

FR. CAMURATI'S CORNER

July 31, 2022

Let's talk about colours. Not because autumn's on the way—we have months to go before we enjoy those temperatures. It's a bit late for spring flowers. Instead, let's talk about liturgical colours. Because I am a priest, and this is part of my allotted fun in life.

Originally, there were not strict rules regarding colours. There was regional variation and adaptability until the schemes began to be formally codified about 500 years ago. They still vary between different Churches, but we'll handle the colours of our Roman Rite.

White denotes baptismal purity, and so applies to most saints' days (save martyrs). It also refers to God's redeeming grace, which is why the feasts and seasons of Easter, Christmas, and Epiphany all use the colour white. Some use it in funerals to symbolize the white of baptismal garments and the promise of resurrection

Red denotes the blood, whether from the witness of the martyrs or the wounds of Christ. We also use red for the Holy Cross, washed in the Precious Blood of Christ, as well as for the Fire of the Holy Spirit.

Green is the most standard colour for Sunday goers. It signifies Christian hope, just as the green of the fields promises the coming fruitfulness of the harvest. It is also used on a general weekdays, called "Ferial Days" in Church lingo.

Gold and Silver are solemn colours that can replace white, red, or green on more solemn occasions. Sometimes these colours are used on the biggest feasts of the year, like Easter or Christmas.

Violet is a royal colour signifying penance. Christ is king in part because He was willing to suffer for us. Advent and Lent are times linked to this royal road of suffering, as were the ancient fast and vigil days of the Church's calendar. Some use it in funerals to signify mourning and penance for the dead.

Rose is a blend of penitential violet with joyful white. It is permitted twice a year during the "seventh inning stretch" of penitential seasons to herald the coming feast. These two days are Laetare Sunday in Lent, and Gaudete Sunday in Advent.

Black can be worn on All Souls' Day, and funerals in general, as a sign of mourning for the faithful departed and of penance undertaken on their behalf.

Each of these colours speaks to us. Enjoy the view!

In Christ,

Fr. Leo, O.P .