

Traditions and Symbols

The Inaugural Ceremony investing Timothy R. Lannon, S.J., as the 24th president of Creighton University will include many traditions and symbols.

Inaugural Ceremony: The act of inaugurating, or inducting into office a university president is a hallmark event on college campuses often including a solemn, investiture activity accompanied by celebratory events prior to and following the formal ceremony. Inaugurating a president provides the university an opportunity to celebrate its heritage and reaffirm its mission to its many constituents: students, parents, alumni, donors, faculty and staff, as well as community, civic, business, religious, educational and political leaders.

The Spirit of Creighton inaugural symbol: Chosen by Fr. Lannon to represent the Spirit of Creighton, the blue stylized cross is a graphic depiction of an aerial view of St. John's Church, the physical and spiritual center of the Creighton campus.

Each of the four quadrants of the symbol represents one of four values Creighton incorporates into the daily life of the University community: academic excellence, unwavering faith, compassionate patient care and service to others.

Guided by its Jesuit tradition and Catholic heritage, Creighton prepares men and women to be for and with others. Impassioned by the Spirit of Creighton, they are motivated to serve and to lead, determined to create a more just world.

Mace: The mace, carried by the faculty president and associate professor of Modern Languages and Literatures, Thomas F. Coffey, Ph.D. is an important part of the ceremony. In the Middle Ages, the mace was a club used in battle and carried by a bodyguard to defend a person of authority. Over the years, it began to lose its warlike image and became a symbol of peaceful leadership.

At an academic institution, the mace is the symbol of the legal and chartered authority of the people – usually the president and vice presidents – to whom the board of directors have



delegated authority. When the ceremonial mace is present, the authority of the university is present. Use of the mace is reserved for occasions of outstanding importance and it is an honor to bear the mace. The mace was designed and fashioned by Brian K. Besack, Operation Supervisor of the University's carpenter shop, to commemorate the 125th anniversary of the University.

Using a cherry wood baluster from a staircase in the attic of Creighton Hall (the former Administration building), the oldest building on Creighton's campus, Besack designed and fashioned the shaft, head and foot of the mace. Each facet of the nine-sided head displays a bronze, gold-plated medallion bearing the name and founding date of the University's schools and colleges. Its foot is sheathed in gold-plated brass and cradled in its shaft rests the official seal of the University. At its top, the mace is crowned with a three-dimensional blue and gold medallion symbol of the Society of Jesus.

Academic Regalia: The clothing worn by academics at such university ceremonies as inaugurations and commencements is rich with history, tradition and symbolism, much of it dating to England's university in the Middle Ages. Principle pieces of the academic dress are the gown, the cap and the hood. Each adornment helps reveal the wearer's education and ranking. For example, professors in the School of Medicine wear stoles of kelly green; those in Law, purple.

Chain of Office

Another ceremonial symbol central to a University inauguration is the chain, a necklace of metal with includes 11 medallions—one representing each of the nine colleges and schools at Creighton, one with the Jesuit seal and one with the Creighton University seal. It is bestowed on Fr. Lannon during the Inaugural Ceremony by Bruce C. Rohde, chairman of Creighton University's Board of Directors. The Chain of Office is worn by the president at all formal academic occasions and identifies the wearer as the designated leader of the University.

The use of chains and medallions as ceremonial garb originated in medieval times, when they were known as livery collars, ornate and durable symbols of the authority of office.