

THE MASS SERIES : ART & LITURGY : VESTMENTS

BY FR IAN ANDREW PALKO, FSSPX

THE HISTORY OF VESTMENTS OR WHY WEAR VESTMENTS?

- **Specifically clerical dress was uncommon in the early church during the times of persecutions**
 - The Church was not highly directive in her liturgical rules, so there was not a universal practice
 - There was frequent need that clergy not be publicly identified as Christians on account of persecution (or possible persecution)
 - The keeping of a large amount of specialized vestments was only possible once there were churches, and not smaller ceremonies.
 - In other words, historically, we see the most significant development start after the Edict of Milan in 313, but even then it was not what we see today (or even sometimes see in iconography).
 - Often we see Saints like St. Lawrence pictured in a gothic dalmatic, but while there was a similar secular garment, he would not have worn what we would recognize today at a Solemn Mass.
 - Even in the 4th century, the *Canons of Hippolytus* simply directs that priests and deacons gather around the bishop in white, clean clothes, which are better than what the faithful wear.
 - Eusebius recounts at St. Cyprian's martyrdom he was wearing a under tunic, regular tunic, a mantle (a jacket similar to a cope). These were common secular garments.
- **The truly distinctive wear of clergy, especially for liturgical functions comes about in the 6th century**
 - It was at this point in time where the tunic went out of fashion in secular life, but remained in use in the Church.
 - Similarly, the longer tunic from Dalmatia (the dalmatic) became fashionable in the 2nd century, and was adopted for the deacon in the Church, but fell out of secular fashion
 - The chasuble, originally, a poncho-like garment, was a garment of slaves that the nobility adopted in the 3rd century as a convenience while riding, it also eventually falls out of fashion
- **While the civil and clerical garb was similar by the 4th century, the quality of what clergy wore was distinguished from civil dress, even if the forms were similar.**
- **Truly distinctive vestments in form did not come about until the late 4th century**
 - In the 4th century the *Omophorion* (Latin *pallium*) was used by Eastern bishops and the Pope
 - Around the same time the *Orarion* (Latin *stola*) which was used by civil authorities when exercising authority, was borrowed into the Church and became distinctive
 - Most of the Roman vestments are settled upon by the 9th century
 - After the fall of the Western Empire, the Popes became a common substitute in Rome for the Emperor, and began using garments distinctive to the Emperor and nobility
 - By the time of Charlamagne, the Popes were certainly looked upon as having some authority equivalent to the Emperors, so wearing Imperial garments made great sense
 - The clergy of Rome (and then the West) began adopting Papal vesture in part.
 - Charlemagne was instrumental in bringing the Roman Rite and its customs into the West, even supplanting some older rites.

- **The distinction in form between Eastern Vestments and Western began about this same time**
 - Most of the vestments had a similar origin and form
 - For example, the *phelonion* and *chasuble* are priestly vestments for use at Mass, but now have different forms
 - The originated from the same *pænula* (poncho) garment
 - In the West,
 - The chasuble began from a early medieval conical garment with a hole for the head that would hang well past the hands
 - Then in different places, parts were trimmed away to ease the movement of the arms, forming what we commonly call the “Roman Chasuble”
 - A bit of a misnomer, because there are many different styles and Roman is only one type which is wider and longer than others
 - In the East
 - The *phelonion* also began in the early middle ages as a full conical vestment
 - Then it began to be cut back in the front, with the sides remaining long, also to free the hands
 - Eventually, in some places the neck became so thin that it was easier to join with a clasp, like the Western cope (without a hood)
 - This is still the exact same garment, used for almost the same purpose, dating back to the 3rd century.
- **So, why wear vestments?**
 - To make the liturgical service a distinctive and ceremonial act, which requires certain items and clothing
 - To clothe the priest who has receive some of Christ’s power in garments that signify this power, and help the faithful see this distinction
 - To add beauty to the liturgy through the use of the highest-quality items and kinds of dress (like any formal occasion demands the best kind of dress).
 - Aside : Until the 1970s, it was quite common to have all manner of different grades of dress. There was the formal morning attire and white tie, the semi-formal lounge suit and black tie, the informal business suit, and then casual attire. Many think a suit or even a shirt and tie is “formal” when it was barely above casual wear before the 1970s.
 - If for the laity, informal business attire is a minimum for appropriate church wear, then what the clergy wear in performing the ceremonies should be of the highest-quality, and care used that these vestments are carefully tailored and kept.

SYMBOLISM OF VESTMENTS

- **Much of the symbolism that is attributed to vestments is a reinterpretation after the fact.**
 - As can be seen, the early liturgy did not have distinctive garments
 - This is among many very problematic thing in the book *How Christ Said the First Mass* by the Fr. James Meagher
 - “Few writers trace clerical robes and vestments to their origin in the Temple and Passover” — *Because they do not come from the Temple or Passover*
 - The Alb supposedly came from the seamless garment of the Temple priest, except it more easily shown to be part of the Greco-Roman common wear as an under-tunic

- The Chasuble, despite every author attributing it to an adaptation of Roman costume of the 1st century is supposedly Elias' prophetic robe.
 - There are many other claims, all trying to suggest a deep but contrived symbolism, but what is striking is that the book few references to other scholarship supporting these claims is made. Footnotes reference scripture or other authors in passing, but not in a scholarly way, to support claims.
- Important Point : Symbolism should not be looked for, because the spirit of the Roman liturgy while not absent symbolism, does not primarily try to symbolize things by its liturgy and object used.
- The Roman liturgical spirit is eminently practical
 - Roman prayers tend to be short, simple, and to the point (versus Gallican-style prayers or Eastern prayers which tend to be instructional and symbolic).
 - The Roman rite is, by far, the shortest of Catholic rites in its ceremonies.
 - If there is some action or movement, there was originally some reason for this
 - If a server genuflects, there will always be a reason for this
 - For example, he is crossing the center, or accompanying a server who is crossing the center.
 - Always somewhat frustrating to see servers go out of their way to go to the center to genuflect, just to then return to the side from which they came.
- Most vestments began as a modification of, or the highest quality of common clothing or other items, and then as fashions changed, the clergy retained distinctive clothing.
 - For example, the maniple was originally a towel for the priest to use when he became hot, it was decorated, and when highly decorated wasn't used as to wipe sweat any more, but the maniple itself remained.
 - This also makes sense with regard to the persecutions in the early centuries
 - While not Empire-wide except for some short periods, still, if there were special distinctive wears, this would have drawn attention.
- Even if much of what is spoken of as "symbolic" is applied after the fact, the Church has adopted, to some degree, some of these ideas, for example in the prayer for vesting with the amice, the words speak of the "helmet of salvation" and the cleric is directed to first put the amice on top of his head (like a hood), before moving it down over his shoulders and tucking it into his neck.
- We will mention some symbolism at times, but it is important to consider that much of our symbolism does not come from the original purpose of the vestment, but is an application after the fact, meaning, it is meant to help us, not to suggest why the garment is what it is.
- In other words, we do not want to denigrate "symbolism" but also not give it too much importance, as if it was a primary concern.

VESTMENTS AND RELATED CLOTH ITEMS USED IN THE ROMAN RITE

- **We can divide the sacred cloths into :**
 - Sacred Vestments (used by the clergy such as the alb, chasuble, stole, cope, etc.)
 - Altar Vestments (Tabernacle Veil and Antependium)
 - Altar Linens (C corporal, Altar Cloths, Purificator, Pall, Manutergium, etc.)
- **Preliminary : The Cassock**
 - Latin : *Vestis talaris* ("ankle length robe")
 - Comes from the under-tunic/chiton worn under the toga/himation in Greco-Roman civil life
 - The black color is very distinctive, since the original civil garb would have been white linen, hence the separation from the civil life was shown by such an opposite color
 - Various styles of both cassock and collars. Eastern cassocks are doubled (inner and outer)

- Religious habits replace the cassock
- White cassocks are approved for missionary territory (not specifically the tropics)
 - i.e. New Zealand is still a “missionary country” but the pre-conciliar practice was that black was used during the winter, and white during the summer, even though it never gets “hot” in any real sense there.
- For prelates there are two kinds (choir & house)
 - The choir cassocks are all solid colors (roman purple/magenta, red, or white)
 - The house cassocks are black with piping and a colored sash.
- For servers, cassocks should be black only. Red (or colors) are for prelates.
 - Red cassocks are a late 19th century French invention and are ***not traditional***
 - Dozens of young boys (often without any discipline) would dress up to look like miniature cardinals and sit in choir for no reason
 - Lay men serving substitute for the minor order of acolyte by special privilege, but acolytes wear a black cassock and surplice
 - Exceptions : At a Pontifical Mass, the MC is permitted to use the roman purple of bishops. The servers at St. Peter’s Basilica also use this color. This is a long-standing custom in both cases.
- **Sacred Vestments**
 - **The Amice**
 - A square or rectangular piece of linen which is meant to cover the shoulders
 - It must be made of linen. Cotton or polyester is forbidden (though often this is neglected)
 - The Roman form should be about 30" square, with 3' of twill tape ribbons on two corners. It should have a cross in the center.
 - It is common to find smaller versions, but with albs that do not have a neck that ties, this often exposes the cassock
 - When vesting the subdeacon with the amice, the bishop says this symbolizes the “discipline of the voice” though it is unclear if this was on account of the amice having been something which muffled the voice, or this is symbolic due to being tied around the neck.
 - It was originally placed over the head, the other vestments then put on, and the amice lowered as a kind of hood. This is still done by monastics, who have a special form that fits their hood.
 - They wear this hood in place of the biretta.
 - There are medieval and revival forms that use a band of silken fabric or embroidery that hangs around the neck, called an appareled amice. These are not forbidden, but are only appropriate for certain styles of vestments.
 - The amice is always worn with the alb, except in one situation, where the custom outside of the U.S. and monastic usages, is that at a Pontifical Mass, the assistant priest and assistant deacons do not wear the alb, but only the surplice, and the amice goes over the surplice.
 - This harkens back to the time when a cleric dressed with all of the vestments he had received, so surplice over cassock, amice over surplice, alb over amice and surplice, etc.
 - **The Alb**
 - A full length linen under-tunic which entirely covers the street wear (cassock)
 - As with the amice, it must be made of linen or hemp. Cotton or other blended fabrics can only be used with a special indult (given only when linen is difficult to obtain).

- This is often violated, and cheaper materials that are easier to care for are often substituted
 - Practically, though, if the right weight of linen is used, a linen alb is much better than a poly-cotton alb.
 - It may be adorned with embroidered panels (as was customary in the middle ages), or have cuffs and a skirt made from lace.
 - Practically, too much lace, or use of a very fine mesh (often in polyester) is not appropriate or dignified.
 - A reasonable trim of lace is fitting outside of penitential times.
 - During penitential times and requiem Masses, the alb should be entirely plain
 - If lace is added, it can be useful to remove the skirt for cleaning, and so have fasteners that allow this.
 - The neck can either be a squared-off neck, or be gathered and tied around the neck of the wearer with strings.
 - This vestment has not changed much since the 9th century, and derives from the white tunic (hence *alba*) used in Grego-Roman civil society
 - There is a natural symbolism of purity, but the practical usage of the alb is to entirely cover the street clothing so only the head and hands are seen.
 - Until the 12th cent. all clerics wore an alb, after this the surplice was used at times.
 - The alb is used at Mass and various other ceremonies attached to Mass.
 - The alb is always worn with a cincture.
- **The Surplice**
- Developed from the alb, this is a shorter and wider form of the tunic.
 - Whereas the alb has tight-fitting sleeves, the surplice have wide sleeves
 - Whereas the alb is fairly tight fitting through the upper body, the surplice is quite wide, and only comes to mid-thigh to knee.
 - Aside for young servers: the surplice is not a tee-shirt. Pick on that reaches to your thighs or knees.
 - Some lace on the edges of the surplice are permitted, but really should only be used for very festive days and occasions.
 - The entirely sheer surplice is certainly forbidden, yet often finds its way onto a priest somewhere, and looks terrible.
 - There is no regulation on materials, but since it is worn frequently a cotton-linen blend is acceptable and perhaps easier to care for.
 - As with the amice, it must be made of linen or hemp. Cotton or other blended fabrics can only be used with a special indult (given only when linen is difficult to obtain).
 - A cleric receives this garment upon tonsure in which the cleric is told, “May the Lord clothe thee with the new man who is created in righeteousness and true holiness after the image of God.”
 - It is used by clerics as a kind of choir garment, and often symbols of one’s order are worn over this for minor functions.
 - For example, a priest wears a surplice and stole when Baptizing, Blessing items, hearing confessions, etc.
- **The Rochet**
- A kind of alb in shorter surplice form which is often highly decorated with lace, ties at the neck, and has tight fitting sleeves like the alb.
 - This was a form of shortened alb used for canons and prelates.

- The distinction tends to be the tie at the neck (though some surplices can be tied at the neck), but especially the tight sleeves which are meant to cover the whole arm.
 - This garment is properly restricted to prelates or at least those of a higher rank than the ordinary priest.
 - It is certainly not appropriate for a layman serving at the altar (because questionable for a priest, so much more so for a lay man)

- **The Cincture (or Girdle)**
 - A cord (often tasseled at the end) made of linen or other cord that binds the alb.
 - Normally white, but
 - It may be of any liturgical color (except black, since it symbolizes chastity and purity, and black certainly does not symbolize purity)
 - It may be twisted with metallic cords for use during solemn feasts (often called a “Pontifical Cincture” there is nothing really pontifical about this, except the cord often matches that used on pectoral crosses)
 - Symbolizes chastity (“Gird me O Lord with the girdle of purity...”)
 - In the East, there is a similar band often of the same material as the vestments, but this serves the same purpose of gathering the garments at the waist.
 - Only worn with the alb, never with surplice or rochet.
 - When wearing the alb, the cincture is always worn also
 - While it has been a particular liturgical vestment since the 9th century, its use in the liturgy is from the earliest days of the Church.

- **The Maniple**
 - The first of the specifically sacred vestments reserved to sacred (major) orders
 - This is a doubled band of fabric worn over the left forearm, about 3 feet in total length and about 3-4 inches wide.
 - It is typically fastened on the side closest to the hand about two-thirds of the way down with a stitch, cord, or vestment trim.
 - While not forbidden to fasten both sides, this is not a good idea, because when the hands are held in prayer, a single sided maniple naturally lays against the vestments, whereas a double-side fastened maniple tends to rub the vestments, wearing them unnecessarily.
 - A way of pinning the looped center to the alb, or a cord allowing the maniple to be bound to the arm is often provided. Today this is often just an elastic band.
 - A cross must be placed in the middle of the band (top when wearing), and a cross must be placed on each end. (The practice of placing other emblems in place of the crosses is incorrect, but often found in cheap modern manufacturing)
 - As mentioned before, it developed from the practice of carrying a towel with which to wipe perspiration (hence why it was often called in the middle ages the *sudarium*), but obviously is not used for this function now.
 - Must be made of vestment material (silk or similar) * We’ll discuss rules later
 - Should match the rest of the vestments in color
 - Worn only during the Mass proper (so never when the cope is used, nor when the chasuble is removed).
 - Given to the subdeacon at his ordination.
 - Bishops put this on during the prayers at the foot, others in the sacristy.

- Various styles:
 - Medieval/Gothic is a straight band
 - French style is like a spade (wide shovel-like ends)
 - Belgian-German style is straight, with a slight flare at the ends
 - Italian is also wide and flared at the ends, but the cross is placed not in the center of the flare, but a few inches above in the area right before it flares out
- **The Tunicle**
 - The next vestment given to the subdeacon at his ordination
 - It comes directly from the over-tunic worn in Greco-Roman society and is simply a version of this.
 - It is similar to the Dalmatic but was typically shorter and wider, though practically, most vestment sets do not make any distinction between the dalmatic and tunicle (except sometimes to have one or two bands of trim across the back).
 - In form it is like a large shirt, which comes to the knees, with a hole for the head and sleeves that come half-way down the arms.
 - Gothic, Italian and Spanish styles tend to have the tunicle with full sleeves
 - French and Germanic styles tend to have the bottom of the sleeves open to free the hands to move around more easily
 - This is a doubled band of fabric worn over the left forearm, about 3 feet in total length and about 3-4 inches wide.
 - It is symbolic of joy according to the words of the bishop in clothing the subdeacon “May the Lord clothe thee with the tunic of joy and the garment of rejoicing”
 - Pope St. Gregory the Great suppressed the use of the tunicle, and the subdeacon for a time wore the chasuble, often folded (from where the custom of using a folded chasuble comes from), but by the middle ages the use of the tunicle and dalmatic returned during times of joy (non-penitential days).
- **The Stole**
 - The first vestment given to the deacon at his ordination (and used by deacons, priests and bishops) is a symbol of authority.
 - The stole derives from a band of cloth that magistrates and those who exercised jurisdiction would employ to show their authority. It shows the same thing in the Church now, hence
 - A deacon wears it across his body as a sash, from left shoulder, with ends joined and the ends hanging on his right, showing a limited amount of authority and power.
 - The priest wears it in front of his body, but when wearing the alb, he crosses the ends over each other, forming an X shape, showing a full, but restricted authority, as some priestly acts are reserved to bishops.
 - When wearing a surplice and not the alb, he will let the ends hang down in front or use a pastoral stole (where a cord binds the ends in the middle, for convenience).
 - The bishop wears the stole straight down in front of his body, showing a complete and unrestricted authority. He does this whether he is wearing the alb or a rochet.
 - The stole is meant to be worn over the shoulders, not around the neck.
 - Styles for the stole are similar to that of the maniple, but longer.
 - Medieval/Gothic stoles are about 10 feet in length
 - French, Germanic, and Italian stoles are about 8 feet in length
 - “Receive the yoke of the Lord, for His yoke is sweet and His burden is light.”

- This suggests that the stole is symbolic of the office of the Levite (dedicated to service of God in the Temple) and the Levitical authority
 - Since Levitical, restricted to Deacons and above.
 - The prayer when putting on the stole, however, speaks of the restoration of innocence.
 - At first this may seem like a symbol of purity,
 - But in fact, it seems more to be a reference to Sanctifying Grace, which is the purpose of the sanctifying office of Holy Orders, since the same prayer speak of this “robe of immortality” being “lost in the transgression of our first parents”
 - Thus, the idea of it being symbolic of the authority and office ties into this idea.
- **The Dalmatic**
- The next vestment given to the deacon at his ordination
 - As the name suggests it is a tunic in a form seen in Dalmatia (The coast across the Adriatic from Italy)
 - It is more narrow and longer than the tunic, although by the 16th century, there was no longer any real difference in form.
 - It was introduced by Pope St. Sylvester in 315 for deacons in Rome, and spread from there, in some places it was used by acolytes (and the East still does this).
 - There is no real symbolism to this vestment, since it originated from civil wear, but the Abbot Bl. Maurus Rabanus of Fulda, spoke of the cruciform shape being an image of Christ’s sufferings.
 - The prayers for vesting “Lord, endow me with the garment of salvation, the vestment of joy, and with the dalmatic of justice ever encompass me” suggest it is not symbolic of the Cross.
- **The Chasuble**
- Derived from civil attire (as mentioned) the Chasuble was worn by almost all clergy at certain times, even down to acolytes
 - As noted, St. Gregory the Great suppressed the use of the Tunic and subdeacons return to using the chasuble until the 9th century.
 - The original form was a large “poncho” worn by the lower classes, but became common and popular amongst all classes in Roman society.
 - The medieval form is simply a large circular garment, about 11-12 feet in diameter, with a hole for the head.
 - It was gathered up around the arms, which is one reason for the priest always keeping his hands folded and up at chest level or above (else the sides would fall down over his hands).
 - In the East this garment retained the long back and sides, but the front was cut away for ease of movement, turning the garment into more of a cope-like vestment
 - In the West, we began in the late middle ages and early Renaissance to cut away the sides of the vestment
 - The so-called “Borromean style” or semi-Gothic cuts back the sides to about halfway down the upper arms
 -
- **The Cope**

- The next vestment given to the deacon at his ordination
 - As the name suggests it is from Dalmatia
- **The Humeral Veil**
 - This is a 10-foot long, 2-foot wide vestment which is worn over the shoulders and upper arms (humerus) when something needs to be veiled
 - It has a clasp or ties to keep it around the neck, and is often ornamented in the back, though no ornamentation is required.
 - It is used at Solemn Mass (except for Requiems) by the subdeacon who holds the paten, and veils this with the right side of the veil, letting the left hang down.
 - It also serves as the chalice veil for Solemn Mass when the chalice is set up on the credence table.
 - There is never a black humeral veil, because at a Requiem Mass, the paten remains on the altar (and Subdeacon incenses the Blessed Sacrament at the elevation)
 - The colors are only ever used at Mass
 - White is always used (no matter the color of the cope) for Benediction, to cover the hands of the priest (as he is not blessing you).
- **The Chalice Veil**
 - This is a 18-24" square piece of vestment fabric meant to cover the chalice when not used during the first part of the Mass, and after Communion.
 - It may have a cross on the front, but none is prescribed
- **The Burse**
 - This is a small 6-10" square envelope of vestment fabric which holds the corporal when it is not in use.
 - When a corporal is in it, it always lays flat on the altar
 - When a corporal is not in it, it stands up on the altar
 - The top should match the vestments being used, and often is ornamented with a cross (though none is prescribed). Other symbols are not appropriate, however.
 - There are many styles of burse (Italian, open sided, etc.)
- **The Folded Chasuble and Broad Stole**
 - These are not used since the 1960 modifications to the rubrics (and for Holy Week the 1956 modifications), however, they are still seen in some places where priests use former rites (we'll talk about that in an upcoming episode)
 - They were only ever used for penitential days, so only a violet and black version existed
 - **Folded Chasuble**
 - While related to ordination, this is not folded up in the back as is done at the ordination of a priest
 - Instead, the back is normal, but the front is truncated
 - This is worn in place of the Dalmatic or Tunicle by the Deacon and Subdeacon
 - This flows from the 6th century to 9th century usage in Rome, but also relates to ordinations

- On Ember Days, it was common to confer ordinations, and at these, the candidates would enter with their vestments tied up, and then these would be let down during the ceremony.
- **Broad Stole**
 - This was a very wide stole which was not worn in place of the regular stole, but over it, like the dalmatic or folded chasuble.
 - It was only used by the deacon when singing the Gospel, and he would remove the folded chasuble before putting on the broad stole
 - It is derived from a Gothic chasuble, which instead of being folded, was rolled up as a sash and worn across the shoulder like a stole.
 - Again, reminiscent of ordinations on Ember Days
- **Headwear**
 - **The Biretta**
 - A square cap with three horns sometimes with a tuft.
 - For a cleric up to a priest it is black
 - For a priest who has received some prelatial dignity (e.g. appointment as a chaplain of His Holiness), it is black with a red pom
 - For a bishop, it is amaranth or Roman purple
 - For a cardinal red, but with no pom
 - Certain orders without hoods use a biretta of the color of their habits (Premonstrarians use white).
 - The rubrics instruct the sacred ministers to wear this at various points in time, but it does not seem to be of obligation.
 - The custom in the SSPX in many places has disfavored its use
 - Some have made it a point of argument and controversy
 - It is not commonly used in France
 - **The Zuchetto**
 - A small round head covering which covered the tonsure
 - For a cleric up to a priest it is black (though rarely worn, and forbidden during sacred functions)
 - For a bishop, it is amaranth or Roman purple
 - For a cardinal red,
 - For the Pope, white.
 - Formerly, clerics, once tonsured, were obliged to keep the crown of their head shaven (even if this was reduced to about a 1" circle). So, this cap was to cover this bare spot on the head.
- **Episcopal Garments**
 - **Gloves**
 - Tight-fitting gloves used when at the throne, processing, carrying the crozier, and also for the ordination of priest and deacon.
 - These follow the color of the vestments.
 - **The Tunicella**
 - A very thick combined tunic and dalmatic in two layers, often sewn together, which the bishop wears under the chasuble at certain solemn functions
 - These follow the color of the vestments.
 - **The Miter**

- A peaked hat (of varying height) used by prelates and bishops
- Three kinds exist : The Golden Miter (made from Cloth of Gold), the Precious Miter (with embroidery and jewels on it), and the Simplex Miter (made from white linen)
 - The Precious Miter is the one typically used, but because these often were heavy, at certain times, a bishop would switch to the golden miter which was solemn, but light weight.
 - The simplex miter was used for penitential days and requiems.
- **The Gremial**
 - A large lap cloth placed over the bishops' lap when he is seated at the throne, or seated on the altar predella doing some action in which there could be something spilled on the vestments
 - Typically matches the vestments, or it is made of white linen so it can be laundered easily (for Confirmation, for example).
- **Altar “Vestments”**
 - **The Antependium**
 - A large cloth made from vestment-type material that covers the front of the altar during sacred ceremonies in which the altar is employed (Mass, Vespers, Benediction, etc.)
 - The name means “hangs before” which is precisely what it does.
 - Often constructed in two parts (or one part on a frame) where the main piece hangs from a rod, and another piece (the superantependium) attached to the altar cloths hangs in front of this rod hiding it from view
 - This is required on altars that are not highly decorated, made of marble, or otherwise of such beauty that the antependium would distract from the altar, rather than enhance it's beauty.
 - Since the altar is a symbol of Christ, as is the priest a representative, it makes sense that both would be adorned for sacred services.
 - The lace fringe on an altar cloth is not a substitute for an antependium.
 - They come in all liturgical colors, including black, which is used for Requiem Masses (even when the tabernacle veil must be violet).
 - **The Tabernacle Veil**
 - While many people think that the “little red light” is the sign of the presence of the Blessed Sacrament in a tabernacle, in the mind of the Church, it is the veil over the tabernacle.
 - She does require a candle to burn before such a tabernacle, so this is where the use of the Sanctuary Lamp came from.
 - Red, in fact, is not the most appropriate color for the Blessed Sacrament, but is so customary, it is hard to suggest it be changed.
 - White/clear is the most ideal color.
 - The tabernacle veil must cover the whole tabernacle, like a tent, unless the design of the tabernacle will not allow this.
 - The use of two curtains hanging in front is not allowed, unless the tabernacle is so built into the altar that it cannot be covered properly.
 - Tabernacles and altars should not be constructed so that the tabernacle cannot be covered properly.
 - The material to be used is not determined, so it could be of any decent fabric, but matching the antependia seems most fitting, thus, vestment material is appropriate.

- The only prohibition is that the veil cannot be sheer or made of lace.
- If the tabernacle is lined with gold or linen/silk, there is no need to have an inner veil, and an inner veil is quite inconvenient.
- The use of this veil is obligatory, and the only exemptions are the Pontifical Basilicas in Rome because their tabernacles are so large it is difficult to change veils on them.
- The colors permitted are all, except black, which is never used. Violet is used in place of black.
 - The color follows the Office/Mass of the Day
 - When a Sung Votive Mass or commemoration is celebrated, the color is changed to match the votive Mass, otherwise, the color for the day is retained, even if it does not match the vestments the priest is using.
 - For Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, the color is white, except when this occurs during Vespers where the color is that of the Office.
- **Altar Linens**
 - **The Purificator**
 - A rectangular cloth of linen or hemp (all other materials strictly forbidden), about 16" x 10" which is folded in thirds lengthwise, then in half.
 - This is placed on the chalice to be used to cleanse it (and a purificator is used any time one must purify his fingers, or a place due to a dropped host or spill of the Precious Blood.
 - Often it has a cross in the center, to distinguish this from other linens
 - Once used, it must be washed by a subdeacon before it can be laundered by others, because it is possible remnants of the Blessed Sacrament are contained in it.
 - **The Corporal**
 - A square cloth of linen or hemp (all other materials strictly forbidden), about 20" x 20" which is folded in thirds twice.
 - This is symbolic of the burial shroud of Our Lord, and is placed on the altar under the Blessed Sacrament or anything containing it.
 - Aside : It is not used under relics, nor under statues, even of Our Lord or His Passion. It is reserved for the Blessed Sacrament alone.
 - It is usually heavily starched so it is easy to scrape up any particles left from the host laying on it.
 - If used only for Benediction (the host never physically touches it), the cross is typically placed in the middle, otherwise in the middle of the front square after folding.
 - Once used, it must be washed by a subdeacon before it can be laundered by others, because it is likely remnants of the Blessed Sacrament are contained in it, and so it must be washed separately from the purificators.
 - **The Manutergium/Finger Towel**
 - A cloth of linen or hemp (though other materials are permitted), about 12" x 12" which is folded in quarters then in half.
 - Often has a small cross in the corner, to distinguish it from a purificator.
 - Used by the priest when washing his fingers/hands at Mass
 - **The Pall**

- A square piece of linen about 6" on a side, supported by some card (often binders' board is best) which is used to cover the chalice
 - It may have embroidery on the top and use any fabric for decoration, but the bottom must have a removable square of linen that is the actual pall.
 - It is fitting that the bottom have a cross in the center.
- Originally, the corporal was large enough to be pulled forward to cover the chalice, then a second (folded) corporal would be used to cover the chalice, eventually becoming the card-like pall.

[Possible Break]

COLORS OF VESTMENTS

- **In the Roman Rite there are five colors approved for vestments**
 1. White — *Feasts of the Trinity, Our Lord (when not related to His Passion), Our Lady, Confessors, Virgins (not martyrs), Holy Women, Blessings and preaching when no other color is noted, Confirmation, Funeral and Burial of infants (or those without reason)*
 - Symbolic of purity and joy
 2. Red — *Feasts related to Our Lord's Passion, the Holy Ghost, Martyrs, Papal Funerals*
 - Symbolic of the blood shed by Our Lord and martyrs, and the tongues of fire
 - The medieval papal color (until Pope St. Pius V) was red, so popes were buried in red, and usually did not use black vestments.
 3. Green — *Sundays and Ferias during the Tempus per Annum (after Epiphany and Pentecost)*
 - Symbolic of growth, life, and hope, so in some places (Eastern) the Holy Ghost
 - The time during the year is symbolic of the life of the Church and the growth of virtue in the Christian life, so green is very appropriate
 4. Violet (not Purple) — *Advent and Lenten Sundays and Ferias, Septuagesima Sundays and Ferias, Vigils (except Pentecost and the Ascension), Penitential Days and Acts (Rogations), Exorcisms, Blessing of Holy Water, Extreme Unction, Penance, Votive Masses (in general), Priests (except the Pope) are buried in Violet*
 - Symbolic of sorrow and penance
 - Why not "purple"
 - Violet is a color of the spectrum in which red and blue combine
 - Purple (from the Greek πορφύρα (*porphura*), is a variety of colors which come from dying fabrics with Tyrian Purple (a dye historically collected from the mucus of the spiny-dye murex snail).
 - Because of the difficulty of obtaining this dye, like Ultramarine (made by grinding the gemstone lapis lazuli), it was extremely expensive
 - Thus it was reserved for royalty, and did not symbolize penance, sacrifice, or sorrow, rather just the opposite.
 - When the Eastern empire fell in 1453, and the dye works in Constantinople were destroyed, scarlet (red) became the royal color.
 - In 1464, Paul II decreed that scarlet was to be the color of cardinals, and bishops were to use "purple" overlaid with scarlet (which is close to what we have today as the magenta "Roman Purple" of bishops).
 - Thus slowly the colors violet and purple were confused, but vestments are "violet" in all the Roman rubrical language.

5. Black — *Requiem and Funeral Rites, All Souls Day, Good Friday (the Pope excepted)*
 - Symbolic of death and darkness
- **Note that several colors commonly seen are not mentioned, and for good reason, because either they are not properly colors, or they are allowed as substitutes only**
 - **Rose**
 - Rose is permitted as a substitute for Violet on two Sundays (3rd of Advent, 4th of Lent) but it is not required to be used.
 - Rose is meant to be a muted form of violet, showing a kind of reprieve of the penances (so is a combination of violet, white, and a bit more red)
 - This is NOT pink. (While there are pink roses, the classic color of a rose is between red and violet in a kind of light maroon or wine-like color.
 - The garish hot pink often found in chapels is really awful and unfitting for the liturgy, and having a “rose” set is not necessary, so wait for a good set to be found/made.
 - **Cloth of Gold**
 - Gold is not a color. It is a metal
 - Cloth of Gold (also historically lamé, not the common term now) is a fabric (often of heavy silk onto which very fine wires of gold, or silver plated with gold were woven.
 - Thus, these fabrics are actually made from precious metals, which is why they are shiny
 - The main color is from the ground fabric, but the shine is from real gold
 - Cloth of Gold must contain actual gold, and the Sacred Congregation of Rites expressly forbids imitation gold or yellow fabrics (and ruled this way at least six different times)
 - The reason Cloth of Gold can substitute for white, red, or green is because of its precious quality, being made from gold
 - Practical note : It is **far better** for a church to have very fine, high-quality colors, than to have poor-quality colors and purchase or seek to have made “gold” vestments.
 - **Cloth of Silver**
 - More rare than gold, this is also a cloth made from silk interwoven with silver threads.
 - It was far more common in Italy and Spain than in France, and since many antique vestments we have today are French in origin (due to the wholesale apostasy of France and the government owning all the churches (and disposing of their goods), silver is somewhat uncommon to find
 - In Fort Worth we were able to acquire a full Solemn Set in museum-quality condition of a 1793-made Silver set from Toledo (Spain, not Ohio)
 - Cloth of Silver must contain actual gold, and the Sacred Congregation of Rites expressly forbids imitation silver or grey-metallic fabrics
 - For the same reason of its preciousness Cloth of Silver can substitute for white (only)
 - Practical note : It is **even more important** for a church to have very fine, high-quality colors, than to have poor-quality colors and purchase or seek to have made “silver” vestments.
 - **Blue**
 - Not an approved liturgical color ***in the Roman Rite***.
 - It was used in several other rites, such as Toledo and many Eastern rites.

- After *Quo Primum* while the Mozarabic Rite was still permitted in Toledo, it slowly was replaced by the Roman Rite, and by 1842 only two parishes remained that used this rite.
- Permissions to use blue are related to the fact that Spain used to employ the Mozarabic Rite throughout her territories, so can be seen as an indulgent to allow an older custom (and employ those antique vestments)
- There is are all manner of claimed indulgences
 - Some say, Spain and all of her former territories received permission
 - None can locate a decree that says this, because none exists.
 - Certainly there are none that are 400 years old, in fact the only 400 year old decree dealing with this is a ruling against a using white chasuble with blue trim, and this by a bishop who was notorious for litigation (144 dubia).
 - However, there are permissions by several indulgences (not just one), most during the 19th century, however:
 - All are extremely restrictive, and apply to a single diocese,
 - None of the indulgences ever grant the use of blue to Spain and all of her former colonies,
 - All grant the use of blue **only** for the Immaculate Conception, its octave and Votive Masses of the Immaculate Conception
 - It is not an optional permission, but a decree that blue **must** be used once all churches in a diocese have blue vestments.
 - White is forbidden, suggesting the purpose of restoring the older custom of Toledo.
 - It is not granted for any other Marian feast (even Our Lady of Lourdes per a 1902 decree)
 - It is granted only after the Ordinary requests this.
 - It does seem that the intention of the SRC and Popes was to concede this to any diocese that requested it provided it was at one time ruled by Spain.
 - Pope St. Pius X granted to the SRC the power to permit blue as an ordinary faculty, which suggests it must be requested, and cannot be presumed.
 - This becomes clear by a 1910 permission granted by St. Pius X to the Philippines as formerly under Spanish rule, which requested this, and was granted it.
- Summary : Blue is not a permitted liturgical color, except in places where permission of the Holy See was asked and granted
 - These include certain Spanish dioceses, the Philippines, Peru, Mexico, and Cuba.
 - No diocese in the United States has ever asked for or received this permission, so it is a liturgical abuse to use blue vestments.
 - Blue Vestments may only be used for the Feast of the Immaculate Conception itself, or votive Masses of the Immaculate Conception.
 - However, there is nothing wrong with white vestments which have a great deal of blue highlights in them, nor lining white vestments with blue and reserving these for Marian feasts, so long as the vestments are clearly white, not blue.

GOOD AND BAD VESTMENTS

- Too Stiff, Not Stiff Enough

- If you look at well-designed antique vestments, they have a body to them (they are somewhat stiff, but also bend naturally)

PRACTICAL DETAILS

- **Each chapel should have at least one 1st class, and one ordinary set of every one of the five normal colors**
 - It is a matter of priorities:
 - First priority is to provide something decent (an ordinary set) within means of all five standard colors
 - Second priority is to provide something very nice for feasts in each of the standard colors (since we should be able, by the vestments and adornment of the altar tell if this is a great feast, or feria, penitential day, etc.
 - Only then, should one consider investing in Cloth of Gold, Cloth of Silver, or Rose vestments, all of which are substitutes for the other sets.
 - Too often in chapels, decent sets of colors cannot be found, yet a shiny polyester yellow (“gold”) set is available.
 - For places that never have a Solemn Mass, this should be a Low Mass (5-piece) Set with a Cope (Chasuble, Stole, Maniple, Chalice Veil, Burse)
 - For places that may have a Solemn Mass, efforts to acquire a full (12-piece) set slowly should happen (Chasuble, Dalmatic, Tunic, Priests’ Stole, Deacon’s Stole, 3 Maniples, Humeral Veil, Chalice Veil, Burse, Cope), but always high-quality, not simply to acquire them.
 - If necessary, often a priory will lend one of it’s chapels a set for a one-off occasion, rather than the chapel invest in something that is cheap and rarely used.
- **How to acquire good-quality vestments**
 - What not to do:
 - Many online vestment retailers selling “off-the-shelf” products are not making decent vestments
 - “Takes one to know one” — A priest with some experience and decent taste will know how a vestment is meant to move and fit.
 - Many retailers produce vestments that do not sit correctly on a priests’ body, often because they are making vestments for the Novus Ordo Mass, where they are worn in a different manner.
 - Simply because they sell “Roman Chasubles” Wh

GOOD AND BAD VESTMENTS

- **Too Stiff, Not Stiff Enough**
 - If you look at well-designed antique vestments, they have a body to them (they are somewhat stiff, but also bend naturally)
 - This is similar to suits, where there is an interfacing (usually of horsehair cloth)
 - Often newer vestments are made (commercially and privately) using iron-in or polyester interfacing that is far too stiff, or nothing, making them not stiff enough.
 - In those well designed antique vestments, the interfacing (typically a waxed sackcloth, duck canvas, or heavy horsehair cloth) was never fused to the vestment fabric or lining, but only stitched at the edges, allowing all parts to flow freely.

- Instead, when interfacing is too stiff, and fused, the bending creates odd creases that then separate from the fabric, and make the garment look wrinkled.
 - These wrinkles tend to pick up stains because they are raised.
 - There is no easy way to fix this.

- **Too heavy, not enough flow**
 - If you look at well-designed antique vestments, they have a body to them (they are somewhat stiff, but also bend naturally)

- **Bad choice of fabrics**
 - Garish colors or designs that are distracting.
 - Yellow (not cloth of Gold)
 - Not silk, (given how hard it is to acquire good vestment silk, we can probably tolerate the high-quality polyester brocades)
 - Often this is a cost cutting technique to use poor quality fabrics
 - Most good quality fabrics are imported from England, Italy, Greece, Russia, or East Asia
 - You cannot find vestment fabrics at Hobby Lobby, Joann, or other craft stores
 - Good cheap fabric will run \$50 per yard/meter for decent simple fabric (silk velvet)
 - They can run \$200-300 per yard/meter for good quality brocades
 - Good vestments are expensive, and have always been
 - A decent simple Low Mass set should run \$1000-2000
 - A simple solemn set should run \$2500-5000
 -

- **Finding Good New Vestments**
 - Look for Bespoke tailors or long-standing ecclesiastical houses (e.g. Gammarelli), not off-the-shelf vestments, or inexpensive online deals
 - Many of these off-the-shelf look good from a distance but are made in factory setups where the people sewing or designing do not understand how clothing works.
 - The same difference between a tailored suit and off-the-rack at Walmart
 - A tailor understand how fabric falls on the body, and how to adjust cuts so everything fits well. The off-the-rack is going to be mass-produced and take shortcuts
 - Similarly, one of the biggest issues with many online vestment makers is the chasuble does not hang correctly, or the stole rides up incorrectly, or is impossible to cross.
 - Auction sites avoid like the plague
 - If one is to make vestments, it must be treated looked at like tailoring, not sewing.
 - Most good seamstresses will refuse to attempt a suit unless they have significant tailoring experience, because they know it is a very complex process to get things right
 - The same with vestments, they are not quite as hard, but they do require a great deal of care, attention to detail, and hand sewing, like tailoring does.
 - They will have to be pieced together
 - As a priest with known good taste and experience

- **Finding Good Used Vestments**

- Various used sellers like Luzar
- Auction sites (be careful and unless you have a good tailor to assist, avoid incomplete sets)
- Avoid on eBay anything that is not used.
 -