

THE ANATOMY OF THE SEAL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF SAINT MARY OF THE LAKE

The University of Saint Mary of the Lake seal is comprised of several components individually representing the origins, history and mission of our institution and cumulatively encapsulating our purpose – who we are and all we strive to achieve.

The symbolism that serves as the basis of our seal and our institution as a whole all revolve around the ideas of resurrection and renewal and the transformative nature of faith and education as it empowers and protects individuals and, by extension, our broader community.

Resurrection and rebirth also serve as a reminder of the mission our institution was founded upon and the need to continually adapt, evolve, and transform, always with an eye on our legacy but prepared for our third century.

COLOR:

The primary colors represented in the seal are red and blue.

RED REPRESENTS DIVINITY

Red is most often associated with the blood of Christ and the sacrifice of martyrs and is the color worn by Cardinals.

At the University of Saint Mary of the Lake, red's significance revolves around spiritual awakening, intuition, inspiration, imagination, freedom, and inner peace – all primary tenets in the exploration of faith and the pursuits of academia.

BLUE REPRESENTS HUMANITY

Blue represents the heavens and the Word of God, the basis on which our curriculum is based. Blue also represents trust, loyalty, sincerity, wisdom, confidence, stability, and intelligence which signify not only those we serve but the honor and responsibility our students bestow upon us as their educators and mentors.

Blue is not a naturally occurring pigment and, as such, is often considered mystical and rare. Similarly, faith and knowledge are not innate traits but require commitment, work, and passion to achieve – making those who pursue both unique and worthy of the highest regard.

RED & BLUE

The red and blue in our seal should not only be considered individually and in isolation but holistically and in collaboration. Ministry and education are not merely outbound pursuits but cyclical and interwoven. To be successful, Divinity (red) requires an intimate understanding of the Humanity (blue) to which we minister. A diverse Humanity, whose varying shades and tones must be acknowledged in order to be truly understood and appreciated. At the same time, ministering (red) requires the commitment, passion, and collaboration of those to whom we minister. That Humanity (blue) must not only be willing pupils but active participants – educating us on the diverse and evolving needs of the people that make up our local, global, and religious community.

Like our colors, the University of Saint Mary by the Lake, our Seminary, colleges and programs work together to serve clergy, aspiring clergy, and lay students alike with no one endeavor standing alone or superior to the others. Their goals and successes irrevocably tied to one another.



LILIES:

The Madonna lily is a symbol of the Virgin Mary whose name adorns our university. Its whiteness symbolizes purity, innocence, fertility, and, like our university, a conduit to the divine.

More broadly, the lilies in the University of Saint Mary of the Lake seal reinforce the symbolism of rebirth, resurrection, new beginnings, and hope – all integral themes to the pursuit of faith and continued education.

WATER:

Water has always played a significant role in our identity. From our founding on the shores of Lake Michigan to our current location on St. Mary's Lake.

Water, as in baptism, symbolizes a resurrection that can only be achieved through immersion. In the case of the University of Saint Mary by the Lake, that immersion takes the form of knowledge, education and the cultivation of faith.

PHOENIX:

At the top of our crest, the Phoenix, the fabled bird who rose from the ashes to live again, symbolizes resurrection. For The University of Saint Mary of the Lake, the resurrection's significance serves as a tribute to our faith, history, and our connection to the Archdiocese of Chicago.

THE PHOENIX:

- Represents the resurrection of Jesus Christ.
- Pays tribute to the people of Chicago who rebuilt their city after the great fire of October 8, 1871.
- Pays tribute to our own beginnings and the Divinity School, which would later become Mundelein Seminary, which operated until 1867. The university closed and the building was destroyed in the Chicago Fire in October 1871 before being 'resurrected' in 1922 at our Mundelein campus.
- Pays homage to the seal of the Archdiocese of Chicago and our shared history, longstanding partnership, and common mission. The first Gothic structure of the Cathedral of the Holy Name, the Cathedral Parish of the Archdiocese of Chicago was also destroyed in the great fire of 1871 and itself rose from the ashes to be rebuilt in 1875.
- Signifies our students, clergy and lay students alike, and their academic pursuits which can be viewed as a rebirth, evolution and advancement of their faith and understanding. Education is their enlightening that empowers them, like the Phoenix to take on a new form.



TORTEAU ROUNDEL:

The torteau roundel represents the blood of Christ and his resurrection. Resurrection and rebirth directly correspond to our mission as educators; awakening our students curiosity and empowering them to access their full potential and reinvent and re-envision their role in the Church. The torteau roundel also represents the faithful's life after Christ. Their mission, purpose and responsibility to carry on His message.

The torteau roundel is also a representation of the zucchetto, the red skullcap worn by cardinals, and is included in homage to our founder, George Cardinal Mundelein.

SHIELD:

Much of the symbolism contained in our seal resides on a shield.

Magen is the Hebrew name for God meaning the Lord is My Shield. In the Bible, the shield generally represents the protection of God (Psalms 33; 28:7) and in Ephesians 6, Paul discusses the shield of faith as a form of protection.

Faith and education are often referred to as the best 'shield' or protection against those who lack understanding and seek to undermine faith.

The shield also communicates stability, protection, longevity, and tradition and speaks to our legacy and longstanding traditions and our continued importance as we head into our third century.