapers, their criticisms undermining the authority of the clergy.

# Anticlericalism

*“So, based on the principle that ‘not all books are for all eyes’, shall we deduce the other principle that a library should only contain inoffensive books AND IMPOSE THIS ON EVERYONE? Thus, libraries should be measured according to ignorance rather than knowledge! Hence, the educated man must be content with books from which he shall learn nothing!! Shall permission thus be granted based on character, degree of education? Who shall be the judge?”*

Excerpt from: Louis-Antoine Dessaulles, *Speech on the Institut canadien*, 1862 [translation]

# Nationalism of cultural survival

- In Québec, francophone nationalists were focused on **preserving the identity of the French-Canadian people**, which they felt was under threat, through:
  - the Catholic faith
  - French culture and language
  - the preservation of traditions and customs
  - a traditional, conservative way of life (e.g. farm work)
  - traditional family values (e.g. submission to the father's authority)
  - submission to English authority

# *Did you know?*

- *Children in Québec were poorly educated until the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.*
- *Around 1840, Canada East's literacy rate was around 20%.*
- *With the creation of free primary schools, by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, literacy rose to about 70%, which was still much lower than Ontario's 93%.*
- *In the countryside, children of all ages and levels were taught in the same classroom, with the older, more skilled students helping the younger ones.*