



Episode 18: Liturgical Vestments, part 2

SUMMARY

The alb, along with the amice and cincture, is the sacred garment common to ordained and instituted ministers.

Other vestments are worn by those in Holy Orders, the Deacon and the Priest. The first of these vestments is the stole. The stole is a wide band of cloth that in the case of the deacon is worn over the left shoulder and is attached at the right hip. It signifies his diaconal office: the office of ministry of Word, Sacrament, and Charity. For the priest, the stole is worn around the neck, with both ends hanging in front of the alb. The stole is never worn over the chasuble or dalmatic.

The outer garment for the deacon is a tunic-like vestment called a dalmatic; it represents his diaconal service. The ministry of deacons is first described in the sixth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles.

The chasuble, which is the priest's outer garment, was originally designed to entirely envelop him. When the priest dons the chasuble, he recalls the words of St. Paul to the Colossians as well as the Lord's words in the Gospel of St. Matthew: "my yoke is sweet."

The sacred vestments provide distance from the mundane reality of everyday life. They become a sacramental sign of the wedding garments of eternity, and prepare both faithful and ministers for the foretaste of the heavenly liturgy celebrated in our churches.

Roman Missal

The vestment proper to the Priest Celebrant at Mass and during other sacred actions directly connected with Mass is the chasuble worn, unless otherwise indicated, over the alb and stole.

General Instruction, n.º 337

The vestment proper to the Deacon is the dalmatic, worn over the alb and stole; however, the dalmatic may be omitted out of necessity or on account of a lesser degree of solemnity.

General Instruction, n.º 338

Virgil Michel, osb.

"The externals of the liturgy are there to express and reveal the internal, they are the visible embodiment of the divine powers exercised in all liturgical functions, the visible expression of the sentiments uniting the members of the

mystical body of Christ among themselves and with their Head.”

IN THE TRADITION

“Above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfection.”

Colossians 3:14

“So the Twelve called together the community of the disciples and said, ‘It is not right for us to neglect the word of God to serve at table.

Brothers, select from among you seven reputable men, filled with the Spirit and wisdom, whom we shall appoint to this task.’ “

Acts 6:2-3

“Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves. For my yoke is easy, and my burden light.”

Matthew 11:28-30

THE TEACHING OF THE CHURCH

✠ “Let the holiness of your lives be a delightful fragrance to Christ’s faithful, so that by word and example you may build up the house which is God’s Church.

Likewise you will exercise in Christ the office of sanctifying. For by your ministry the spiritual sacrifice of the faithful will be made perfect, being united to the sacrifice of Christ, which will be offered through your hands in an unbloody way on the altar, in union with the faithful, in the celebration of the sacraments. Understand, therefore, what you do and imitate what you celebrate.”

Rite of Ordination of a Priest

IN THE PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Lord, restore the stole of immortality, which I lost through the collusion of our first parents, and, unworthy as I am to approach Thy sacred mysteries, may I yet gain eternal joy.

Prayer for the Stole

Lord, endow me with the garment of salvation, the vestment of joy, and with the dalmatic of justice ever encompass me.

Prayer for the Dalmatic

O Lord, who has said, “My yoke is sweet and my burden light,” grant that I may so carry it as to merit Thy grace.

Prayer for the Chasuble

O God,
who willed your Son to submit for our sake to the yoke of the Cross,
so that you might drive from us the power of the enemy,
grant us, your servants,
to attain the grace of the resurrection.

Collect, Wednesday of Holy Week

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why does the Church make a connection between the “yoke” of ministry and the chasuble of the priest?
2. How are the sleeves of the Deacon’s dalmatic a reminder of his service?

FOR FURTHER READING

Virgil Michel, *The Liturgy of the Church according to the Roman Rite*, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1937).

James Charles Noonon, Jr., *The Church Visible*, (New York: Penguin Books, 1996)