



# *Coat of Arms*

## **BISHOP THOMAS JOSEPH J. FLANAGAN, DD**

The shield of the coat of arms of Bishop Thomas Joseph Flanagan symbolizes his family origins, his priestly vocation, and his devotion to the service of the Church and the people of God.

### **In heraldic language, the shield reads as follows:**

The field party per saltire is tinctured azure (blue) and or (gold/yellow). In chief azure a dove rising ardent (silver/white) on a lily branch gold, in dexter gold a St. Brigid's cross vert (green), in sinister gold a rose gules (red) barbed vert seeded gold, in base azure a lamb ardent.

In chief (top division) the blue background displays a silver dove in motion carrying a gold lily. The blue background evokes the inner peace and serenity present when the Holy Spirit, symbolized by the flying dove, is called upon to guide, direct and empower Bishop Flanagan in his service to the people. The dove is also a symbol of peace, gentleness, healing and compassion; all part of Bishop Flanagan's ministry in the parishes and with the Charismatic Renewal of the Archdiocese of San Antonio. The gold lily is a symbol of the lily of St. Joseph, Bishop Flanagan's middle name.

In dexter (the bearer's right) is a green St. Brigid's cross in the field of gold. The green cross symbolizes Bishop Flanagan's homeland of Ireland, his missionary call to leave Ireland, and the many parishes that he has served in the Archdiocese of San Antonio, including the most recent parish community of St. Brigid.

In sinister (the bearer's left) is a red rose, barbed green seeded gold. In displaying this charge Bishop Flanagan places himself under the patronage of Mary of Knock, a patroness of Ireland and Our Lady of Guadalupe, Patroness of the Americas.

In base (bottom division) a silver lamb rests on a field of blue. The lamb symbolizes Christ, the Good Shepherd and Bishop Flanagan's role of shepherd in the Church. It also symbolizes the people of God, all people called into the

one body of Christ. The blue background is for peace and unity, qualities that Bishop Flanagan brings with his commitment to ecumenism.

To complete the achievement of arms, an Episcopal hat in green and the mantling is the double six tassels of a bishop. The Celtic cross in gold forms the hilt of the sword behind the shield.

On a scroll, the motto "For Christ We Are Ambassadors" appears at the base of the shield and expresses Bishop Flanagan's priestly motto of his ordination class, and his desire to continue to be an ambassador of hope, sharing God's love and forgiveness. It also expresses his commitment to encourage and challenge all of God's people to be agents of hope, love, and forgiveness.