



Legend on the coat of arms

D'azur à un Maria d'argent accompagné en chef d'une étoile rayonnante du même (Azure a Maria argent accompanied in chief by a star radiant)

The term azure, blue in heraldry, symbolizes joy, learning, loyalty and clarity. It is the colour of the Blessed Virgin and the colour of the student uniforms at the convents of the Congregation between 1833 and 1869.

The symbol under the star, the letters A and M, stand for the Latin expression *Auspice Maria* which means "under the protection of Mary." The letters A and M interlaced are the monogram of the Virgin Mary. They appear on many doors inside the building in the form of a wrought iron monogram.

The colour argent (silver) represents light, purity and virtue. From a negative perspective, it recalls the moon, death and the shroud.

The star is a commonly used charge on a coat of arms. A charge is everything that is placed on the shield that is not an ordinary (a geometrical form). The five-pointed star symbolizes the manifestation of light. It is described as radiant because rays are emanating from it. The Shepherd's star, alias Venus, is regarded as the star that brings life, a message of peace and joy. It is also said to be an attribute of the Virgin, which is why she is often represented with a crown of stars.

Azure, argent, the star and the monogram are also present on the coat of arms of the Congrégation de Notre-Dame.



Savoir plus pour aimer mieux (Know More to Love Better):

Motto and Coat of Arms of École normale

The building located at 2330 Sherbrooke Street West was built to house the girls' sector of École normale Jacques-Cartier founded in 1899 (renamed École normale Notre-Dame-de-Montréal in 1957)¹. In 1913, the institution moved to this address and continued here until it closed in June 1969.

A coat of arms and a motto were created for École normale, probably at the time it was founded. The origin of the coat of arms as a sign of nobility and privilege dates back to the 12th century when it was intended to identify knights in battle. A coat of arms also represents the history, values and identity of the organization it symbolizes. Today's equivalent would be logos or slogans created for institutions and companies.

The vocabulary used to describe a coat of arms in heraldry is generally unintelligible for a non-expert. It plunges us undeniably into the Middle Ages during the knights' tournaments where the heralds announced the participants by describing their respective coat of arms.

Motto

Savoir plus pour aimer mieux (know more to love better)

The motto appears on a scroll below the shield. This motto was taken from St. Bonaventure in the *Commentaire du Livre des Sentences* "Learning for the sake of learning is a pointless satisfaction; true wisdom consists of benefiting from one's education, *know more to love better*, and to always give priority to divine charity which is the jewel of heaven and earth."²

Certain graduates of École normale became teachers, others, mothers, but whatever path these students embarked on, École normale ensured that each one had a solid education.

¹ To learn more about École normale Jacques-Cartier, please see http://www.cnd-m.org/100/en/normal_school.php

² Blason, 1881. Archives of the Congrégation de Notre-Dame – Montréal, 660.063.024.