

**The Coat of Arms of  
His Excellency, the Most Reverend  
Leonard Paul Blair, S. T .D., D.D.  
Titular Bishop of Voncariana  
and  
Auxiliary Bishop of Detroit**

BLAZON:

Or, a cross throughout Sable; on the arms, to chief two keys and a sword per saltair, interlaced, the keys per bend with the wards in chief; to sinister and dexter a star and to base a fleur-de-lis, all Argent; on an escutcheon Gules, a lion rampant hold in his dexter paw a heart, all of the first.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The episcopal heraldic achievement, or bishop's coat of arms, is composed of a shield, with its charges (symbols), a motto scroll and the external ornaments. The shield, which is the central and most important feature of any heraldic device, is described (blazoned) in 12th century terms, that are archaic to our modern language, and this description is done as if being given by the bearer with the shield being worn on the arm. Thus, it must be remembered, where it applies, that the terms dexter and sinister are reversed as the device is viewed from the front.

For his personal arms, His Excellency, Bishop Blair has adopted a design that reflect his life and his ministries as a priest and now as a bishop.

The design is based on the arms of the Archdiocese of Detroit, by using the gold field with the black cross and the silver stars. It is here that Bishop Blair has served God's People as a priest, pastor and seminary faculty member, and whom he will now serve through the fullness of Christ's holy priesthood, as a bishop. At the top of the cross are two keys crossed with a sword in the classic representation of the fathers of The Church, Saints Peter and Paul and at the bottom of the cross is a fleur-de-lis, taken from the masthead of St. Paul's Parish in Grosse Pointe Farms, where His Excellency was serving when he was called to become a bishop, and which is often used as a Marian charge. The used of the Apostolic charges, the keys and the sword, and the Marian charge, the fleur-de-lis, are a graphic ways of representing that The Church, is and must be, both Apostolic and Marian if it is to come to what Christ intended.

In a separate shield, in the center of the design, called an escutcheon, is a golden lion on a red field, holding a heart in his forepaw. This use of the lion to cant ("play on") the Bishop's baptismal name of Leonard, is also used to honor Sacred Heart Seminary where Bishop Blair served on the faculty and as Dean of Students.

For his motto, His Excellency, Bishop Blair has selected the phrase "PASCE OVES MEAS." This phrase, which is taken from St. John's Gospel (John 21:15ff) is the recurrent phrase given by the Risen Christ to St. Peter as He charges the Apostle to lead His Church... "FEED MY SHEEP ." It is this mission to which all bishops, priests and deacons are called, by their sacred ministries, to feed God's Holy Flock with His Words and with His Sacraments, and to which all faithful people are called to share as the means by which Christ bring salvation to all generations.

The device is completed with the external ornaments which are a gold processional cross, which is placed in back of the shield and which extends above and below the shield, and a pontifical hat, called a "gallero," with its six tassels, in three rows, on either side of the shield, all in green. These are the heraldic insignia of a prelate of the rank of bishop by instruction of The Holy See of March 31, 1969.

By: Deacon Paul J. Sullivan

N .B. -The author and designer respectfully requests appropriate acknowledgment for the public use of these efforts. Rev. Mr. Sullivan is a Permanent Deacon of the Diocese of Providence.

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