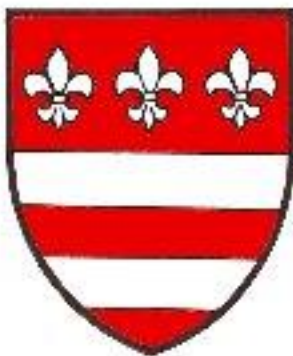


# St. Joseph Washington NJ, Coat of Arms



This is the newly-adopted symbol for our parish. Rather than a logo which, by its nature, is transitory and becomes easily “dated” the parish employs a coat of arms.

Coats of arms (which, contrary to popular belief, are **not** synonymous with crests) have been used in the Church since the XII Century as a means of identifying individual clerics and also corporate bodies such as parishes and dioceses. There is a timelessness to a coat of arms once adopted. In some countries the devisal and granting of coats of arms are regulated by a body, usually connected with the government.

However, there are only about a dozen such granting bodies worldwide. Everywhere else groups and individuals are free to adopt or “assume” a coat of arms as long as it is unique to them.

The newly assumed coat of arms of St. Joseph Catholic Church incorporates elements alluding to the location of the parish and the parish's titular patron saint. The blazon (heraldic description) is: *Gules, two bars and in chief three fleur-de-lis Argent*. In plain english that is: on a red background there are two horizontal silver (white) stripes and above that three fleur-de-lis also silver (white).

The new coat of arms is based closely on the coat of arms of George Washington which depicted a silver (white) background on which there were two red horizontal stripes above which there were three five-pointed stars. The Borough of Washington and Washington Township are named for Washington.

In the arms of the parish the colors have been reversed for difference and the three mullets or stars have been replaced with three fleur-de-lis, a symbol in heraldry used most often to represent Our Lady but one which is also used to allude to St. Joseph, her husband. For some time now our parish already employed the fleur-de-lis as a kind of logo or parish symbol.