

Church textiles

Clericals and vestments



Clergy wear particular clothes called clericals and vestments.

Clericals are the distinctive every day street clothes that clergy wear when they are working or 'on duty'. They are only worn by clergy and makes it evident that they are clergy. Sometimes the clericals are worn under vestments. Clerical clothing generally consists of a clerical collar, clergy shirt, and, on some occasions, a



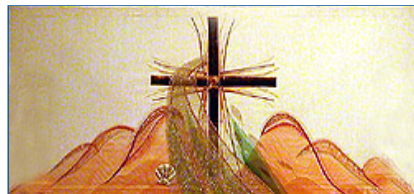
cassock.

Vestments are liturgical garments and worn only by clergy when they are taking services and they are worn over everyday clothes or clericals. They are often festive and the colours vary according to the liturgical season: white or gold during Christmas, Epiphany, Easter and for major Saints Days; red at Pentecost and principal feast days for martyrs, and days which emphasise the cross of Jesus; purple during Advent and Lent; green when there are no festivals or special days. Explanations and examples of these colours can be found on the page [Colours of the Christian Year](#). Vestments include the alb, amice, chasuble, and surplice and date back to the first century. Sometimes the vestments, particularly the stole, will have a cross on them which the clergy kiss before putting it on.

Find out about clericals and vestments on the page [Service garments](#).

High altar frontals

The frontals are the same size as the front of the altar, made of tapestry, silk or damask, and are richly decorated. There are different colours according to the time in the liturgical season.



Chalice cloths



The chalice veils and burses

- **The corporal**, a square white cloth, is laid on the altar with the chalice and ciborium on top. Corporal comes from the Latin *corpus*, meaning body. It may have a lace edging, and a cross may be embroidered onto it near the front edge.

- **The chalice veil**, a large square cloth the colour of the liturgical season, is placed over the chalice, ciborium and purificator when the vessels are prepared for communion, with the embroidered symbol facing the congregation. It is always in the correct liturgical colour.

- **The burse**, a type of folder used to carry the corporal to and from the altar, is always in the correct liturgical colour.



The pall and purificator

- **The purificator**, a white linen cloth, serves as a napkin to 'purify' the celebrant's lips, and which is used to wipe the chalice after each communicant sips from the chalice. It is also used to wipe the chalice and ciborium after the ablutions which follow Communion.

- **The pall**, a stiffened square card covered with white linen, usually embroidered with a cross, prevents dust and insects from getting into the bread and wine.

- **The lavabo towel** is used by the priest to dry his hands after washing them.

Pulpit falls

The pulpit falls are decorative pieces of material adorning the pulpit. They hang down in front of the book stand on the pulpit so the front of the fall is seen by the congregation. There are different colours according to the time in the liturgical season.



Hassocks or kneelers

The creation of a series of new kneelers was a millennium project for the church which involved a group of women who used their talents and artistic energy to give something lasting to St James's. There are four kneelers depicting the four seasons and others show the emblems for the guides and scouts, Mothers Union and New Start. The remaining designs are based on the tiles and stained glass windows in the church. See all St James's kneelers on the page [Kneelers](#).

