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Ut Unum Sint
“Que todos sejam um”
“That all may be one”
(John 17:21)

The bishops, appointed by the Holy Spirit as successors to the Apostles, respond to the Lord’s call to be with Him and, through Him, be sent on a mission (cf. Mark 3:13-14). God, the love that calls, is the Lord who gives life, and in communion, the bishop proclaims this love. In this way, the bishops also respond to the prayerful request of Jesus Christ addressed to the Father: “That all may be one” (John 17:21).

In the strength of the Holy Spirit, the bishops perpetuate the work of Christ, the Eternal Shepherd. Indeed, Christ entrusted to the Apostles and their successors the mandate and power to teach all nations, to sanctify people in truth, and to shepherd them. Sharing in the concern for all the Churches, bishops exercise this ministry in union with the Supreme Pontiff and under his authority, especially in matters related to teaching and pastoral governance. They are all united in a college or body for the benefit of the entire Church of God, as outlined in the conciliar decree *Christus Dominus* (cf. n.3). This decree also underscores the central importance of dialogue in the episcopal vocation and mission: “Since it is the mission of the Church to converse with the human society in which it lives, it is especially the duty of bishops to seek out men and both request and promote dialogue with them.” The bishop is the first subject and promoter of the Church's dialogue with humanity. Thus, “truth may be joined to charity and understanding with love.... [in so doing, the bishop] is capable of bringing about a union of minds.” (cf. *Christus Dominus*, n.13).

As St. John Paul II reminded us in his 2004, “A fundamental challenge in this area is surely that of bringing about a fruitful encounter between the Gospel and the new global culture which is rapidly taking shape as a result of unprecedented growth in communications and the expansion of a world economy. ...The new evangelization calls for a clear discernment of the profound spiritual needs and aspirations of a culture which, for all its aspects of materialism and relativism, is nonetheless profoundly attracted to the primordially religious dimension of the human experience and is struggling to rediscover its spiritual roots. For the Church in America, the evangelization of culture can thus offer a unique contribution to the Church’s mission *ad gentes* in our day.” (*Ad Limina Visit*, 4 Sept 2004).

A luminous testament to the encounter between the Gospel and a new culture is also found in the life of St. John Nepomucene Neumann, fourth Bishop of Philadelphia (d.1860). In the homily for his 1977 canonization Mass, St. Paul VI recalled that “His love for people was authentic brotherly love. It was real charity: missionary and pastoral charity. It meant that he gave himself to others. Like Jesus the Good Shepherd, he lay down his life for the sheep, for Christ’s flock: to provide for their needs, to lead them to salvation. And today, with the Evangelist, we solemnly proclaim: ‘There is no greater love than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends’ (John 15:13).” St. John Neumann lived love in solidarity with the most needy: “He was close to the sick; he was at home with the poor; he was a friend to sinners. And today he is the honor of all immigrants, and from the viewpoint of the Beatitudes the symbol of Christian success.”

Here is the inspiration for the motto: “That all may be one” (John 17:21). Our Lord Jesus Christ revealed the mystery of God’s love to his disciples as the Incarnate Word who nurtures, instructs, and saves. Thus, upon receiving the episcopal mission, the bishop is called to care for and shepherd, with love and unity, those whom God entrusts to him in a particular diocese.



1. The prominently featured anchor in the center represents hope and fidelity. It maintains the stability of the boat amidst storms and serves as a symbol of trust in Christ in the face of mission challenges. "We who have taken refuge might be strongly encouraged to hold fast to the hope that lies before us. This we have as an anchor of the soul, sure and firm, which reaches into the interior behind the veil, where Jesus has entered on our behalf as forerunner, becoming high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek" (Hebrews 6:18-20). The anchor has been used as a Christian sign of hope from ancient times, and our neighboring Rhode Island adopted both the anchor and the word 'hope' on its state flag. Pope Francis asserted on the 2022 International Day of Human Fraternity, "Fraternity is the anchor of salvation for humanity." St. John Paul II wrote in his Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Pastores Gregis* on the role of the bishop: "Hope encourages a Bishop to discern, wherever he exercises his ministry, the signs of life which are able to uproot the seeds of destruction and death. Hope sustains him as he transforms conflicts themselves into an opportunity for growth and for reconciliation. Hope in Jesus the Good Shepherd will fill his heart with compassion, prompting him to draw near to the pain of every suffering man and woman and to soothe their wounds, ever confident that every lost sheep will be found." The anchor also recalls the bishop's pastoral care for immigrants in the Archdiocese of Boston.

2. On the upper right side of the shield, we have the North Star, the brightest star in the Ursa Minor constellation, visible only in the Northern Hemisphere. Aligned directly with the Earth's axis above the North Pole, it remains nearly stationary and is

a vital navigational reference. It ensures proper navigation, a safe path to the north. For this reason, it also recalls the Virgin Mary, the Star of Evangelization, who tells us “Do whatever he tells you” (John 2:5), and who always points, as in the traditional icon of Hodegetria, to her Divine Son. Convinced of the intercession and protection of the Virgin Mary, Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception and the faithful “handmaid of the Lord” (Luke 1:38), the new bishop entrusts to her his ministry and the life of the particular diocese he will serve. She, who is the Queen of the Apostles and the Mother of the Church, is also a model disciple attentive to the Word of God, as she “kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart” (Luke 2:19). As St. John Paul II emphasized in *Pastores Gregis*, “The holy Mother of God will consequently be the Bishop's teacher in listening to the word of God and promptly putting it into practice, as a faithful disciple of the one Teacher, in firm faith, confident hope and ardent charity.”

3. Below, the waves evoke the Massachusetts Bay where the bishop will serve as an auxiliary. It also reminds the bishop that it is time once again to “go out into the deep” (cf. Luke 5:4).

4. In the upper left, we have the Holy Scriptures, a symbol of the presence of the Word of God in the life and mission of the bishop. The open book also recalls the bishop's prior formation in both theology and the human sciences. Pope Benedict XVI emphasized “the importance of promoting a suitable knowledge of the Bible among those engaged in the area of culture, also in secularized contexts and among non-believers. Sacred Scripture contains anthropological and philosophical values that have had a positive influence on humanity as a whole. A sense of the Bible as a great code for cultures needs to be fully recovered.... The word of God, like the Christian faith itself, has a profoundly intercultural character; it is capable of encountering different cultures and in turn enabling them to encounter one another.” (Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Verbum Domini*, 2010, n.110-114, 2010).

5. Underneath, we have the constellation of the Southern Cross. This Milky Way constellation is easily observed in the sky in the Southern Hemisphere. Comprising four main stars, it allows for the identification of the southern cardinal point. It recalls the Lord's Cross, which, like the stars in the sky, shines brightly over sin and death, and particularly the Cathedral of the Holy Cross where the new bishop will be ordained. The Southern Cross also evokes the origin of the new bishop, who was born in Brazil, which was first known as “The Land of the Holy Cross.” This origin is further symbolized by the amethyst stone embedded in the processional cross that traverses the entire coat of arms. At the bottom the coat of arms, there is the Jerusalem Cross of the Order of the Holy Sepulcher, to which the new bishop belongs.

6. The hat and tassels are symbols of the episcopal dignity understood as service to the diocesan community, of which the bishop is the shepherd. It recalls Jesus Christ, the head of the Church, his Twelve Apostles, the apostolic succession, and the collegiality of the Bishops with the Pope.

7. Completing the coat of arms, we have the Bishop's motto: "That all may be one" (cf. John 17:21), expressing how he wishes to serve Christ through the entrusted ministry, by promoting unity – "For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one" (Ephesians 2:14) – and fostering dialogue between faith and reason.

Blazon: Azure, within a diminished border, issuant palewise from an annulet in chief the shank, flukes, and arms of an anchor throughout or, in dexter chief an open book argent bound and clasped or, in dexter base five mullets of five points or representing the Southern Cross; in sinister chief, a mullet or of eight points, in sinister base, three bars wavy argent.

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