

TREASURES of OUR FAITH

by: Deacon Ryan Adams

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 some of the vestments you'll see wore during the celebration of liturgies.

The word "vestment" comes from the Latin, it simply means clothing. However, now it is generally used to represent the garments that are worn by the ministers in the performance of their sacred duties. Vestments are a sacramental, that means they are set apart to excite good thoughts and to increase devotion in those who see them and those who wear them.

Here are some of the commonly worn 'vestments'.

CASSOCK - A long, close fitting garment worn by Clerics and lay ministers such as Masters of Ceremonies when assisting at mass. It usually has 33 buttons down the front (symbolic of the years of the life of Jesus) For ordinary use it is black in color. Cardinals may wear red, Bishops may wear purple and the Pope's is always white.

SURPLICE – A wide sleeved garment slipped over the head, covering the shoulders and coming down below the hips. It is worn over the cassock.

ALB - A full length white linen vestment sometimes secured with a cincture worn at Mass or other Liturgical celebrations. It is an adaptation of the under tunic worn by the Greeks and Romans of the fourth century. It symbolizes the garment in which Christ was clothed by Herod and the purity of the soul with which the Sacrifice of the Mass should be offered. It symbolizes the innocence and purity that should adorn the soul of the priest who ascends the altar. At Saint Charles, it is also the white garment worn by the newly baptized person right after receiving Baptism on Holy Saturday. In our parish the newly baptized wear the alb when processing in at Sunday Mass until Pentecost.

STOLES – A liturgical vestment worn around the neck by priests and bishops. It is worn over the left shoulder and fastened at the right side by a deacon like a sash. The stole is worn for the celebration of Mass and administration of the sacraments. Whenever a priest celebrates Mass or administers the Sacraments, he wears the stole as a sign that he is engaged with an official priestly duty. The stole is a symbol of the yoke of Christ; it also symbolizes the bonds with which Jesus was bound during his Passion.

DALMATIC – An outer liturgical vestment worn by a deacon. When worn during the mass it is the same liturgical color as the celebrant's chasuble. On account of the cruciform shape, it reminds the deacon, the servant of the altar to offer himself as an acceptable sacrifice to God. It symbolizes the joy and happiness that are the fruit of dedication to God.

CHASUBLE – A sleeveless outer vestment worn by the priest celebrating the Mass. It is slipped on over the head, hanging down covering the stole and alb. They are worn in following the colors of the liturgical calendar. The Chasuble symbolizes the virtue of charity, and the yoke of unselfish service for the Lord, which the priest assumes at his ordination.