

Blazon and Explanation of the Coat of Arms of the Most Reverend

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Titular Bishop of Egara and Auxiliary Bishop of Rockville Centre

BLAZON: *Per fess Gules and Argent; a bar wavy composed of two troughs and one wave per fess Argent & Azure, with the upper edge invected of one point and the middle division line engrailed of one point with the lower edge of the bar dovetailed of a single point at the center; in chief, flanked by two escallop shells Argent, the insignia of the Idente Missionaries Proper (a plate fimbriated Or on which is depicted the lower case letters “i” surmounted by a flame Gules and “d”, both Or with a Latin cross Gules between them); in base three roses on the stem issuant in base Gules, barbed and stemmed Vert, seeded Or. Shield ensigned with an episcopal cross Or behind the shield and a bishop’s galero Vert cords and twelve tassels disposed in three rows of one, two and three all Vert. On a scroll below the shield the motto, “Meek And Humble of Heart”.*

EXPLANATION: The coat of arms assumed by Bishop Romero reflects his Religious Community, the diocese in which he serves, his previous ministry and his heritage. The colors used in this coat of arms are primarily red, white and blue, the national colors of the United States because the bishop wishes to honor the country in which he now lives and serves as both a priest and bishop. The main charge, or feature, across the middle of the shield is a bar specifically shaped to suggest an open book with the blue lower portion representing the binding and spine of the book and the white upper portion suggesting the pages. This is used to symbolize the many years the bishop spent working in a university setting as a teacher and administrator.

The lower portion of the shield depicts three red roses on their green stems. This is an allusion to the miracle of the roses in December that accompanied the apparition of Our Lady of Guadalupe to Juan Diego. As such they serve as a symbol of Our Lady, especially Our Lady of Guadalupe, patroness of the Americas and a particular devotion to the Hispanic peoples. This is for all the many years the bishop has spent in priestly ministry outside his native Spain serving Spanish-speaking people in other countries, especially in the Americas.

The upper part of the shield contains the symbol of the Community to which the bishop belongs, the Idente Missionaries. He is the first member of this community to be appointed a bishop so it was of great importance for him to include the community emblem in his own coat of arms. This is flanked by two escallop shells taken from the coat of arms of the Diocese of Rockville Centre in which he has served as a priest and pastor and which he is now called to serve in a greater capacity as a bishop.

The motto below the shield is, "Meek And Humble Of Heart" (Matthew 11:29)

The shield is also ensigned with those external ornaments that indicate the bearer is a bishop. The gold (yellow) cross is placed vertically behind and extending above and below the shield. This is often mistakenly thought to be a processional cross like those used in liturgical processions. That is not entirely correct. In former times archbishops, and later all bishops, had a cross mounted on a staff carried immediately in front of them while in procession or on solemn occasions. This cross was a symbol of their rank as bishop. While such an episcopal cross is no longer used practically it has been retained heraldically. In fact, there are other clerics who make use of the ecclesiastical hat with its many tassels but the one true heraldic emblem of a bishop, and the only essential one, is the episcopal cross placed behind the shield.

Above the shield is the ecclesiastical hat, called a galero which, in heraldry, replaces the martial helmet, mantling and crest. "The hat with six pendant tassels (green, purple or black) on each side is universally considered in heraldry as the sign of prelates. It, therefore, pertains to all who are actually prelates." (Heim, Bruno B., Heraldry in the Catholic Church 1978, page 114) The galero is green with green cords pendant from it and twelve green tassels arranged in a pyramid shape on either side of the shield. At one time in history bishops and archbishops wore green before adopting the more Roman purple we see today. In heraldry the green hat and tassels was retained for prelates with the rank of bishop according to the Instruction of the Holy See Secretariat of State, "Ut Sive" of March, 1969.

The armorial bearings of Bishop Romero were designed, blazoned and rendered by the Rev. Guy Selvester a priest of the Diocese of Metuchen, New Jersey who was also born and grew up in the Diocese of Rockville Centre.

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