



The Diocesan Administrator, Rev. Fr. Jordan Gongora announced the use of a new diocesan logo effective March 1, 2024. This will replace Bishop Nicasio's episcopal logo on letterheads for communication from the Chancery.

The new logo was approved by Bishop Larry before the onset of Covid-19 but was not made official due to his illness.

The logo is described as follows:

The Crucifix at the top symbolizes the sacrifice of the Lamb of God. This is the "Sacrifice of the Mass" or the Eucharist that is the *source* and *summit* of Christian life (CCC 1324). The Eucharist is the *source*, because it enables us to make present and offer anew Jesus Christ's one redemptive Sacrifice of Calvary, which began with his Passion (CCC 1362-68; 1341). It is the *summit*, because the Eucharist is truly a foretaste of heaven, in which we partake of Jesus' body and blood as heaven and earth become most profoundly one.

The map of Belize is cut out or etched in the colors of the Belizean Flag identifying the Roman Catholic Church in Belize. The map and colors are also an acknowledgement and tribute to the bishops who have served our diocese.

The *fleur-de-lis* has the color of the papal flag showing communion with our Pope. The *fleur-de-lis* is a stylized lily composed of three petals bound together at their base. In one interpretation, the flower is a symbol of the Virgin Mary, the mother of Jesus. The whiteness and beauty of the lily is symbolic of the purity of Mary Immaculate. Mary is also Our Lady of Guadalupe, the Patroness and Queen of the Americas. In another interpretation, the lily also depicts the Holy Trinity, which consists of the Father (God), the Son (Jesus Christ), and the Holy Spirit - or one God in three divine persons. The band which holds the three petals together represents Mary, since it was she who bore the child of God. In our Niceno-Constantinople Creed we profess belief in One God - the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit; we also profess that Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary, the "theotokos"- mother of God.

In Christian art, crossed keys, sometimes known as the Keys of Heaven, are a pair of keys that overlap and interlock, creating an "X" (in the Greek alphabet X or "Chi" equals "CH" the first two letters of Christ). The keys are used as ecclesiastical heraldry, papal coats of arms, and symbolic images in holy places. The crossed keys represent the metaphorical keys that Jesus promised to St. Peter, empowering him to take binding actions in leading the institution of the Catholic Church. In short, they are a symbol of the Pope's authority.

In the gospel of Matthew (16:19 NABRE), Jesus says to Peter, "I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

Note: the golden key symbolizes "the kingdom of heaven"; the silver key symbolizes "the kingdom of earth". St. Peter was the first vicar of Christ, and those who succeed him share in the apostolic power or authority of Jesus. The Ordinary of our diocese, the Bishop, is a successor of the Apostles.