

Seal of the Diocese of South Carolina



The Diocese of
South Carolina

The Seal of the Diocese of South Carolina was first formally proposed at Diocesan Convention in 1908 and initially adopted in 1911. The current final form was adopted in 1930, based largely upon the seal used by Bishop Nathaniel Bowen during his time as the Third Bishop of the Diocese (1818-1839). It is described in detail by the Rt. Rev. A. S. Thomas, Ninth Bishop of the Diocese of South Carolina (1928 - 1944) in his book *The Episcopal Church in South Carolina* (1957).

The seal is an oval cartouche containing a shield quartered by a Latin Cross in white.

In the first quarter of the shield is a lighted candle upon a golden candlestick upon a red background, representing Christ as the Light of the World.

In the second quarter, on a blue background is placed “the pelican in her piety,” an image in white of the pelican feeding her young with the blood of her own breast, which represents the atonement by Christ. The pelican is also associated with the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, an English missionary society which maintained the Anglican Church in large measure during

Colonial days. There is a pelican, for example, on St. James’ Goose Creek, which was a mission of the Society as early as 1702.

The third quarter, also upon a blue background, displays the South Carolina palmetto tree, the symbol of the state.

In the fourth quarter of the shield, upon a red background, are two crossed swords of St. Paul. They were the main symbol on the seal of the Diocese of London. The South Carolina Church in Colonial days was a part of the Diocese of London and under the Bishop of London. These symbols were added with that bishop’s expressed consent at that time.

Centered above the shield, in gold on a white background, is a bishop’s mitre with lappets, bearing three crosses. It is an indication of the episcopal character of the diocese. To its left is the symbol of the key, also in gold, representing the authority Christ has given to His Church. To its right is the gold head of the bishop’s crozier or staff, the symbol of the pastoral jurisdiction of the bishop.

In the cartouche around the perimeter of the shield and mitre is inscribed the name and motto of the Diocese on a white background in gold letters. The name as given on the top half of the seal is: The Diocese of South Carolina. The motto around the bottom half is from an old seal used in the Diocese as early as 1818. It is written in the original Greek, reading: ΜΗΔΕΙΣ ΣΟΥ ΠΕΡΙΦΟΝΕΙΤΩ

The phrase is an excerpt from Titus 2:15:

“These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. **Let no man despise thee.**”