

“YEAR OF THE EUCHARIST” — by Fr. Steve Lape

As you may know, our diocese began a “Year of the Eucharist,” as declared by Bishop Matano, on June 18th, the solemn feast day of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ. It will continue till June 3rd, 2018 (next year’s same feast day.) It is only fitting then to continue to grow in our understanding various aspects of the Eucharist as the central source of our life as Catholics, as the Body of Christ we call the Church. Thus, various articles will appear about the Eucharist for educational and reflective purposes. Today’s topic: [Mass colors.](#)



At Mass, the colors used in clergy’s clothing and in decoration are meant to convey certain meanings, as well as something about the Church season or feast day during which we gather to celebrate.

Here are the main colors used by the Catholic Church—what they signify and when they’re usually displayed:

- - - **white:** It represents joy, purity and new life. White is worn during the Christmas & Easter seasons, on feast days of Mary and many saints who were martyred (killed for the faith). White has generally replaced black at funeral celebrations, since it points to new life in heavenly, resurrection joy.

- - - **green:** It represents hope, life and vitality in growing things for things. It is worn during “Ordinary Time” (which is what the Church is in right now). Most of the Church’s year is in “Ordinary Time,” which occurs in two main periods during the year: 1— between the end of the Christmas season (which ends on the feast day of the Baptism of the Lord in early January) and the beginning of Lent, and 2— between the end of the Easter season (which ends with the Feast of Pentecost) and the beginning of Advent (around the end of November.)

- - - **red:** We often think of red as the color of love (such as the heart which symbolizes love, red roses given to a loved one). It is also the color of blood, representing those who made the ultimate sacrifice in being killed out of their love and faith in Christ. We call them martyrs for the faith. Red also represents the passionate flame of the Holy Spirit, which is why it’s the color for the feast day of Pentecost, the birthday of the Church, when the Holy Spirit descended upon Mary and the Apostles and select others who were gathered in the Upper Room (see Acts 1:13-2:4). It is worn on feast days honoring martyrs, as well as on Palm Sunday and Good Friday.

- - - **purple (violet):** This represents anticipation, waiting, sorrow or penance. It is worn during the seasons of Advent and Lent. It is also the color of the priest’s stole (the scarf-like, thin cloth that is draped around the neck and hangs down the front) when he administers, in the name of Christ, the Sacraments of Reconciliation (also known as Confession) and the Anointing of the Sick.

- - - **rose:** This represents joy at the halfway mark of Advent and Lent. It is commonly worn on the 3rd Sunday of Advent known as “Gaudete Sunday,” with “Gaudete being the Latin word for “rejoice”) & the 4th Sunday of Lent (known as “Laetare Sunday,” another Latin word meaning rejoice.”)

The rejoicing theme is to highlight the fact that we’ve moved more than halfway through the preparatory seasons of Advent and Lent, drawing closer, with growing joy and anticipation, towards the light of Christmas and Easter respectively.

