

BASILICA OF ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL

Basilica is a title of honor bestowed on a church of historic and spiritual importance by the Holy Father. It may be a parish church, a cathedral, or a shrine. These special churches serve as a center for the community of faith in demonstrating and living out the Gospel values. The title of Basilica was bestowed on the church of St. Michael the Archangel by Pope Benedict XVI on December 28, 2011.

The title *Basilica* carries with it both privileges and obligations. Among the primary privileges are the right to display the coat of arms of the pope who designated the church as a Basilica and to display the church's own coat of arms bearing the marks of the pope. Two additional symbols, rooted in the papal court, are given to the church for use and display. The *ombrellone* is an elaborate umbrella which would protect the Holy Father from inclement weather. The *tintinnabulum* is a bell which had the practical function of alerting the people to the approach of the Holy Father during papal processions through the streets of Rome.

The Coat of Arms



Top Center – the ombrellone associated with a Basilica.

Crossed Keys – indicate the Pope's power to bind and loose.

Sword and Scale – Saint Michael is depicted brandishing a sword in triumph over Satan subdued at his feet. The purpose of the scales is not to measure justice, but to weigh souls. The primary role of Saint Michael the Archangel is to be the advocate of justice and mercy in perfect balance – for justice without mercy is little more than vengeance.

The Ombrellone

St. Michael's Ombrellone is permanently displayed in the Sanctuary to note that this building, in a very special way, belongs to the Holy Father. It is constructed with eight fabric panels alternating red and yellow. On the end of each panel is placed a significant emblem. To date, our panels are as follows:

Coat of Arms of Pope Benedict XVI, who designated St. Michael the Archangel as a basilica

Coat of Arms of Bishop Gregory L. Parkes, D.D., current Bishop of the Diocese.

Coat of Arms of Bishop John H. Ricard, S.S.J., who sent the original request for consideration to Rome

Coat of Arms of the Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee

Coat of Arms of the Basilica of St. Michael the Archangel

The Tintinnabulum

The Tintinnabulum, like the Ombrellone, indicates that this building has a special relationship with the Holy Father. And, like the Ombrellone, the Tintinnabulum is permanently displayed in the Sanctuary.