

REJOICE IN HOPE
The Coat of Arms of the Most Reverend
JOHN QUINN, M.DIV., M.A., D.D.
Titular Bishop of Ressiana and Auxiliary Bishop of Detroit



Blazon: *Asure and Vert, on a bend wavy of five Argent and Light Azure; between a displayed eagle Or maintaining in sinister talon an ondoyant snake Or; a displayed book with shamrock Vert imposed; bordure Argent.*

Significance: The above description of the episcopal Coat of Arms of Bishop John M. Quinn is written in the vocabulary of heraldry as expressed in the Old English language by way of its French roots. The shield is straight-lined and angular. It is diagonally divided between blue and green fields by a wavy set of lines alternating between silver and light blue. The "charge", or symbol, emblazoned on the top portion of the shield is that of an Eagle with a snake in its talon. The two charges at the bottom of the shield are an open book with a shamrock laid on top of it. The shield is bordered in silver.

In addition to the central shield with its charges, an episcopal coat of arms contains other elements as prescribed by custom and ecclesiastical protocol. This includes a "gallero", which is a hat with a wide brim used by Roman Catholic clergy since the tenth century. The gallero has a cord attached to it which ends in a set of tassels, or "fiocchi". Tradition dictates that a bishop's gallero is pictured in green and flanked by two sets of six tassels ordered in three rows. Behind the shield there appears a processional cross. The last device of an episcopal coat of arms is a banner unfurled along the bottom of the display with a motto from Scripture inscribed upon it.

Against a field of blue representing the sky, there appears an eagle with outstretched wings, symbolic of Bishop Quinn's baptismal patron, St. John the Evangelist. St. John is usually thought of as the "eagle of theology", soaring in lofty regions that other Gospel writers did not enter. This particular eagle clutches a snake in its left talon. This predatory grasp signifies sin and evil being overcome by this mighty word of God. In this application, the snake also references those that appear on the Quinn family Coat of Arms. In Irish heraldry, the snake signifies wisdom and renewal. Taken together, the eagle (St. John) clutching the snake (Quinn family) creates for the viewer a heraldic play on words: John Quinn.

The green of the bottom portion of the shield signifies hope and relates to Bishop Quinn's motto. On this field an open book is placed as a symbol of Bishop Quinn's vocation as a teacher of theology. The book also references Bishop Quinn's work in Catholic education. The shamrock overlaid on the book is a symbol of the Holy Trinity, the subject best associated with Bishop Quinn in his role as a seminary professor. The leaves of this particular shamrock are formed by three hearts, indicating the grace of the Triune God expressed in the theological virtue of love. The shamrock also represents St. Patrick, on whose feast Bishop Quinn was ordained to the priesthood.

Forming the central band of this Coat of Arms is a series of wavy lines, alternating between silver and blue. These represent the Detroit River. Bishop Quinn was born in the city of Detroit, and as part of the

presbyterate of the Archdiocese of Detroit, he has invested himself in the life of its parishes and schools in the hope of creating a promising future for the city and its inhabitants. Drawing from the imagery of the 22nd chapter of the Book of Revelation, this river symbol reflects Bishop Quinn's optimism as it alludes to the life-giving river that flows from the throne of God -a promise of urban life renewed and of the eschatological age to come.

At the top of Bishop Quinn's Coat of Arms is the gallero. In English, it is also known as the "pilgrim's hat" because it was commonly used to protect travelers from the heat of the sun. In this context, the gallero indicates a person's willingness to journey for the sake of the Gospel while expecting God's protection from all that might be harmful. The cords extending from the gallero end in a series of tassels displayed to the right and left of the central shield. The cord pattern is intentionally kept simple, reflecting Bishop Quinn's life-style.

The Celtic Cross is used as a processional standard behind the shield. At the junction of its horizontal and vertical members, this cross is hollowed out in four places and a circle representing eternity is placed about it. Used by the early Celtic Christians, its presence here pays tribute to Bishop Quinn's Irish Catholic heritage.

The words of Bishop Quinn's Motto "REJOICE IN HOPE" reflect his perennial optimism and characteristic good humor. Taken from the 12th verse of the 12th chapter of St. Paul's letter to the Romans, these words are part of the apostle's instruction about the personal sacrifice needed in serving God. Paul recommends the humble use of one's gifts for the benefit of the community, along with patience, prayer and fraternal charity.

Prepared and executed for the Most Rev. John M. Quinn in June, 2003 by the Rev. Timothy R. Pelc with the assistance of Stephenie Ruttinger.