

'God Alone Do I Serve'

Words of St. Lawrence, Bishop Casey's Patron,
chosen as motto and pledge for coat-of-arms

By ROBERT SMETT

"AND Blessed Lawrence cried out and said: I worship my God. Him alone do I serve!" These are the words that the priest reads when he recites the Divine Office on August 10, the feast of St. Lawrence, the martyr-saint of third century Christendom.

And these are the words—"Him only do I serve"—found inscribed on the coat-of-arms of Rochester's new Auxiliary Bishop Casey, the latest namesake of the valiant martyr to be raised to the hierarchy of the Catholic Church.

Saint Lawrence's cry was one of just defiance to his persecutors when they commanded him to worship the pagan gods of Rome. They remind us of Our Lord's own answer to the Pharisees, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."

Adoption of St. Lawrence's brave words as his episcopal motto, is Bishop Casey's pledge that for him God's will is his will, God's way is the only way, God's service is his service.

Bishop Casey was fortunate on his baptismal day. He received a strong name, a name rich in Christian tradition and memory, a name of service for a life of service, and a name of pride to the angels and saints in heaven.

SAINT Lawrence, the martyr, lived in the time of the Roman Emperor Valerian, around the year 250 A.D. These were difficult times for the young Church of Christ, although at first the Emperor was very friendly to the Christians.

Toward the end of his reign, however, goaded on by jealousy and cupidity this counsellor made him believe that the Church was a powerful organization possessed of great wealth. Valerian played the role of persecutor.

In the year 257, he issued an edict ordering all bishops, priests, and deacons to sacrifice to the pagan gods under threat of banishment, and forbidding all Christians under pain of death from assembling in public or in private, and from visiting the cemeteries (catacombs).

One day, Pope Sixtus II, the Supreme Pontiff at that time, was surprised by the Emperor's guards in the Catacomb of Callistus while he was celebrating Holy Mass. He was beheaded on the spot with six of his deacons. This was August 6, 258.

There were seven deacons in all taken that day, and Lawrence was the seventh. But he did not die with the rest. St. Lawrence was reserved for greater sufferings before he joined his master and beloved teacher, Sixtus.

His trial was an atrocity, the sort to which we have become used to in our own day by reports from Red China and the Iron Curtain nations.

The judge, believing the lies that had been spread regarding the new religion, called upon Lawrence to bring forth the treasures of the Church, which had been committed to his charge as chief deacon.

LAWRENCE smiled and turning from the magistrate's chair, walked to the doors of the courtroom. When he opened them, the poor people of the city, crowded against the building and waiting to hear of the fate of their benefactor, poured into the room.

With weeping and wailing, they grabbed at Lawrence's hands and feet to kiss them, to show their love and

devotion. Standing tall and straight in their midst, Lawrence turned to his judge and said, "Behold, the treasures of the Church."

Back in the catacombs, on the day that Pope Sixtus was put to death, the Holy Father had prophesied the martyrdom of his devoted deacon. As the sword was raised to strike the neck of the Pontiff, Lawrence ran to him and threw himself against the body of his spiritual father.

"Father! where do you go without your son? Holy Priest! where do you go without your deacon?" he cried in his anguish of separation.

Sixtus dropped his eyes, filled with a mixture of love and sorrow, and whispered, "In three days, you will follow me." A swish of the sword and the saintly Pope's head fell at Lawrence's feet.

The prophecy was fulfilled. Three days later, two guards arrived at Lawrence's cell and led the deacon to the place of execution. But the sword that struck down his beloved Pontiff was not for Lawrence, nor the cross, dignified by his Master—but the ignominy of the gridiron.

The grill—used for the roasting of a score of suckling pigs or a whole steer for some Roman bacchanale—was the instrument of Lawrence's passion and the throne of his consecration.

As the fire was lighted, Lawrence was stripped of his clothing, and he remembered that all this had happened before. He remembered Christ being painfully stripped of His garments on the Hill of Calvary as He accepted His cross.

LAWRENCE was taken by the arms and legs and lifted above the gridiron where the flames already licked through the cross bars and the metal glowed white-hot. The torment was great and the pain unbearable, but Lawrence thought again of his words to the judge, "Him only do I serve."

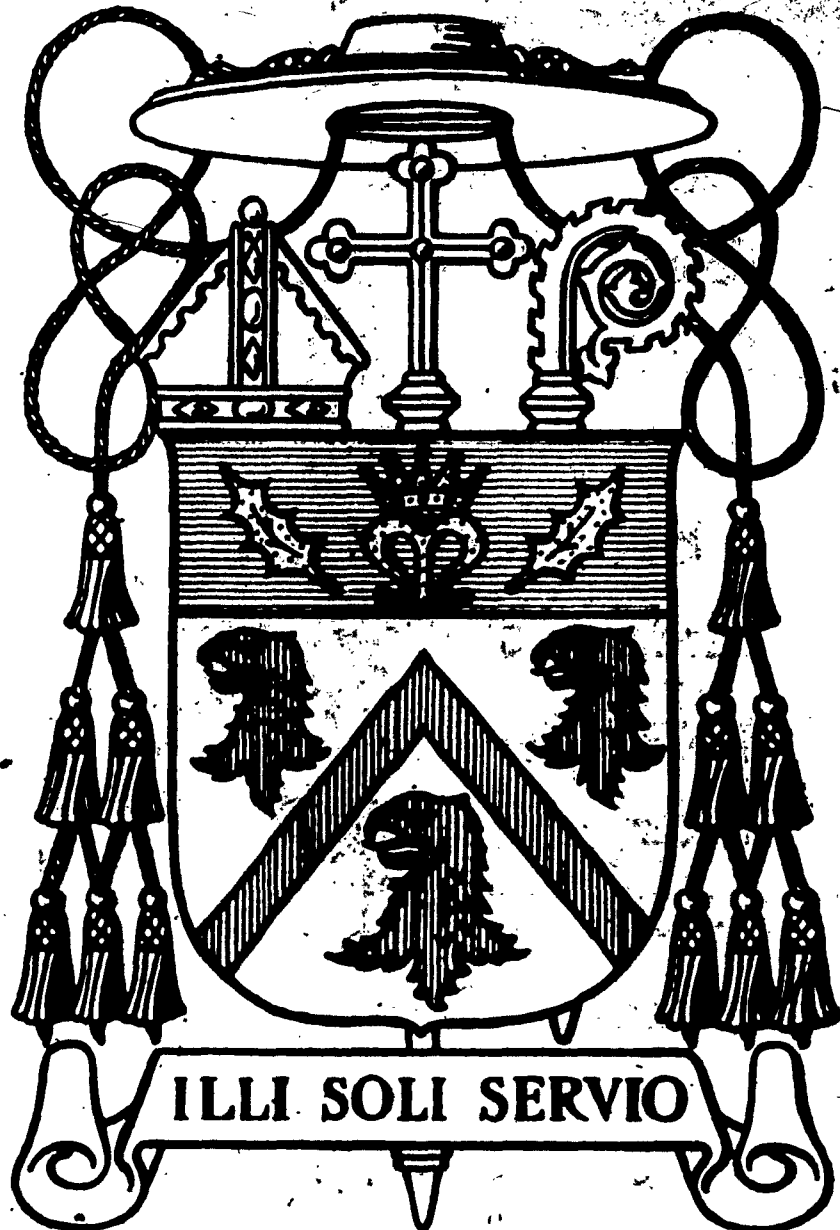
Death for Christ: Martyrdom for the Faith! This was the service demanded of Lawrence. This was asked of him as the servant of his Master, to give all, even to the last breath. And so there was joy in this death, a death usually surrounded by tears and tortured screams.

There was a smile on his face as Lawrence turned to his judge who stood within the heat of the fire. The smile broadened in complete pity but with the inebriation of fulfillment, for this, certainly, was "to serve," and he said: "I am roasted enough on this side, turn me round."

Neither the Roman magistrates nor the guards could understand this utterance. They could not understand for they served other masters. They could never know the joy of Lawrence or his legacy to Christianity—the definition of service in the simplicity of "him only" or "God alone."

St. Lawrence is one of the early Christian martyrs whose name is enshrined in one of the prayers in the Canon of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Each morning, therefore, as Bishop Casey celebrates Mass he will recite the prayer in which his patron saint is honored.

And each morning as the name of Lawrence falls from his lips there will come to his mind the inspiration of his patron and the pledge of his own episcopal consecration—the service of God. "I worship my God, Him alone do I serve."



COAT OF ARMS of the most Rev. Lawrence B. Casey, Auxiliary Bishop-Elect to the Bishop of Rochester is shown above. The English translation of the Latin motto, "Illi Soli Servo," is "God alone I serve," and are the words of St. Lawrence, patron of Bishop-Elect Casey.

Coat Of Arms

Episcopal Shield based
on Casey family of Ireland

BEARING the Latin motto "Illi Soli Servo" (God Alone I Serve), the episcopal coat of arms of the Most Rev. Lawrence B. Casey, Auxiliary Bishop-Elect to the Bishop of Rochester, is based on the coat of arms of one of the Casey families of Ireland.

The episcopal shield of the Bishop-Elect consists of a golden field bearing a red chevron between three eagle heads also in red, thus continuing the symbolism found on the coat of arms of Irish families bearing the name of Casey.

The Casey Family coat of arms has been personalized for the Bishop-Elect's use by the addition of an upper compartment or "chief", as it is called, of sky blue. To this azure chief have been added "charges" or bearings which symbolize the fact that the Auxiliary Bishop has served as secretary to two Bishops of Rochester.

The golden crowned monogram of the Blessed Virgin is derived from the coat of arms of Bishop Kearney whom Bishop Casey formerly served as secretary (1937-1946), and whom he will now serve as Auxiliary Bishop.

At either side of the Marian monogram is found a golden holly leaf which represent His Eminence Edward Cardinal Mooney whom the Bishop-Elect also served as secretary for four years (1933-1937) when His Eminence was fourth Bishop of Rochester. The holly tree represents the Mooney family on the Cardinal's own episcopal coat of arms.

Completing the coat of arms are the traditional symbols of the episcopal office. These include: the green pontifical hat with six green tassels on either side; and the golden mitre,

processional cross and crozier or bishop's staff.

William F. J. Ryan of New York and authority on Ecclesiastical heraldry, designed Bishop Casey's coat of arms.

The motto "Illi Soli Servo" commemorates St. Lawrence, the early

New York Archbishops

Four of the five Bishops of Rochester have been consecrated by Archbishops of New York.

Bishop Bernard McQuinn, first Bishop of Rochester, was consecrated in St. Patrick's Cathedral, New York, on July 12, 1888 by Archbishop John McCloskey, who later became the first American Cardinal.

Archbishop Thomas F. Hickey, second Bishop of Rochester, was consecrated in St. Patrick's Cathedral, Rochester, on May 28, 1908 by Archbishop John M. Farley.

Bishop John Francis O'Hara, third Bishop of Rochester, was consecrated in St. Patrick's Cathedral, Rochester, on March 19, 1930 by Patrick Cardinal Hayes.

Bishop James E. Kearney, fifth Bishop of Rochester, was consecrated Bishop of Salt Lake City in St. Patrick's Cathedral, New York, on Oct. 24, 1922 by Patrick Cardinal Hayes. He was transferred to the See of Rochester in 1927.

Christian martyr and baptismal patron of the Bishop-Elect.

While on trial for his faith in Rome in the year 258, St. Lawrence told the judge: "Deum meum colo, illi soli servo"—"I worship God, Him alone do I serve."