

TREASURES of OUR FAITH
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Greetings brothers and sisters. As we go through this 'Year of Faith', each week we will take a journey together to deepen and rediscover our faith as Catholic Christians. We will take time to look at the rich traditions of our Church, we'll look at what certain things signify and their symbolism, take time to answer some frequently asked questions and look at why we do certain things as Catholics. This week we'll look at Liturgical Colors.

The Church's liturgical norms do prescribe specific vestment colors for various celebrations. The purpose of utilizing different colors for vestments is twofold: first, the colors highlight the particular liturgical season and the faithful's journey through these seasons. Second, the colors punctuate the liturgical season by highlighting a particular event or particular mystery of faith. The following explanation is based on the norms of The General Instruction on the Roman Missal (GIRM).

White (or Gold), a color symbolizing rejoicing, holiness, glory and purity of soul, is worn during the liturgical seasons of Christmas and Easter. White vestments are also used for feasts of our Lord (except those pertaining to His passion), the Blessed Virgin Mary, the angels, and the saints who were not martyrs. White may also be worn for Baptism's, Marriages and Christian Burial's.

Red has a dual imagery: On one hand, red symbolizes the shedding of blood and is therefore used on Palm Sunday (when Christ entered Jerusalem to prepare for His death), Good Friday, and any other commemoration of the Lord's passion and the feasts of martyrs who offered their lives for the faith. On the other hand, red also signifies the burning fire of God's love. For this reason, red vestments are worn on Pentecost when the Holy Spirit descended on the apostles and for the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Green is used during the liturgical season called Ordinary Time. This season focuses on Jesus' teachings and ministry. All of these teachings and events give us great hope in the mystery of salvation. Green symbolizes our hopes and lives and our growth, just as the hint of green on trees in early spring arouses the hope of new life.

Purple is used during Advent and Lent as a sign of penance, humility, sacrifice and preparation. Also worn for the sacrament of reconciliation. At the midpoint of both of these seasons — Gaudete Sunday (the third Sunday of Advent) and Laetare Sunday (the fourth Sunday of Lent) — **Rose** vestments are traditionally worn as a sign of joy: we rejoice at the midpoint because we are half-way through the preparation and anticipate the coming joy of Christmas or Easter.

The liturgical colors awaken us to the sense of sacred time. They are another visible way to make present the sacred mysteries that we celebrate.

