

AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

Marjorie Converse Reppeto for the degree of Master of Science  
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Title: THE USE OF CONTEMPORARY TEXTILES IN LITURGICAL  
VESTMENTS IN EPISCOPAL CHURCHES OF THE WEST  
COAST

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Florence E. Petzel

The study examines the extent to which contemporary textiles and designs are being used in the Eucharistic vestments worn by Episcopal priests of the West Coast, and the relationship of such change in vesture to the age of the priest and to Liturgical revision presently taking place in the Church. Hypotheses are that correlation will not be found between the use of contemporary vestments, the use of Second Service of Services for Trial Use, and the age of the priest. Descriptive hypotheses of the study are that the more frequent Celebration of Holy Eucharist is associated with liturgical change, that contemporary vestments will be found in a minority of parish churches in the sample, that a variety of design techniques will be found, that traditional symbolism relatively freely expressed will predominate, and that contemporary vestments are not designed

to coordinate with church architecture and color.

A questionnaire developed by the writer was sent to a random sample of 300 Episcopal clergymen in California, Oregon, and Washington. A sample of 167 replies was used for evaluation.

The use of contemporary vestments exceeded expectations, with 55.4% of the sample reporting their use at some time, and 34.5% indicating use of contemporary style vestments 50% or more of the time. This usage was found to be positively correlated with the use of the Second Service, Services for Trial Use, and negatively correlated with the age of the priest. Use of the Second Service was also found to be negatively correlated with the age of the priest, and liturgical change was found to be associated with increased frequency of Celebration of Holy Eucharist. A variety of design techniques was found, contemporary symbolism was slightly predominant over traditional symbolism, and consideration of church color and design was not a predominant influence upon design of vestments.

Forty churches were visited, 130 vestments seen, and 36 priests interviewed. Contemporary vestments demonstrated many levels of artistic and sewing skills, professional and amateur design ability, and a wide variety of fabrics and symbols.

A discussion of representative vestments, together with photographs includes evaluation in relation to liturgical principles

and artistic unities and other factors of concern for textile artists and craftsmen finding opportunity to exercise their skills in the service of the Church.

The Use of Contemporary Textiles in Liturgical  
Vestments in Episcopal Churches of the  
West Coast

by

Marjorie Converse Reppeto

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Head of Department

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Dean of Graduate School

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Typed by Velda D. Mullins for Marjorie Converse Reppeto

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To the many priests of the Church who responded not only to the questionnaire, but also with expressions of interest and encouragement, and particularly to those who gave time to show me their vestments and to discuss many facets of the life of the Church, grateful appreciation is expressed.

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# THE USE OF CONTEMPORARY TEXTILES IN LITURGICAL VESTMENTS IN EPISCOPAL CHURCHES OF THE WEST COAST

## I INTRODUCTION

### Background of the Study

The use of textiles in the adornment of the house of worship and for the garments of the priests is of ancient origin. Scripture records that Moses received from God the directions for the building of the Temple, the textiles to be used in the Temple and the garments of the priests (Exodus 26-28).

A survey of historic textiles shows that many of the examples preserved are from religious usage. In previous ages the finest work of artists and craftsmen was directed to or commissioned by royalty and religion. In the Christian church, liturgical vesture has been transformed from the everyday cloak of Roman citizens to the opulent vestments of the Renaissance era. Indeed, during this period vestments became veritable works of art.

The Reformation era brought about a division of Christian thought which affected attitudes not only toward theology, but also toward the proper garments of the ministers. The forces of history continue at work in the present time, bringing into the life of the Church what some observers call a twentieth century Reformation.

The liturgical movement which had its beginning in nineteenth century France is pressing forward in re-examination of that which lies beneath the rites, ceremonies and outward trappings of worship. The rediscovery of the Eucharistic celebration as the act of the gathered community of the Mystical Body of Christ and the liturgy as more than a proper order of prayers and actions is affecting the life and worship of the Church in diverse ways.

In the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, revision of the Book of Common Prayer is a visible part of this re-examination of the corporate life of the Church. A proposed revision of the Service of Holy Eucharist was approved by the General Convention of the Church for use in parishes during the triennium 1967-1970. In 1970 a more extensive proposed revision of the Prayer Book, including three alternate forms of the Service of Holy Eucharist, was authorized for trial use in parishes.

The post-World War II years have seen development of varying styles of church architecture and a renewed emphasis upon the unity of all artistic elements which form the setting for the celebration of the central Mysteries of the Faith. The Church is again discovering the merit of artistic genius which can express the ancient Faith in an open and straightforward manner, devoid of sentimentalism and decoration for its own sake. A portion of that artistic expression is found in the Eucharistic vestments worn by the celebrant.

### The Nature and Scope of This Study

It is the purpose of this study to examine the use of contemporary textiles in the Eucharistic vestments of the Episcopal Church.

Having examined the historical development of vestments, as well as the color and symbolism traditionally associated with such garments, and having established that the Church is, in fact, in a period of change, it is deemed valid to examine more closely the extent to which contemporary textiles have entered into the vesture seen in the parish church. With attention drawn to numerous departures from the traditional style of vestments, it is considered valid to examine the extent to which these changes have moved from highly publicized, affluent, or special circumstances to the level of the local parish. If there is, in fact, a growing interest at the parish level in clothing the priest in vesture which reflects the contemporary re-evaluation of the liturgy, then this is a rightful concern of textile artists and craftsmen.

This study examines the extent to which vestments in contemporary style are presently being worn in parish churches and evaluates two possible factors associated with such change. The second portion of the study investigates the nature of such changes that exist in terms of fabrics, decorative techniques, and use of traditional symbolism. The data are limited to parochial clergy of the

Episcopal Churches of Oregon, Washington, and California.

### Hypotheses

The null hypotheses to be tested are as follows:

1. The use of contemporary vestments is not correlated with the extent of use of the Services for Trial Use, Second Service of 1970.

2. The use of contemporary vestments is not correlated with the age of the priest.

3. The extent of use of Services for Trial Use, Second Service of 1970 is not correlated with the age of the priest.

The descriptive hypotheses of the study are as follows:

1. Contemporary vestments will be found in a significant number of churches, but in a minority of those selected for this study.

2. An increase in frequency of celebrations of Holy Communion will be found to be associated with the introduction of Services for Trial Use of 1970.

3. Contemporary vestments which are found will include a variety of fabrics and decorative techniques, including appliqué, crewel embroidery, other types of embroidery, and handwoven work.

4. Traditional symbolism expressed with less restraint than characteristic of traditional vestments will be predominant in the

contemporary style vestments.

5. Contemporary style vestments will not be designed to coordinate with the church architecture, color and design in a majority of vestments reported in this study.

### Motivations

Impetus for the study of change in ecclesiastical vesture in terms of contemporary textiles was initially motivated by the study of historic textiles, and the evidences of the churches of Europe as vast treasuries of fine textiles and embroideries. The writer became aware of deviations from the traditional norm in church vestments through involvement in the local parish church. As a committed churchwoman, it became evident that some need might exist for considerations of artistic and liturgical unity in the making of such vestments, as well as the extensive possibilities for textile artists and craftsmen to apply their skills in the service of the Church in this era. It was determined then to explore the extent to which contemporary fabrics and designs are being introduced and used in other parishes, and if possible, to relate such usage to changes in other aspects of the life of the Church. Throughout the planning of the study, it was assumed that change in textile use and design is a continuous process through time, and that such changes within the Church do not exist independently.

## II REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Many factors are to be considered in a study of liturgical vestments. The necessity of examining the extent of change of the vestments through time is obvious. Christian symbolism as a language which is used liturgically, as well as color symbolism and its changes through time are also important to the study.

In seeking the relationship of changes in vesture and liturgy, it is necessary to go behind the externals of shape, color, and symbol to examine the nature of liturgy, the liturgical movement, and change in the contemporary Church.

With these aspects in mind, one can then turn to factors of art and architecture which are intended to express the liturgical function of the Church, and to see the important relationships among them. Finally, the examples of contemporary vestments appearing in the literature can be examined in the light of this background.

### Origin and Development of the Chasuble

The term "vestment" encompasses a variety of garments used to clothe the ministers or officiants at public worship. The garment identifies the wearer with his role in the liturgy, be it priest, deacon, acolyte, preacher or choir member. It is essentially a garment intended to clothe the man with the identity of his office



rather than the identity of his own personality

Eucharistic vestments are those which are worn by the priest who is celebrant of the Holy Eucharist or the Mass, particularly in Roman, Anglican, orthodox, and some Lutheran churches. The complete Eucharistic vesture includes the alb, amice, girdle, stole, maniple, and chasuble.

The alb is the basic, ankle length garment, usually of linen, and white, symbolizing purity. It is worn with the amice, a rectangular linen neckpiece and collar, also white. Deriving from the hood, it symbolizes the helmet of salvation. The girdle is a rope of white cotton, tied around the waist over the alb, representing the cords which bound Jesus in His Passion. The stole is a narrow band of fabric the color of the season, worn around the priest's neck, crossed on the breast, and held in place by the girdle. It is symbolic of the yoke of Christ. The maniple is a short stole worn on the left arm. Originally a napkin or towel, it has passed into optional use in the Roman church and is rapidly becoming obsolete. The chasuble is a large, oval shaped garment of silk or linen, the color of the church season, usually decorated. It represents the robe which the Roman soldiers placed upon Christ. (Definitions after Eckel, 1960)

The alb, amice, and girdle are worn by clergy other than the celebrant, and the alb is also worn by acolytes. The stole is worn

by bishops, priest, and deacons, being worn differently according to the office. The stole is also worn by the priest for other rites of the Church. It remains then that the chasuble is the distinctively Eucharistic vestment of the priest in the western Church. It is upon this unique outer garment which has been most subject to change in design, shape and color that this study is focused.

The chasuble as a liturgical garment has no well defined early history or developmental terminology. Authorities agree that the chasuble derives from the outer garment of Roman classical dress. In this form it was variously known as paenula, planeta, and casula. Ireland (1971, p. 53-54) notes that "The paenula was worn by the Etruscans as early as the fourth century B. C., and by Tacitus' time, it replaced the toga for Senatorial dress." The garment was a circle of fabric with a hole in the center for the neck opening, and fell around the body in ample folds.

Norris (1950) and Dix (1945) note the probable Greek origin of the paenula, in which it had been a calf length garment of heavy, coarse fabric or skins, worn by the lower classes. This useful garment was adopted by all classes of Romans as a traveling cloak, most convenient for protection from rain and cold. When made of heavy fabric, it served as temporary shelter if the traveler was forced to remain out over night.

Detailed observations of mosaics and other records of the

first three centuries of the church reveal the commonality of the paenula as an outer garment for laymen as well as priests and bishops.

With the changing of common dress to a more "barbarian" and military style during the fourth century, the paenula was retained as official dress for Roman senators and civil servants (Dix, 1945). Variations from the round shape are also observed.

Norris (1950) diagrams the later shape of the paenula as that of a semicircle joined to form a cone shaped garment. It should be noted that Ireland (1971) and Pocknee (1961) state that the major evidence is in favor of this conical shaped garment as being the form of the primitive chasuble, rather than the circle. Sutfin (1956) further points out that the horizontal draping which appears in such mosaics as those of Ravenna indicates the conical shape of the garment.

Another fourth century variation of the paenula is the casula, which is cut as two-thirds of a semicircle. This resulted in a more closely fitting garment which took the name of casula or little house.

By the fifth century, another variation of the paenula appears as the rich garments of nobility and station called the planeta. This garment was also semicircular or a semicircle plus a third of a circle. During the seventh and eighth centuries, the terms casula

and planeta were used interchangeably, with the term planeta disappearing by the end of the eighth century.

In the period when Roman civil dress was in the process of change, the garments worn by bishops and priests when celebrating the Eucharist were not dissimilar to those worn at other times. It may be assumed that the "Sunday best" was worn from motives of reverence and respect. When the flowing garments of the period fell into disuse entirely as everyday dress, the conservative instinct of the Church continued their use for the celebrant of the Holy Mysteries.

By the sixth century, the casula had become the priestly vestment and would be essentially unchanged until the thirteenth century, when the modification of shape began with the distinctly pointed shape in center front and back resulting from the shortening of the sides of the vestment (Fig. 1 and 2).

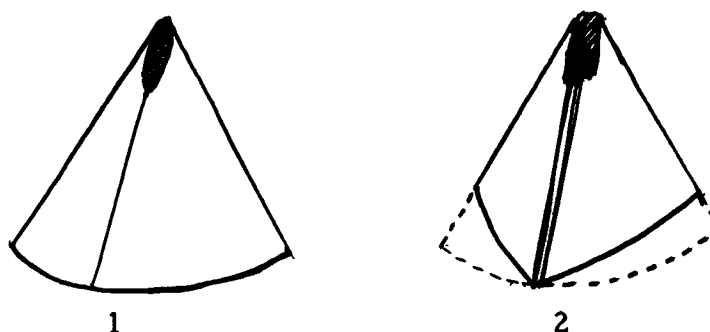


Figure 1. The ancient conical shape of the chasuble.

2. Early modification of the chasuble.

(Drawings after Sutfin)

The adoption of priestly vestments by the Christian church sometimes has been associated by medieval ritualists with a return to or counterpart of the priestly garments of the Old Testament. Dix (1945) however, in his discussion of the development of ceremonial in the Liturgy, considers vestments to be part of the spontaneous and natural process of the time. By the fourth century, Christian worship had come out of the Catacombs and other secret places, and had become a public act. In a world where every public act was performed with a degree of ceremony, it was only the natural course for the Eucharistic celebration to be accompanied by ceremony. Vestments became the official costume or robe of office, and hence only part of the logical treatment of worship as a public act.

The vestments of the church were made of fine wool, linen, and later silk. The elaborate patterns and designs of fabrics during this period of history found their way into the garments of the church. The development of the decorative orphreys began as ways to cover the seams and to strengthen the neck opening. Other bands were added as part of the design. Examples of these varying aspects of church vestments may be found in brasses, frescoes, and mosaics of the period. Norris (1950) mentions chasubles dating from the tenth century which are still preserved in European cathedrals.

During the Gothic period, the arts of tapestry and embroidery

flourished, with the masterpieces of needlework being accomplished as proper companions for the soaring magnificence of Gothic cathedrals.

The most important single movement involving Christian textile art was known as 'Opus Anglicanum' lasting from the eleventh century to the close of the medieval period, the end of the fifteenth century. Its peak was from 1270 to 1330, when it was renowned throughout Christendom. The term referred to the ecclesiastical embroidery done in England, universally esteemed for its beauty and richness. (Ireland, 1971, p. 118)

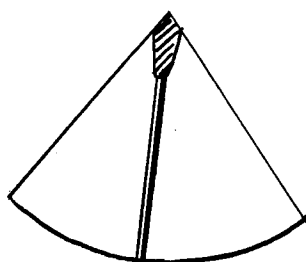
The Syon cope dated 1300-1320 is an outstanding and famous example of this work, and is preserved in the Victoria and Albert museum.

The extension of the decorative arts combined with a thirteenth century ceremonial innovation in the liturgy to bring about major changes in the shape of the chasuble. "The elevation of the Host" required the celebrant to hold the Host high with both hands so that it could be seen over his head by the worshipping congregation. With the conical chasuble enveloping his arms, this was done with difficulty, and the folding back of the chasuble over the shoulders led to the cutting away of the vestment to free the arms (Pocknee, 1961). Sutfin (1956) however, does not give credence to this rationale for the modification of the chasuble, since even the present day rubrics of the Roman missal provide for the server to lift the chasuble at the time of the Elevation, so that this difficulty is overcome. He considers that the successive cutting

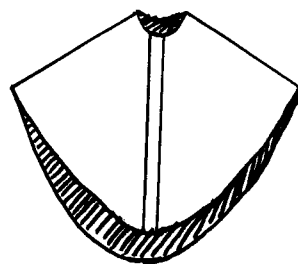
away of the chasuble was done to accommodate the ever-increasing weight of fabric and embellishment. Indeed, when the vestment reached its ultimate modifications, it was a flat surface, often stiffened with buckram, and most suitable for the display of works of art. Some have likened such vestments to "sandwich boards" and with less charity, refer to the process of change as mutilation. Objectively, it is difficult to identify the so-called "Roman" chasuble with the free flowing garment from which it derived. (Fig. 3, a-d)

Roulin (1950) writes that the chasuble is not an isolated thing, but it may be considered in the light of the history of the period. As the Gothic period, known as the age of faith, diminished and the Renaissance period of history developed, the concerns of man became humanistic. The arts flourished, intellectual reason dominated and sought the superhuman rather than the supernatural. Court ceremony and life with all the pomp and pageantry, abuses, and inequities was found in the hierarchy of the church as well as the royal palaces. Indeed, a reading of Latourette (1954) discloses a form of ecclesiastical life totally unrecognizable as the Christianity of the first six centuries.

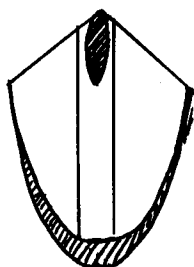
Bouyer (1954) in discussing the nature of liturgy in light of the pietism of the Renaissance and Baroque periods, observes that during this period the Mass was in fact considered an ecclesiastical counterpart of court ceremony. Within the framework of the society



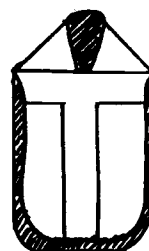
a. Early Conical Shape



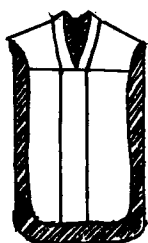
b. Shape of 14th Century



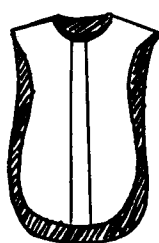
c. Shape of 16th Century



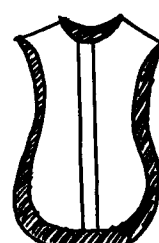
d. Shape of 17th Century



e. Italian Shape



f. Gallican Shape



g. Spanish fiddleback

Figure 3. The changing shape of the chasuble.



and the mind set of the time, the changing shape of church vestments becomes more understandable.

St. Charles Borromeo is credited with an attempt to stop the mutilation of the chasuble in the sixteenth century. He stipulated that the vestments should be 51 inches wide. The trend which had begun before him, however, was to continue into the nineteenth century, and the chasuble would shrink to 25 inches in width at the shoulder.

Other modifications occurred which have become identified with nationality. Sutfin (1956) illustrates and identifies these variations as Italian, Gallican, and Spanish. Ireland (1971) also identifies various shapes with their national origins. The most complete departure from the full, flowing casula is the "fiddleback" identified with Spain, which is cut inward from the shoulders to accommodate arm movement, and then bells outward again and is rounded at the bottom, not unlike the shape of a violin (Fig. 3, e-g).

Roulin (1950) calls attention to the fact that not everywhere nor at all times were these modifications the only vestments worn. Full and ample chasubles were in use in the eighteenth century at such important cathedrals as Notre Dame de Paris. Then as now, a priest wore what was available to him, according to his own understanding and preferences, and within the dictates and permissions of the Congregation of Rites in Rome. Under this jurisdiction are defined and controlled all matters pertaining to the rites

and ceremonial of the Roman Church.

The sixteenth century is important historically as the period of Reformation, both on the Continent and in England. A reading of church history (Lautourette, 1954 and Dawley, 1963) shows the various diverging elements of ecclesiastical and theological positions, which have bearing not only upon history and church life, but also upon church vesture.

The continental Reformation brought forth the separating bodies such as the Lutherans and Calvinists, whose theological positions emphasized the exclusive supremacy of Scripture and focused upon the preaching of the Word. Eucharistic vestments were rejected, and the academic preaching robe became the approved clerical vestment, giving emphasis to the scholarly nature of the minister's role as preacher.

Concurrently the English church culminated 400 years of English resentment toward foreign interference, not only in ecclesiastical affairs but also in national and political life, and separated itself from Rome. By act of Parliament, England was declared free from outside authority, and "turned the Church IN England into the Church OF England." (Dawley, 1963, p. 156) The national church was to continue in the ancient catholic faith, and for a time the outward appearances and religious life of Englishmen were unchanged.

The separation of the English church from Rome is important to the study of the use of Eucharistic vestments in the Episcopal church. The Reformation of the English church went through "catholic" and "protestant" phases, and in the Episcopal church, which derives from the Church of England, both elements are found. Modern developments in Eucharistic vestments have occurred, but references are predominantly written by Roman Catholic authors, and reflect the carefully defined usages according to the Congregation of Rites.

In the Episcopal church, no such definitive body exists. The priest is at liberty to wear such vestments as are available to him, as he deems appropriate, with common usage being only a guideline. Indeed, the protestant periods of English Church history are reflected in many Episcopal churches where the Eucharistic vestments are all but unknown. In these churches, the norm for the celebrant is the cassock, surplice and stole. When the priest chooses to wear the traditional vestments, the chasuble which he wears does reflect the defined requirements or permissions of Rome.

The chasuble of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is the result of the restorations of liturgy and the more ample chasuble which were begun by Dom Guéranger, abbot of Solesmes monastery in France during the middle of the nineteenth century. Sutfin (1956) goes to some length to point out the inaccuracies of

the church supply house terminology which uses such terms as "Gothic" or "Roman" to describe these more ample vestments.

Lesage (1960) also notes

. . . that in 1863 the Congregation of Rites was consulted about chasubles called "Gothic." This was a very badly chosen term, because it is 'an Italian Renaissance word, and insulting word, says Louis Gillet, 'which means uncouth, barbarous!' Moreover, it is unacceptable as a qualification for the vestments of the 'Gothic' period of the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, since no special type of chasuble was produced at the time: it remained as it had been in the two preceding centuries. (Lesage, 1960, p. 122)

Other writers indicate that the word "Roman" was inserted in the phrase, since the term "Gothic" was unknown, as applied to vestments.

A possibly more accurate term which came into use to identify the vestments of this restoration period is "neo-Gothic." Chasubles of neo-Gothic style are more ample and reach toward the early ideal of draped folds of cloth, as contrasted to the stiff models referred to earlier. The construction, however, retains the basic form of two panels of fabric which hang from the shoulders, not unlike the Mexican poncho, and consequently fall short of the enveloping garment of the fifth and sixth centuries (Fig. 4 and 5).

At the present time, the church supply houses are offering more ample and conical shaped chasubles, and the trend of the Church is toward the re-adoption of the enveloping garment. The conical shape resulting in horizontal folds in turn requires a

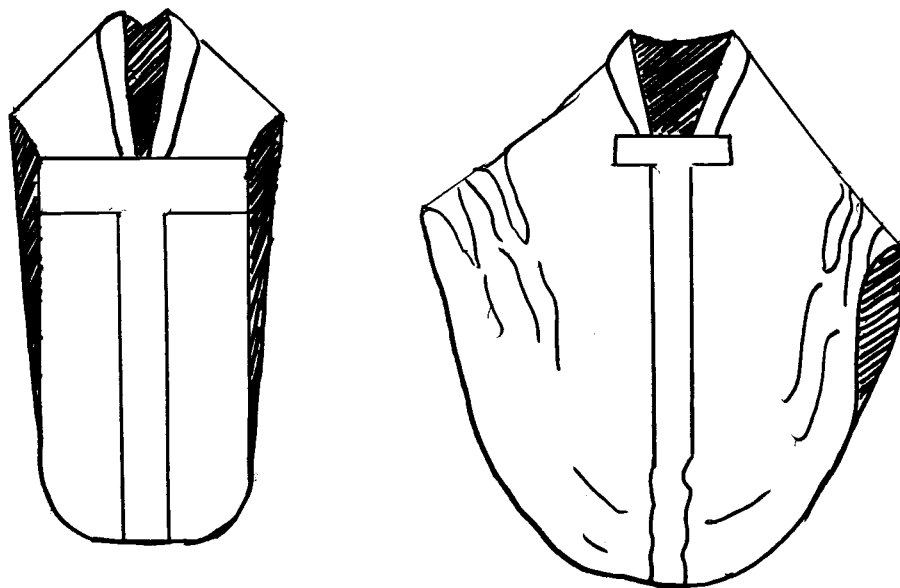


Figure 4. Neo-Gothic amplification of the Italian chasuble.

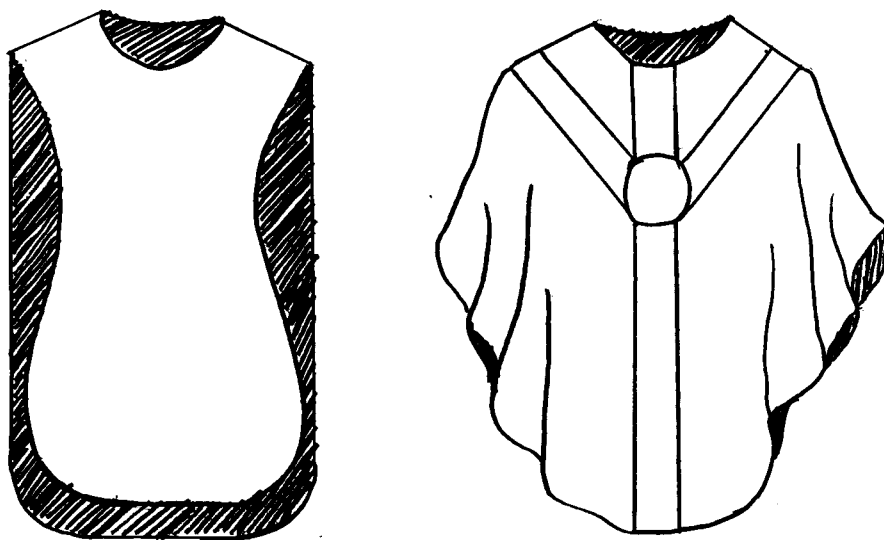


Figure 5. Neo-Gothic amplification of the Gallican-type chasuble.

(Drawings after Sutfin)

reduction in the amount of added decorations and embellishment.

Orphreys and symbols once thought indispensable are being replaced by the simple dignity of a well cut and hence well draped fabric.

The later concept of form and fabric was laid down as the criterion for vestments by the second Vatican Council whose reforms in the Roman Catholic church are far reaching. Doherty (1972) writes that revision of the liturgy will influence vestment design further. Until recent reforms, the Mass was celebrated with the priest's back to the congregation, and the chasuble became a visual point of focus, and hence most appropriately decorated with the Cross, liturgical symbols, and devotional pictures. Since the revisions, the priest stands behind the altar, facing the people, and vestments become secondary. Thought is also given to the design of the front of the chasuble, which before may have been plain or nearly so.

This practical influence combines with a newer view of the Church as the people of God, with the bishop and priest as a shepherd rather than in the kingly model which formerly prevailed. Similar liturgical revisions in the Episcopal church will also influence the vestments used in worship.

## Christian Symbolism

Symbolism is a means of conveying ideas, of identifying, and of instructing. Man lives by symbols which convey ideas from one to another, as in writing or printing. Religious symbolism incorporates many symbols which have carried a variety of meanings in different ages. Within the Christian faith, symbolism is used to inspire the faithful and to communicate spiritual concepts which cannot be pictorially represented. Stafford says

The word symbol is derived from two Greek words, syn, meaning together, and ballein, meaning to throw. Hence, symbolon, a sign, mark or token, implying the throwing together or joining of an abstract idea and a visible sign of it; the sign serving to recall it, not by exact resemblance, but by suggestion. (Stafford, 1942, p. 17)

Ferguson (1966) points out the importance of outward signs of inward reality in terms of the expressions of love and sorrow, eloquently conveyed by a look or by a single tear. He further distinguishes between a sign, which represents or points to something, and a symbol, which resembles and conveys a deeper meaning.

The cross represents the Christian faith and points to Christ's Crucifixion . . . . The Cross symbolizes God's love for man in the sacrifice of His Son for the sins of the world. (Ferguson, 1966, p. 8)

Child and Colles (1971) point out,

One cannot invent a religious symbolism, it has to grow from the complex interaction of life and belief and thus becomes a language without words linking those of the same culture. (p. 6)

Ireland (1971) also speaks of symbolism as the vocabulary of the artist, which must shift from age to age in order to communicate spiritual realities. The detailed complexities of the symbolism of Renaissance art are beyond the understanding of modern men, for the present world does not see God in every created thing, and therefore imbue it with symbolic meaning. On the other hand, modern man has seen photographs of the earth from the moon, and has seen the interdependency of life as brought into focus by ecologists. Psychology has brought greater understanding of man's mind. From these insights and experiences new symbols will emerge (Child and Colles, 1971).

Ireland (1967) points out that medieval symbolism was a teaching medium as well as a devotional and inspirational one, because it served a largely illiterate population.

The understanding of much of the medieval symbolism has faded, but certain symbols have retained meaning as expressions of the foundations of the Christian faith, rooted in Scripture and man's relation to his God. In terms of the present study, further discussion of these symbols is limited to those commonly appearing on Eucharistic vesture.



The Cross is the most widely identified Christian symbol, and it appears in many forms.

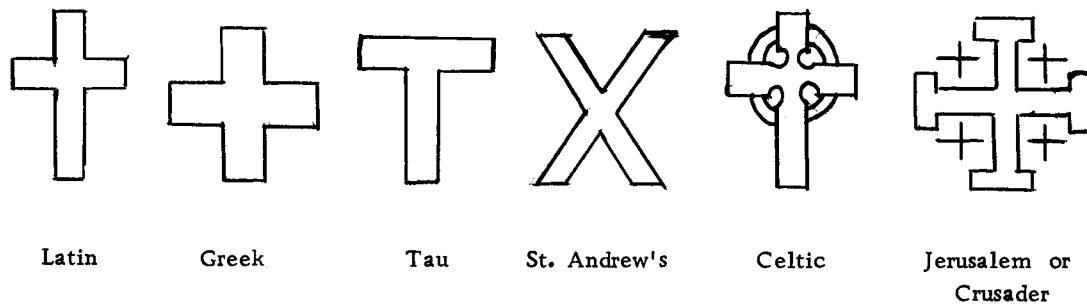


Figure 6. Commonly used Cross forms.

There are over 400 forms of the Cross, according to Webber (1938), of which some 50 are used in Christian symbolism, with many deriving their origins from heraldry.

Monograms of Christ are frequently found and are composed of the first and last letters or the first two and last letters of the Greek words for Jesus Christ. Numerous inaccurate and sentimental interpretations have been given to the IHS form of the monogram (Fig. 7a). The monogram shown in Figure 7b is referred to as the Chi Rho monogram. Figure 7c shows the monogram form derived from the Greek words meaning Jesus Christ the conqueror or victor.

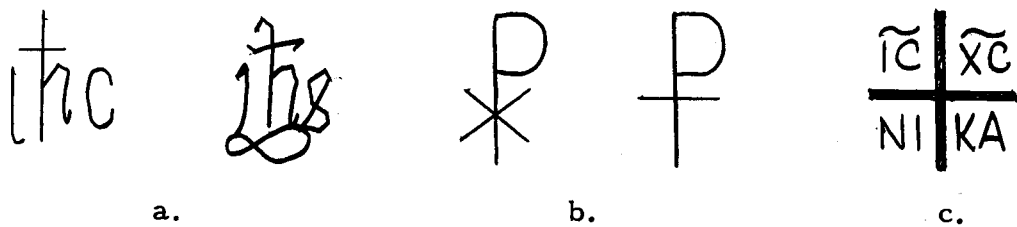


Figure 7. Monograms of Christ.

Various forms of interlocking triangles and circles are used to symbolize the Holy Trinity, thus illustrating the doctrine of the unity of God in the three Persons of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

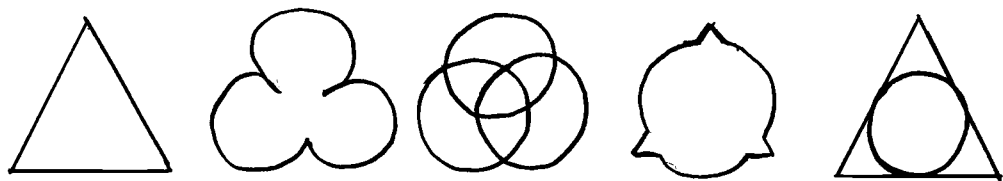


Figure 8. Some symbols of the Holy Trinity.

Ferguson (1966) finds the triquetra form the finest symbol of the Trinity.

This mystical symbol is quite simple in form . . . . The three equal arcs of the circle express the equality of the Three Divine Persons, their union expresses the unity of divine essence, their continuous form symbolizes eternity, and the fact that they are interwoven denotes the indivisibility of the Blessed Trinity. In the center of the triquetra is an equilateral triangle, the most

ancient of the Trinity symbols, and each pair of arcs forms a vesica, the symbol of glory. Thus the one simple figure reminds us of many important truths. (p. 43-44)



Figure 9. Triquetra symbol of the Holy Trinity.

Three fish forming a triangle or curved, three-sided device are also found as a symbol of the Trinity, particularly in European churches.

The fish is one of the most ancient symbols of Christ. The Greek word for fish, ΙΧΘΥΣ, forms an acronym of the words Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior. Other symbols of Our Lord are the lamb and the star. The Agnus Dei (Lamb of God) is usually portrayed either with the Book of Seven Seals or with the Banner of Victory. The star is emblematic of the prophetic words of the Old Testament "a star shall come forth out of Jacob . . . ." (Numbers 24:17) and the Revelation references to the star of dawn (the Morning Star). Although frequently mistaken as a Christmas symbol, the star is properly a symbol of Epiphany or the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles.

Another monogram associated with Our Lord is the alpha and omega referring to the beginning and the end. Both Webber (1938) and Ireland (1971) point out the common abuse of this symbol in omitting a linking symbol such as the Cross. Without such a linking device, the alpha and omega remain merely the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet.

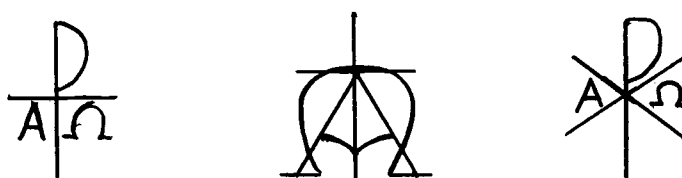


Figure 10. Alpha and omega symbols properly combined with the Cross.

The symbols used for God the Father are most commonly the hand in combination with the three-rayed nimbus symbolizing divinity. The hand is upraised in benediction, or extending down from a cloud.

The Holy Spirit, third person of the Trinity, is symbolized by the dove or flame. The most common form is the descending dove with the three-rayed nimbus of divinity. When the symbol of fire is used, either the seven-tongued flame or seven flames are usually found.

Symbols of the Passion of Our Lord, in addition to the Crucifix are the crown of thorns and nails, used separately or in combination. The scourge, and the ladder, reed and sponge

are also used.

Symbols of the Holy Eucharist are the Chalice and Host or the wheat and grape used together, symbolizing the Bread and Wine of the Sacrament.

The symbols of the four Evangelists are sometimes used in combination with the Cross in a complex symbol of the divinity and humanity of Christ. The symbols are associated with the emphasis given in the Gospel writer's record of the life of Our Lord. St. Matthew is represented as a winged man. His gospel emphasizes the humanity of Jesus through the record of his human genealogy and the events surrounding the Incarnation.

St. Mark is symbolized by the winged lion, because his Gospel opens with reference to St. John the Baptist as the voice of one crying in the wilderness. The lion is a royal symbol and hence is also used in relation to the messianic or kingly nature of Christ.

The calf or oxen is a symbol of sacrifice, and therefore the winged calf or oxen is used to represent St. Luke, whose gospel emphasizes the sacrificial and atoning death of Christ.

The eagle of St. John associates the soaring nature of this bird with the exalted terms with which this Gospel stresses the divinity of Jesus.

Many symbols used in Christian art have multiple meanings, and in effect need to be read in context. The crown, although

principally associated with royalty and the kingly nature of Christ, also finds its place in Christian symbolism as an emblem of victory and eternal life. The trefoil is sometimes used to represent the Trinity. It is also used to represent the Blessed Virgin, and is thought by some to be a stylized lily, which is also a reference to her. The Easter lily, however, is a Resurrection symbol. The rose is another symbol with multiple meanings, including the Mystic Rose, in reference to the Virgin, and the Rose of Sharon and the Christmas Rose in reference to Our Lord.

Many other natural forms are used in Christian symbolism. The peacock and the butterfly are symbols expressive of the Resurrection. The peacock is an ancient symbol of immortality and gains favor in the Christian symbols from the shedding of its plumage, only to be replaced by more brilliant feathers. Roulin (1950) however, takes great exception to this use of the peacock as a Christian symbol, lamenting the idea that the great, showy tail-feathers of this strutting, proud bird should be so incongruously associated. He decries the "pietistic fancifulness" (p. 233) which attempts to attach great symbolic meaning to every bit of decorative art in every ancient fresco.

Webber (1938) and others find the butterfly the most splendid of Resurrection symbols incorporating mortal life, death, and resurrection or eternal life through the growth stages of larvae,

pupa, and finally the soaring butterfly.

The use of vines as art forms precedes the Christian era, but like other natural forms, takes on or is given new meaning in Christian symbolism. For Christians the vine represents Christ and the Church, from the Scriptural reference in the Gospel of St. John "I am the Vine, you are the branches."

Similarly, the tree of life found in many ancient forms, becomes the Tree of Jesse for Christians, and has reference to the prophecies of Isaiah concerning the lineage of the Messiah.

Many symbols developed to represent the Apostles and the Saints are closely related to the heraldry of the Middle Ages. Renaissance art is replete with the symbolism which developed around plant and animal forms. However, further discussion of these developments is beyond the scope of this study.

Reference has been made to the symbolism of the various pieces of ecclesiastical vesture. Some further references to the symbolism of the chasuble may be added here. According to Ball (1916) the chasuble not only represents the purple garment which the Roman soldiers mockingly put upon Christ, but also represents the seamless robe of Christ, as well as being an emblem of charity. Ferguson (1966) further augments the latter significance:

Because the chasuble covers the other vestments, its symbolic meaning is Christian charity and protection; charity being the virtue that should supersede all others. (p. 157)

The orphreys and pillars common to the decoration of traditional chasubles have also been given symbolic meaning. Ball (1916) records that the orphrey in the form of a cross on the back of the garment is the reminder to carry the Cross, while the pillar on the front reminds the wearer to lean upon Christ as true support. The pillar is also given meaning as representing the pillar of scourging.

When the Cross appears in front and back, allusion is made to a reference in Thomas a Kempis' classic devotional work, The Imitation of Christ, that before him (the priest) he bears the Cross that he may behold the footsteps of Christ. Such involved symbolism attached to decorative bandings originally used functionally to cover seams or to strengthen a neckline illustrates a truism found in many aspects of ecclesiastical symbolism and ceremonial--something introduced as a practical necessity becomes sanctified by time. When the need no longer exists, symbolic meaning is attached to justify its continuance.



## Liturgical Color

Color is a language, and as such is a symbol which speaks to the mind and emotions of everyday life. We have blue days, black moods, purple passions; we are green with envy and see red when angry. On the other hand blue skies, royal purple, green fields, and rosy dawn elicit responses totally different from those more violent or somber considerations. It is a matter of association in the mind and heart.

Symbolism in color is an association developed, not only in the mind of individuals, but also over the centuries in the minds of congregations where color has been used in the ornamentation of the house of worship and in the vestments of the ministers. This development in terms of symbolism reached its apex of complexity with the involved symbolism of the middle ages and the Renaissance artists. In modern terminology, for example, green symbolizes life, hope, and peace and it is used for Epiphany and Trinity seasons. (Eckel, 1960) In the language of Renaissance art, however, the symbolism becomes somewhat more involved. According to Ferguson (1966):

Green is the color of vegetation and of spring, and therefore symbolizes the triumph of spring over winter, or of life over death. Being a mixture of yellow and blue, it also suggests charity and the regeneration of the soul through good works. In pagan rites of initiation, green was the color of water; and it is as the symbol of

spiritual initiation that St. John the Evangelist sometimes wears a green mantle. Green is the color of the Epiphany season of the church, marking the Visitation of the Magi, and the initiation rites in the life of Christ. (p. 151)

Although there are those who stand firmly on the principle that there are specific shades which are properly "liturgical colors," Dean (1961) states that "liturgical colors are white or gold, red, green, rose, pink, black or purple, and 'off white' of Lenten array. These are not any particular tints or shades." (p. 12)

The use of color in paraments has developed in relation to the establishment of the sequences of feast and fast in the Church year. Historically, the use of color sequences was unknown in the first eight centuries of the church. That is to say, color was used but with no fixed season or festival assignment. According to Norris (1950) Roman use had become well defined by the end of the twelfth century during the reign of Pope Innocent III. According to that usage, white was used for high festivals (Christmas and Easter), feast of confessors and virgins, the Conversion of St. Paul, and for the consecration of bishops and the dedication of churches. Red was used for apostles, martyrs, and Whitsuntide. Black was used for Advent, Lent, days of affliction, and for funerals. Green was for weekdays, not festivals. In this time the use of purple was disputed.

Ireland (1971) notes that the Innocentian code was more a recording of usage than the establishment of a pattern for other

churches.

Of historical interest to this study is that which is termed Sarum use, which represents the most prominent usage in the development of color sequences of the English Church in the Cathedral of Salisbury. According to Ireland, much legend has been built here where records are in fact silent. Records also indicate occasions for the use of the best vestments available without concern for the color. This is done particularly for Christmas and Epiphany.

The present Sarum usage is given by Ireland as follows:

Advent: Red for Sundays, Blue for weekdays  
Christmas: White or Red (The Best)  
Epiphany: Red (The Best)  
Ash Wednesday: Lenten or Red  
Lent: Lenten (Unbleached linen)  
Passiontide, Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday and Good  
Friday: Red  
Easter: White  
Pentecost (Whitsuntide): White  
Trinity Sunday: Red  
Trinity to Advent: Red

For comparison to this usage is the summary of colors given for church needleworkers by Dean (1961), a prominent British authority on ecclesiastical needlework.

Advent: Blue or Violet  
Christmas: White and/or Gold  
Epiphany: White  
Epiphanytide: Green  
Lent: In the Church of England: Blue or violet first four weeks  
Red for remainder  
In Roman Catholic churches: Purple for first four weeks

Passiontide: Deep red  
 Easter: White and/or Gold  
 Pentecost (Whitsuntide): Bright Red  
 Trinity Sunday: White and/or Gold  
 Trinity to Advent: Green

In addition, white is given for All Saints day, weddings, and feasts of Our Lady. Red is used for Feast of Martyrs (including the Apostles). Black is used for funerals, All Souls' day, and in the Roman Catholic church for Good Friday. Rose pink is used for the fourth Sunday in Advent, and mid-Lent Sunday in the Roman church. In the English church it is used after Trinity and as a general ferial color. Yellow is used for feasts of Confessors.

In the Episcopal church, color usage has generally followed the pattern given by Dean, with the exception of the use of blue, which is not common, and the usage of purple throughout Lent. These practices are being altered however. The present Kalendar has returned to the use of red throughout Holy Week and the deletion of black for Good Friday (The Episcopalian, 1972). White is used not only for the Feast of Epiphany but also through the first Sunday after Epiphany. The use of green for Epiphanytide begins on the second Sunday following the feast day.

The red used for Holy Week is referred to as oxblood, a deep, dark, brown red, in contrast to the more brilliant reds associated with Pentacost and the feasts of martyrs. Again these symbolic associations of deep shades or brilliant colors with somber

or joyful occasions is seen. The use of color as a symbolic communicator is enhanced by this differentiation.

### Liturgy and Change

The term "liturgical worship" brings to the minds of many the concept of a set form of worship conducted with the aid of a prayer book, ritualistic and rigid. For others, it brings to mind concepts of elaborate ceremonial, vestments, incense, solemn music, often plainsong or chant, and various archaic adornments preserved incongruously in a modern world. Shepherd, however, says that worship is liturgical

. . . because the form and substance is a common possession of all the participants, and depends for its effectual performance upon an active and responsible contribution from each and every member who is engaged in it. (1961, p. 35)

The word "liturgy" derives from a secular concept, the Greek word for the peoples work. Applied to worship, it denotes the corporate or public aspects, the public rites authorized by the Church, in which the people have a responsibility with the ministers for the common life of prayer. (Shepherd, 1952)

Viewed from this aspect, a previous reference to the Renaissance era Mass as an ecclesiastical counterpart to court ceremonial raises the question, where is the common life? The extremely elaborate ceremonial, the Latin rite, and the non-

participation of the congregation would indicate that the character of worship was anything but the common possession of all, with active response and participation by the worshipping community.

Personal piety, the Reformation and Counter-Reformation, Scholasticism, and the perceptions of the Anglican churchmen, are all factors in the history of the church which lead to the Liturgical Movement throughout the Christian world. (Bouyer, 1954; Hebert, 1942)

This movement, according to Hebert, concerns itself chiefly with the recognition of the ideal of Christian worship and a deep interest in the underlying Christian Mysteries of the Mystical Body of Christ. The Liturgical Movement is generally considered to have begun with Dom Guéranger, Abbot of Solesmes monastery, in mid-nineteenth century France. Guéranger restored the Benedictine order and the Abbey of Solesmes, and did much to recapture the corporateness of worship within the monastery. Roulin (1950) notes with enthusiasm that he was responsible for a return to the full and ample vestments in contrast to the skimpy and ugly forms which had become the norm in the eighteenth century.

Bouyer (1954) is qualified in praise of Guéranger's reforms, but while he notes the mistakes, he also observed that, in the zeal of Guéranger, the liturgy was brought back as something to be lived, and that a deep sense of reverence prevailed in the beauty of the liturgy as performed in the Benedictine monasteries.

The Church of England had, in a sense, anticipated the Catholic liturgical movement through the work of Archbishop Cranmer. It was his skill as a liturgist which saw the possibilities of true corporate worship, and which brought forth the Book of Common Prayer in 1549. (Hebert, 1942) This monumental work is the basis of the Book of Common Prayer of the Episcopal Church.

Babin (1969) discusses the elements of Liturgy as symbol, form and formulary. The symbol in the liturgical sense is an act performed to symbolize God's action and man's response. Thus the basic symbol of the Holy Eucharist is the Supper of the Lord. It is not a sign of God's continuing presence and redemption, pointing the way, it is the substance of His redeeming presence. The form is the physical elements and the acts necessary to communicate the symbol. Thus the form of the Holy Eucharist includes the physical elements of the bread and wine and a table top and a group of the People of God (the community of baptized Christians). The acts of this form are defined by Dix (1945) as the fourfold shape of the liturgy, and specifically known as the Offeratory, Consecration, Fraction (breaking of the bread), and Communion.

Formulary, then, is the means of communicating the form and the symbol. It is the words, music, and the ceremonial which are based upon the form. It is the ritual pattern which becomes familiar, either to the enhancement or detriment of the recognition

of the form and symbol.

A study of liturgy and liturgical worship reveals that the formulary is a evolving and growing thing. Periodic revisions of the Book of Common Prayer have occurred, the most recent for the American prayer book being 1928. At that time the Standing Liturgical Commission was established by the Church because it was seen then that future revisions would be necessary.

Up to the present time, the discussion of liturgy had been left to the scholars and theologians. Now the Episcopal church at the parish level finds itself caught up in the painful problems of liturgical revision and change, along with much of the rest of Christendom.

Beginning in the Fall of 1967, the Sixty-second General Convention of the Episcopal Church authorized the use of a trial service for the Liturgy of the Lord's Supper, which was the product of the Standing Liturgical Commission. This use was authorized for the three-year period until the next General Convention. During that interval, parishes were asked to experience, evaluate, and report to the Commission. (Babin, 1968) This is the first time that the individual parish and worshiper had been given a major voice in the revision of the formulary for corporate worship.

In 1970, Services for Trial Use, a more extensive revision of the entire Prayer Book, as well as the liturgies for Holy Eucharist,



was authorized by the General Convention for trial use in parishes. In this revision three formularies for Holy Eucharist are given, which reflect the various needs and responses expressed by the Church during the first trial period.

It is this revision which has bearing upon the present study. A careful reading of the three orders for the Celebration of the Holy Eucharist reveals that the first service bears great similarity to the 1928 edition, with certain rearrangements of order and some simplification of complex language and revision of poorly expressed theology. The second order retains the shape of the Liturgy, employs an order similar to the first, but clothes it in contemporary language and provides for numerous alternatives in the rites. The third order is non-structured, with the exception of the Eucharistic Prayer, providing only a guideline for small groups to express their own corporate life in the Liturgy of the Word, intercessions, and other portions of the worship service.

The second order of service requires that the priest give time and thought to the various alternatives which are before him. It also allows him to celebrate the Holy Mysteries with those formularies which he feels may be most meaningful to the particular congregation. Because of the freedom to experiment which accompanies this kind of formulary, its usage will be considered as a possible measure of change in relationship to a priest's

selection of contemporary style vestments. The question raised is that of potential correlation between expressing the form and the symbol of Holy Eucharist in modern language and formulary and the vesting of the priest in modern fabric and design.

Some considerations of change in worship which have been raised may have a relationship to the types of contemporary style vestments which will be found in this study.

Horn (1970) speaks of the problem of experimentation and the change in worship in terms of a need first of all to examine what worship is, including the relationship of Word and Sacrament, Evangelism, and the acting out of Faith in the world. He points out that many in the Church had become open to change in the directions of forms with universal appeal and which would relate to the Church of all time.

But hardly had we rediscovered these treasures than a new and fresh liturgical wind came up. And opening our mouths to gulp in this new movement based upon actions done in worship, we swallowed something else. Innovation of any kind seems to be proper now. One does "his own thing," and all of this is then put together and tied together. Standards of evaluation seem to be limited to popularity; we have swallowed a mouthful of now. And in the hangover, we detect some inarticulate problems that have rarely been brought to the surface.  
(p. 9)

Horn contrasts the now that is celebrated, and the now that is in the individual, and notes that there are many interconnecting aspects in the deeper part of life which are being ignored.

In relation to experimentation in worship, he observes that techniques which ". . . get the people to do what they are supposed to do" shift the burden of experimentation from verbal forms to imagination and movement. Thus he finds "Very often stuffy old words are pretty good vehicles of actions, while brilliant creations of new texts simply dazzle people to a standstill." (p. 14)

Another view of the rage for worship experimentation is examined with the questioning of whether that which is done is ". . . true reform or liturgical gamesmanship at which anyone may try his hand?" (Hoon, 1969, p. 482) He points out that in the drive for "relevance" we are in danger of losing sight of the primary purpose of liturgy, which is in the Divine-human intersection, not totally in sensitivity to the needs of man. The question becomes, what is relevant, the Gospel of Christ or some other gospel? In attempting to humanize worship, have we perhaps stepped into celebrating man and his finiteness, rather than celebrating the Glory and Grace of God?

In discussing the relationship of art and liturgy, Hoon says

You cannot import art into liturgy in the same way you can combine art with the life of religion or accept it in the life of the church elsewhere. In liturgy the artist is first the servant of the Word in its living dialogue with the human soul, and he is next priest, prophet, and pastor to the worshipping community . . . . By definition, liturgical art is kerygmatic and communal, and sacramental as well as sacrificial; the individualism, subjectivism, and expressionism appropriate to the artist's vision elsewhere will not do in liturgy. (p. 491)

Art must be obedient to the nature of the liturgy, but, says Hoon, in many experiments we are seeing merely artistic exhibitionism. The clever, the novel and bizarre become values sought in this kind of gamesmanship, all in the name of getting people into the church.

The spectacle of much experimental worship today increasingly persuades me that we must distinguish between the contribution which the liturgical arts as function can make to worship, and the corruption which Art as an autonomous experience and statement of the nature of Reality projects into worship. (p. 494)

When experimental worship substitutes a poetic, charming, concept of beauty, and entertainment for a God of holiness and righteousness whose Incarnation divides history, then the danger of corruption in worship is very real and present. Aestheticism which perverts reality toward the absurd is equally perverse.

Hoon observes that the statement of Bonhoeffer that "the way of Jesus Christ, and therefore the way of all Christian thinking leads not from the world to God but from God to the world" is pertinent to liturgical theology. (p. 496) Liturgical experimentation must proceed "through Jesus Christ our Lord," both in thought and in worship.

### Artistic Relationships

In a study of Church vestments, there comes into play an additional ingredient for consideration beyond those of the origins of the garments, the color and symbolism involved, and the factors of liturgical change present in the Church today. This is the factor of artistic unity. The basic understanding and artistic principles of liturgical art in relation to textiles and vestments cannot be ignored.

"Art and religion belong together by certain profound identities of Origin, Subject Matter, and Inner Experience," says Vogt (1960, p. 31). He reasons that the spiritual arises from physical, that image, rite, creed, and sacrament, communicate the spiritual concepts. Art, to be vital, must look forward, not backward. The effect created by the architect and artist can have a profound impact upon the spirit of the person who enters the church, and therefore, of the first importance, should be artistic integrity. An architect needs understanding of the Mystery to be celebrated within the confines of the church, not simply a degree of piety or an understanding of church style.

Our concern today must be to clothe the truths of the faith in honest modern dress--the simpler the better, provided only that the cloth is good and that it is well cut. (Hammond, 1961, p. 157)

Hammond further notes that

The English Prayer Book requires that the bread which is used at the Eucharist shall be the 'best and the purest . . . that conveniently may be gotten' (p. 156)

and that the same standard should be applied to anything concerned with the liturgy and the house of God. Unfortunately, he observes, much of that which is accepted in church would not be tolerated elsewhere.

The form of the church must spring from its liturgical function. The architect must know what he is making. . . . Over and above its utilitarian function as a house for corporate worship the building possesses a symbolic purpose: domus ecclesiam significat--the house of stones which shelters the congregation gathered around the altar is itself the unique symbol of the mystical body of Christ, the temple of living stones built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets. Planning for liturgy involves far more than superficial practicality; it must embrace both these functions of the church. It is no use calling in a sculptor to make good the symbolic deficiencies of a building which has been conceived in purely structural or utilitarian terms. One cannot turn a hall into a church by sticking a monumental cross on the east wall, or by commissioning a celebrated artist to paint a mural in the Lady chapel. The church must be a symbolic structure: it must be informed from the outset by a theological understanding of its purpose. (Hammond, 1961, p. 154-155)

With a somewhat different view, it has been observed that an artist without "traditional piety" or hindered by conventional symbolism and artistic form, can bring a vitality to a work of art which may be lacking in the traditional art forms. While the Getleins observe that it is desirable to employ a Catholic artist, they also note that the church is taking notice of the importance of an artist's command of his skill. In the debate of skill versus faith, they write:

Eight hundred years ago a backward brutish community of French peasants and laborers would work for a century to produce a masterpiece of Gothic architecture, to be among other things, the headquarters of a brigand-bishop given to waging holy war against his neighbors in order to steal their land. In Renaissance Italy a pope intent upon making the Universal Church a possession of his own family would give a commission to an artist not at all sure as to whether he was Christian or pagan and the result would be a canticle in fresco from which we can still take spiritual nourishment.

Today a bishop of unimpeachable personal integrity may consult with a religious goods salesman who is a daily communicant and a graduate of a Catholic college, and the results in ecclesiastical architecture or decoration will be bland and banal, utterly unrelated to the realities of Christianity and even further removed from art: at best a weak imitation of a poor copy of some famous work of the past . . . . (Getlein, 1961, p. 2)

The distinction between sacred art, religious art, and liturgical art has been identified by d'Ormesson (1956). According to this artist, religious art produces a religious feeling independent of the subject matter. This feeling is easily evoked by great music as well as other art forms. Sacred art deals with religious subjects, whereas liturgical work fosters piety, the impulse to kneel and pray, and is in conformity to the needs of worship.

It is here in the realm of liturgical appropriateness that the matter of artistic genius superseding liturgical understanding born of faith may be brought to question. Ireland (1967, 1971) observes the divided opinions regarding the Chapel of the Rosary in Vence, France, designed by Henri Matisse. His conceptions of the Stations of the Cross do not correlate with the idea of this devotion as a

procession or walking of the way of the Cross. Similarly, in the vestments which he designed for the chapel, he combines the Resurrection symbols with the purple of Lent and Advent, and the flame of Pentecost with the green of the Trinity season.

Ireland (1971) also illustrates the problem of "unbelievers" with a commentary upon the "Apocalypse" tapestry by Jean Lurçat. This masterpiece employed Revelation ideas and figures in a representation of the struggle of good and evil. The artist's attitude toward religion would not allow him to portray the Divine as a Christian would. "To a Christian, however, the apocalyptic monsters are somewhat disturbing and oddly pagan in an area that is traditionally reserved for Christ in Majesty." (p. 42)

In the realm of textile art, Ireland has written a comprehensive study. She notes the importance of harmony between the textiles used and the church in which they are used. Contemporary styles can be made to harmonize with a Gothic cathedral. On the other hand, she notes in the following description how remnants of a past style clash with present day architecture. The church, she describes,

. . . was a free-form shape with thick adobelike walls in keeping with the historic pioneer heritage of the locale. The pulpit, lecturn, base of the altar and communion rail resembled rough bark of trees. The color scheme of off-white and wood tones was accented with vivid orange kneeling cushions and covering for chairs for the clergy . . . (and on the pulpit a fall of) limp white faille with a cross and gold fringe . . . . The architect's concern for



roughness of texture in the wall and wood finish had not extended to the textiles or designs for the paraments. How much could have been achieved in relating the paraments to the total effect in a church so far from the ordinary. (Ireland, 1967, p. 12)

McClinton also stresses the importance of harmony between modern architecture and the fabrics which are used in the church. The traditional damasks and silks of Renaissance style are not in keeping with the church today. In reference to the traditionally designed fabrics for vestment use, she notes

Some of these special ecclesiastical designs are in good taste, but some are garish and many designs chosen from regular stock are often more effective. There are imported silk damasks without sheen, and there are soft wool and linen damasks, and imported printed cotton damasks which are artistic and beautiful for church use. (McClinton, 1957, p. 85)

Murray McCanse, a vestment maker, states,

The cope or chasuble which will look magnificent and imposing in a rich Gothic interior, against dark woods, stained glass, and under artificial light, may appear cheap, garish and theatrical against the concrete, tile, or glass-block, and full daylight of a modern interior. . . . the coarser weaves in silk, the linens, and woolens, in natural hues and simple designs which are appropriate to a more masculine and monumental interior, cannot help but strike the eye as feeble and dingy when worn in palatial surroundings. (McCanse, a, p. 2)

When considering textiles for the church, Ireland (1971) asserts that

The textile artist may find a great opportunity for experiment and creativity, both in method and in contemporary symbolism or composition. There is no excuse for mediocrity or ignorance of the liturgical function and significance of the object to be made. (p. 22)

In the realm of textiles, she also observes that there are, unfortunately, many examples of a crudity that currently is taken to be freedom of style, and which indicates instead a greater freedom from the discipline of developing skills and techniques. And on the other extreme, there are the pietistic, spindly designs which find their source in the handbook of symbols and the faith of the embroiderer.

Finally, it must be remembered, as both Getlein (1961) and d'Ormesson (1956) note, that today we cannot indulge in the piety of looking back to Renaissance art. Authentic art today must be modern art because "the only artists alive are modern artists." (Getlein, p. 21)

### Contemporary Vestments

The traditional vestments of Episcopal clergymen at Grace Cathedral are giving way to red, yellow and blue creations spangled with butterflies and flowers. 'It all represents a new attitude toward worship' says Vienna Anderson, a 36-year-old one time Broadway actress who designs the mod liturgical attire. (Vestments Turn Colorful, 1971)

This statement in an Associated Press wire service article appeared in the local newspaper in 1971. Was this in fact the way in which traditionally splendid garments which through their color and symbolism had spoken of the feast and seasons of the Church were now changing? Examination of the literature in the field of

arts and crafts revealed that while changes are taking place, the total departure from the rhythm of color and the symbols of tradition is not so complete as Miss Anderson would indicate or prefer.

The Matisse Chasubles (1956) describes these famous vestments, and the techniques of their design. The paper patterns were designed with a decoupage style in the artist's studio, where paper designs were pasted in great semi-circles of paper. The designs were almost seven feet in diameter and were designed with the concept that movement and the light of the chapel for which they were designed would have maximum effect. Reference has been made to the relationship of symbols and colors in these chasubles. Although the vestments were designed as an integral part of the whole chapel, it was found on the occasion of the consecration of the chapel in 1951 that the white vestments that had been completed at the time were so heavy that the chasuble was impractical. The designs, however, are an artistic triumph, and a set of the vestments is now in the New York Museum of Modern Art.

Vestments from the Kilbride Workshop (1964) reports a completely different concept of vestment making. This article reports that dignity and simplicity are the keynote of these vestments.

"Mr. Kilbride was among the first to discard the elaborate embroidery, heavy gold trimmings, and complicated weaves which had made such basic changes in church vestments since the early centuries." (p. 12) The vestments are woven principally of silk, because of its quality of draping, durability, and texture. "All chasubles are made in the full classical shape. For this reason great consideration must be given to the weight and texture of the cloth to avoid heaviness in weight and appearance." (p. 39)

Kilbride is a young man, following his father in the weaving trade established in England. He has also taught ecclesiastical weaving in the United States.

Communion Vestments Designed and Woven by a Clergyman (1965) also indicate the trend toward simplicity. In this instance the weaver is an Episcopal priest who, before entering seminary, graduated from The Philadelphia Textile School (now Philadelphia College of Textiles and Science) and spent five years designing fabrics. Father L. Harold Hinrich's vestments " . . . represent the contemporary trend toward simplicity in ecclesiastical textiles, a turning away from excessive ornamentation toward the type of robes worn in the Early Church." (p. 10) The vestment is designed with the long, full shape, in off-white cotton. The orphrey is woven of oxblood, with the Passion symbols woven in natural color. His design principle is that symbols in vestments are teaching symbols,

and must be visible from 30 feet away.

Vestments by Indian Craftsmen (1967) reports a widespread cooperative vestment-making group of American Indians. Designed by a nun in New Jersey, the fabrics are woven by Lummi Indians in Washington. Embroidery is then applied by Navajos in Arizona, and silver work is done by members of the Navajo Arts and Crafts Guild. The vestments are made finally by the Sioux Indians in South Dakota. The Tekawitha Vestments, as they are called, are the result of various people's interest in Indian crafts and with the desire to make meaningful use of these skills. The designs used in these vestments reflect the Indian culture.

Chasubles from Marjorie January's Looms (1968) describes and pictures four chasubles made for a young priest.

He had definite ideas for design and was greatly interested in textural effect and color. Like many of the younger priests in Southern California, he prefers simpler designs for vestments, rather than the highly decorated styles of the past. (p. 18)

The designs included plaid, horizontal stripe, a broad vertical design band, and a cowl with narrow border on a plain weave. The chasubles were all of the long and full style.

Jacopin (1958) discusses the practical aspects of vestment making, but not before remarking upon " . . . the current phenomenal interest in a dynamic, contemporary, Christian art . . . " (p. 18) and the fact that increasing numbers of clergy are turning

to handweavers to make their vestments.

In addition to details of patterns and measurements, materials to use, and basic color systems, he stresses that color does not specify shade, and that great care should be taken in choosing shades suitable for the lighting and interior of the church. He points out that chasubles were unornamented until the eleventh century, and that there is no reason not to return to the practice today.

Great restraint in the decoration of the chasuble is necessary--it is not a sign board to be covered with quotations, medallions, and painted pictures . . . . One sees far too many chasubles ruined by cheap, tawdry, elaborate decoration. (p. 19)

Also stated is the factor of size in any ornamentation, which must be large enough to be seen from the back of the church.

Jacopin concludes the article by stating

The weaver must set aside his personal tastes, likes and dislikes, and by serious study of the traditions and history of the church produce a cloth beautiful, perfect, and worthy of divine service. Then the words of the psalmist will be fulfilled: 'Praise and Beauty are before Him: holiness and majesty in His sanctuary.' (p. 47)

Greta Lein (1963) is a Norwegian designer and weaver with a strong interest in ecclesiastical textiles. She observes that new churches need textiles that follow the modern lines. In reference to religious symbolism, she observes that exaggeration and overuse can spoil the effect, and that one must know the background of the symbols used. "You cannot use a language that you have never learned." (p. 15) She is a firm believer that only the best is good

enough, and that a chasuble must be a clearly religious garment, in harmony with its setting, and not a theatrical garment.

According to Zahle (1961), the State Industrial School for Women of Norway has been the source of many fine ecclesiastical textiles and vestments under the leadership of artists and designers.

One young artist who has made a specialty of church fabrics is Grete Lein. She has shown particular talent for carrying out this work in a modern manner but with complete understanding of the Church's special needs.

.....

Fortunately, it no longer happens that ecclesiastical fabrics are embroidered by well-meaning and worthy but untrained ladies. (p. 46)

Ireland (1967) concludes her study of textile art in the Church with the observation that no general statement can be applied to the wide variety of church embroideries.

Radical innovations find slower acceptance when applied to liturgical vestments and paraments, however, than with regard to architecture or sculpture. This is undoubtedly due to the fact that they are closely related to the liturgical forms of worship which are deeply rooted in tradition. (p. 75)

Ireland also observed that contemporary vestments show that symbols of the Faith are being used in different ways. She does not find extensive evidence that liturgical textiles of the present time have combined a high standard of artistic merit with theological appropriateness. Neither the ancient standard of laborious hand labor, nor the common standard of monetary value so often used as the basis for judging an embroidery or weaving have any

bearing on the intrinsic artistic merit of the article.

In her extensive work, Textile Art in the Church, Ireland (1971) includes numerous illustrations of contemporary vestments from the prominent creative artists and vestment makers of the world. Appliqué, handweaving, and tapestry techniques are shown, some also accompanied by illustrations of other textiles and the churches in which the vestments will be used. As a complete study of church textiles, examples of the detailed work of the past are included, making comparisons easily seen between the ancient and modern styles.

Murray McCance (b), a Canadian vestment maker, discusses the nature of a vestment and the considerations to be made in designing. Primarily, he says, the foundation for vestment design must be found in the liturgy. Personal adornment of the priest is not the goal, but the office of priest is made the focus, and the man clothed to look the role in which he is cast. The first goal is to be an amply draped garment, concealing the personality of the individual while identifying him in a higher role. McCance compares the chasuble to the judge's robe, which clothes him in a garment representing something higher than his individuality.

The matter of shape and ornament are not simply derived by tape measure and drawing board. The nature of the fabric, the degree of curve, and the way the fabric falls on the man are all



factors which make the man either look the role of priest, or simply as if so much yardage had been draped around him. Vestment design cannot be reduced to theory, formula, or slavish imitation of the past. "Our dignity as designers can be maintained only if we hold fast to the timeless purpose of the liturgy." (p. 4)

In a series of articles edited by Foley (1973) entitled Christian Talent Sampler, Cook reports upon the work of two contemporary vestment makers. Opus Anglicanum, Ltd., is the two-man firm of the Rev. Ralph Carskadden, Episcopal priest, and Steve Iverson, weaver. The two men are committed to the concept that vestments should be designed to be a contribution to the community life where they will be used. "Life is a unity, worship being a part of its fabric and not a pious adjunct" says Father Carskadden. (p.13) The partners combine the unity of life, work, and worship in their small workshop.

Succeeding articles in the series include a chasuble designed and executed by Vienna Anderson, who uses her first name only to identify wall hangings, banners, vestments, and multimedia shows which she creates. The chasuble shown features bold appliques of flowers and letters which, upon careful inspection, attempt to communicate, "He Lives."

Two other chasubles are featured and are the work of "The Beehive," a creative arts group of St. Alban's Episcopal Church of Indianapolis, Indiana. One features a billboard style butterfly,

the other a rainbow. The cover illustrations appear to be the front of these vestments and are of the signboard style with "rejoice, joy, hope, love" and other words boldly appliquéd. Although cut fuller than the Renaissance "sandwich board," the vestments retain the stiff, flattened appearance reminiscent of those styles.

### III METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The data for this study were collected by means of a questionnaire developed by the writer (Appendix B). The questionnaire and a cover letter were mailed, with return, self-addressed, stamped envelope, to a random selection of 300 parochial clergy of Episcopal churches in California, Oregon, and Washington. Parochial clergy are defined as those serving as rector, vicar, curate, associate or assisting priest in a parish church. Not included in this study are those priests who are retired (unless regularly supplying a parish) and those in specialized ministries such as military and institutional chaplaincies, teaching, and a variety of counseling and social service ministries not directly connected with a parish.

The source of the names for selection was the 1971 (current) edition of the "Episcopal Church Annual." The selection was made by use of a table of random numbers, with each priest given a number in the order in which his name appeared in the directory. Eight dioceses of the three states were the units for grouping of data. A diocese is a jurisdictional unit of the Church designated by a geographical area. Those used in this study are as follows:

California: ten counties in west central California  
Los Angeles: southern California  
Northern California: from Vallejo and Sacramento  
north, excluding Marin County

San Joaquin: central third of the state, principally the  
San Joaquin valley eastward  
Eastern Oregon: Oregon east of the Cascades  
Oregon: western Oregon  
Olympia: western Washington  
Spokane: eastern Washington and northern Idaho

For purposes of this study, only the Washington portion of the Diocese of Spokane was included.

Since mobility of clergy is a known fact, it was assumed that the directory listings would not be entirely accurate. In addition, the policies of forwarding mail addressed to a priest at a specific church proved to be inconsistent. In some cases the current rector or vicar responded to a questionnaire directed to his predecessor. In other cases, the questionnaire was forwarded to the priest to whom it was addressed. When reminder postcards were sent approximately one month after the initial mailing to those who had not responded, a number of letters were received from priests who had not received the initial mailing, but did receive the postcard. These men indicated a willingness to participate in the study and were sent the questionnaire. All questionnaires returned by priests serving parishes within the geographically defined area were used.

The data received in all questionnaires completed were tabulated according to use or non-use of contemporary styles of vestments, number of services per Sunday, number of services

of Holy Eucharist per month, use or non-use of Services for Trial Use and specifically the Second Service, and the age of the priest. Change in frequency of celebrations of Holy Eucharist and factors associated with such change were also tabulated.

Where contemporary style vestments were in use, the number of sets, recency of use, factors in their choice, including the coordination to church design and sources of the vestments were tabulated. Types of ornamental designs, fabrics and ornamental techniques were also tabulated.

In preparing the data for statistical analysis, occasional use of contemporary vestments was assigned a ten percent use figure. Those who indicated such use only once or twice a year, or for special occasions only, were assigned a four percent use figure. In determining the percentage use of the Second Service of Services for Trial Use, the ratio of use of this service to the total number of Sunday services of Holy Eucharist per month was used. Where the priest indicated that the parish was alternating the use of First Service and Second Service on alternate Sundays or during alternate months) the 50 percent use was assigned. When it was stated that the Services for Trial Use had been used, but that the parish had returned to the exclusive use of the Prayer Book of 1928, a zero percent use figure was assigned.

Statistical analysis of the correlations of the variables was

made by computer through the Department of Statistics and the Computer Center of the university.

Responses of clergy which indicated the use of contemporary vestments were sorted for indications of examples of particular interest. These were grouped geographically and concentrations found so that a maximum number of vestments could be seen in the time available for the research. Selection of parishes for visitation was made on the basis of comments, sketches, and subjectively assessed combinations of responses to items of the questionnaire which indicated interesting or unusual vestments. These priests were then contacted by letter and telephone to arrange personal interviews where possible.

Forty churches were visited, 26 of which were in California, 6 in Oregon, and 8 in Washington. Thirty-six clergy were interviewed. In three parishes the church secretary showed the vestments, in three others the directress of the altar guild or leader of the church sewing group enabled me to see and photograph vestments. The wife of one priest, the daughter of another, and a parish member who had made vestments completed the variety of persons who assisted.

Additional parishes were visited on referral from the clergy. One such referral was made to a church from which a questionnaire had been returned, but with no particular comments to draw

attention to the need for visitation. It was not possible at that time to visit all the referrals or all the priests whose questionnaires indicated interesting or unusual vestments.

Interviews with the clergy were conducted informally, and pictures were taken in the manner most convenient for the priest. Although this procedure did not give uniform data and pictures, it allowed the necessary flexibility for the amount of time which the priest had available. In some cases it was possible to interview the priest only briefly, and then to take pictures independently when he was called away. In other cases, the priest discussed at length both his vestments and various related factors.

The pictures which were obtained were sorted and classified together with the data concerning vestments seen but not photographed (or those not photographed successfully). Fifty-seven pictures of 53 vestments were selected as representative illustrations of the variety of fabric, design and ornamentation which was seen. In the selection of photographs, it was desired to show the range of design from poor to excellent in terms of liturgical references, and to illustrate some of the considerations for use of textiles which confront the vestment maker.

## IV RESULTS OF THE INVESTIGATION

### Statistical Data and Correlations

#### Background Data

One hundred and sixty-seven usable questionnaires were received of the 300 sent to clergy in the eight dioceses of California, Oregon, and Washington (Table 1, Appendix C). Ten additional questionnaires were received but not used as the respondents did not fall in the category of parochial clergy or because the data were incomplete for statistical purposes.

In order to evaluate the use of contemporary vestments in parish churches, the extent of the use of traditional Eucharistic vesture as an established parish custom was determined. One hundred and ten priests (65.9%) reported that Eucharistic vestments had been worn more than ten years, hence an established custom. (Table 2, Appendix C) In some parishes it was noted that this established custom extended only to special feasts such as Christmas and Easter, and that the cassock, surplice and stole comprised the usual vesture of the priest. Only 13 priests (7.8%) responded that Eucharistic vestments were not worn at all. Those who reported the usage of vestments for five years or less comprised 7.8% of the sample. In some cases usage for five years or less reflected



a recently established parish rather than a lack of interest in vestments, or recent change in usage.

### Usage of Contemporary Vestments

The expectations of the extent of usage of contemporary vestments was expressed in the hypothesis, "Contemporary vestments will be found in a significant number of churches, but in a minority of those selected for this study." The data received indicate that 92 priests or 55.4% of those surveyed wore contemporary vestments at some time. (Table 3, Appendix C) This practice contrasts with the 75 priests (44.6%) who did not wear contemporary vestments. Fifty-eight or 34.5% of those responding indicated that they wore contemporary vestments 50% or more of the time.

These data did not support the hypothesis that contemporary vestments would be used by a minority of the sample. The extent of usage of contemporary style vestments appeared to be greater than expected both in terms of number of priests and the percentage of time used.

### Factors Related to the Use of Contemporary Vestments

#### Liturgical Change

The relationship of the use of contemporary vestments to the

changing aspect of the liturgy was examined in two ways. The first was to examine the recency of use of contemporary vestments in relation to the introduction of possible revisions of the Eucharistic liturgy for use in parish churches in 1967 and 1970. Of 90 responses to the question "How recently were such vestments introduced in your parish?" Forty percent responded 3-5 years ago, which could be construed as indicative of a relation to the first parish experience of change in 1967. (Table 4, Appendix C) Thirty percent of the priests had introduced contemporary vestments into the parish within the past two years, which could also indicate a relationship to the changes in liturgy introduced in 1970. A substantial 30% of priests indicated that newer vestments had been introduced more than five years ago. This fact would indicate that factors other than the Services for Trial Use influence the change of vesture.

The relationship of the use of contemporary vestments to the changes within the liturgy was also compared statistically. The variables correlated were the percentage use of contemporary vestments (Table 3, Appendix C) and the percentage use of the second service of the Services for Trial Use. The use of this service was chosen as a correlational variable because it is a greater departure from the presently authorized Prayer Book service, than the First Service and offers a number of alternatives and variations to the Service of

Holy Eucharist. The freedom to construct many variations of the basic liturgy suggests the possibility of a relationship between the use of the Second Service and a greater disposition to experiment with variations of the basic liturgical vesture through fabric and design.

The statistical analysis reveals a significant positive correlation of 0.16 between the use of Second Service and the use of contemporary vestments at the .05 level of significance. Analysis of the sample according to diocese revealed no significant correlations within these smaller units.

#### Age of Priest

The relationship of the percentage use of contemporary vestments to the age of the priest was analyzed statistically. The assumption that younger persons are more ready to accept change and to experiment was the basis of this comparison. This assumption was confirmed by a correlation of -0.26, significant at the .05 level. The Diocese of Los Angeles, which had the largest number of priests responding, was found to have a significant correlation of -0.32.

There was a significant correlation of -0.28 at the .05 level between the percentage use of the Second Service and the age of the priest. When analyzed by diocese, there was a significant

correlation of -0.50 for the Diocese of Oregon.

These statistical correlations do not support the null hypotheses. For this sample the use of contemporary vestments increases with the use of Second Service of Services for Trial Use and decreases with the increasing age of the priest. Younger clergy are also using Second Service more frequently than older clergy.

#### Frequency of Celebration of Holy Eucharist

Another aspect of change in the worship life of parishes which could be related to the changing liturgy, and which also has implications for the textile artist and craftsman, is that of change in the frequency of Celebration of Holy Eucharist. Such change may include additional services or the shift from the Office of Morning Prayer to the Celebration of Holy Eucharist.

Of the priests responding, 49.7% indicated an increase in Celebrations of Holy Eucharist. (Table 5, Appendix C) The principal reason for change was the presence of a new priest in the parish (62.6%). The desire of the congregations was a reason listed by 40.9% of the respondents. However, 37.3% indicated that the introduction of the Services for Trial Use was a factor in this change. Combinations of two or three factors were noted by a number of the respondents. It should be noted that 74 respondents indicated that there was no change because the parish custom was

already that of Holy Communion as the only service on Sunday.

Related to the introduction of trial services, an additional reason for change given by eight respondents was the concurrent emphasis on the centrality of the Eucharist for corporate worship. Other factors influencing the increases were related to the temper of the times, the renewal in the Church through the movement of the Holy Spirit, the present change allowing children to receive Holy Communion prior to Confirmation, and the effects of the cursillo movement upon individuals and parishes.

The factors of change which have been enumerated support the hypothesis that increased frequency of Holy Eucharist is associated with the introduction of Services for Trial Use, 1970.

#### Fabric, Design and Ornamentation

In evaluating the data concerning fabrics and ornamentation used in contemporary vestments, it is recognized that while many priests are knowledgeable in these areas, many are not. In order to gain a more general picture of the use or non-use of contemporary textiles in liturgical vestments, it was determined not to attempt quantification of this aspect of the study. The descriptive data given by the respondents covered a wide degree of variation in types of vestment design, fabrics, and ornamentation, and in the degree of response to the request for sketches or descriptions of

contemporary vestments.

### Fabrics and Ornamentation Techniques

Of the fabrics listed in the questionnaire, linen and linen-like fabrics were most frequently checked, with burlap and textured fabrics following in frequency. Other fabrics listed included felt, raw silk, velvet, denim, monk's cloth, polyester knit, and wool.

The technique of ornamentation most frequently indicated was appliqué, with embroidery and woven designs also reported frequently. Only 14 responded that they had vestments with no additional ornamentation. Other ornamental techniques included crewel work, couching, painting, ink, and glue. Glue was predominantly used in vestments made as Christian education projects. One respondent indicated the use of deer and lamb skin and semi-precious stones, one reported the use of silver nails, and another the use of spikes and chain.

The hypothesis that a variety of fabrics and ornamental techniques would be found is supported by these data.

### Ornamentation and Design

Ornamentation of the chasuble was defined as traditional style using Christian symbolism in orphreys, pillars, or medallions; as contemporary style which is not restricted in this manner, or as a

design which is not further ornamented, including plaid, striped and printed fabrics.

In identifying the designs used for vestments made from contemporary fabric, 63 priests reported that they possessed vestments with contemporary designs, 46 priests had vestments of traditional design, and 23 priests had vestments with no additional ornamentation. (Table 7, Appendix C) This was a multiple response question, and the number of vestments of each type was not determined. As an indicator of the variety of design used in contemporary vestments, 10 priests had three types of vestment designs, 26 priests had two types of designs, and 53 priests had only one type of design.

The data indicate that the use of contemporary design is slightly more predominant than the use of traditional design, or of no applied ornamentation in contemporary vestments. This finding does not support the hypothesis that traditional symbols expressed with less restraint would be predominant in the contemporary vestments of the sample.

### Design and Church Architecture

In response to the question "Were such vestments designed to coordinate with the style of architecture and interior color and design of the church building?", 25.6% replied affirmatively,

52.1% replied negatively, and 24.3% indicated partial coordination. (Table 8, Appendix C) Only two respondents indicated that the architect had been involved in the selection of the vestments.

I have cause for questioning the total accuracy of these data, although the responses probably were accurate to the best of the priests' knowledge. Two priests who responded were from my own parish, and one was unaware that at least one of the vestments in use was designed with consideration for the color and design of the church. One set of vestments was designed by the other priest and me (who also made the vestments), and I know that the color and design of the church were considered. The data however, support the hypothesis that a majority of contemporary vestments would not be designed to coordinate with the church building.

#### Sources of Vestments

The sources of vestments ranged from major church supply houses to groups of Sunday school children. Professional designers, artists, parish altar guilds and sewing groups, diocesan altar guilds, and individuals were reported sources of vestments. Two professional designers and three vestment houses were specifically named. Parish members, friends, clergy wives and other relatives were also among the sources of vestments, as were camp groups and various Christian education groups. The responses indicate that



many contemporary vestments are the product of parish involvement of those who made them, and not necessarily limited to skilled professional textile artists and craftsmen.

### Field Investigation

#### Diversity of Churches and Clergy

Contemporary vestments were found in a great variety of churches and in use by no one type of priest. The churches visited varied from the famous metropolitan Grace Cathedral in San Francisco to St. Augustine's in-the-Woods on Whidbey Island, Washington, a small church with its first full time priest. The architecture spanned the diversities of a parish presently meeting in a converted house, a storefront church, traditional old established churches, and new soaring architecture. Numerous variations of churches in the round were visited, as well as newer churches with the more traditional floor plans. Metropolitan parishes, suburban and small town parishes were included.

The priests interviewed varied from the modernist, psychologically oriented to those who were theologically and eucharistically centered. These priests included men whose entire adult life had been devoted to the priesthood, while others had been ordained later in life. Their backgrounds as churchmen spanned the variations between "anglo-Catholic" and "Evangelical" Episcopalians, as well

as those who had begun their ministerial life in other denominations. Scholars, artists, administrators and pastors as well as parish priests were represented in the various parishes visited.

### Attitudes of Clergy Toward Vestments

The attitudes of the clergy toward vestments were as varied as the men. Many expressed in one way or another that vestments were only part of the worship pattern but could contribute to a sense of order or becoming a clashing intrusion of irrelevance. The concept of liturgical worship as being of the nature of drama was expressed, with the observation that the vestments should communicate something of this drama, however subtle that contribution might be. One priest summed up the discussion in terms of the liturgy as the whole drama of Redemption in which every aspect must be carefully planned and executed if the congregation is to be caught up in the fullness of worship without being confused or simply dazzled. Vestments should speak more by drape and movement of fabric as part of the whole, rather than function as a display board for a variety of symbols.

Other priests were less concerned with what the vestments looked like than that they had some meaning to the parish, or that they represented the involvement of the parish members. The phrase, "this represents a lot of love" sometimes appeared

to be intended to compensate for an evident lack of artistic, liturgical or sewing skills.

### Diversity and Classification of Vestments

One hundred and thirty vestments were seen with only one duplication. This chasuble was requested by the priest who had seen the first model. At that, it was not strictly a duplicate, since both the front and back were the same, whereas the original had different designs. In classifying these vestments for diversity and similarity, the types of symbolism and design and the use of fabric appeared to be the most useful basis, although some vestments could be assigned in more than one way.

<u>Classification</u>	<u>Number</u>
1. The Cross as principal design symbol . . . . .	20
2. The Flame symbol of the Holy Spirit . . . . .	12
3. Conventional or catalogue type designs . . . . .	17
4. Happenings, vestments which grew . . . . .	21
Felt vestments	5
Youth and Christian education projects	8
Signboard style	3
Miscellaneous	5
5. Fabrics without applied symbols . . . . .	31
6. Drapery-type prints with applied symbols . . .	4
7. Other symbols and designs . . . . .	26

The fabrics which were used in these vestments compose a cross section of possibilities including cotton prints, denim, burlap, and drapery fabrics available in most fabric shops, wool and polyester double knits, Thai silk, velvet, and the specialized rayons and silks available through church supply and vestment houses. In some cases the priests were knowledgeable concerning fabrics used, but interest centered more on design and the way in which the vestments suited the liturgical purposes, were evolved from the life of the parish, were a response of parish members, or were the expression of Christian education.

#### Some Representative Vestments

In selecting the pictures and vestments to be included in this discussion, the goal was to present an overview of what was seen, particularly beyond the scope of the church supply houses and vestment company catalogues. A number of these catalogues have been examined and are available to those who are interested. In this portion of the study, the focus is upon these vestments which were individually designed and made (including both professional and amateur designers) and some of the intangibles which underly the textiles, their selection and use.

### The Cross as the Principal Symbol

The use of the cross on the chasuble ranged from a simple, single cross through the use of multiple crosses and more complex designs in which the cross remained the principal focus.

Plate I shows two uses of the Jerusalem Cross. The first is an all-season chasuble, with the central cross of gold kid and the smaller crosses of pile fabric in traditional seasonal colors. The chasuble is conical in shape, of textured cotton and wool, and unlined. The priest for whom this was made is presently serving as a college chaplain and finds the all-season, single vestment a convenience.

The second chasuble is made of thick and thin wale corduroy. The crosses were made of yarn on a base, and then appliquéd. The result is a simple, yet rich looking vestment. It was the only use of corduroy seen, possibly because it is a warm vestment which has more limited use than a green set would otherwise have.

Two ornate crosses are seen on Plate II. Both are designed as patronal vestments, meaning that symbols are used which relate to the saint who is honored by the parish name. The first picture shows the Iona Cross, the symbol of the sixth century monk and evangelist, St. Columba. It is an example of crewel embroidery on soft wool, the work done by a community of nuns in the area. The

## PLATE I

## TWO USES OF THE JERUSALEM CROSS



## PLATE II

## FINE DETAIL IN PATRONAL VESTMENTS



second patronal design is that of St. Charles, King and Martyr. A heraldic design does not appear in the handbooks of saints' emblems, but is here interpreted by the symbols of the British Empire. This crewel embroidery was the work of two members of the parish.

In contrast to the delicate designs are the bold Celtic Crosses in Plate III. The hand-carved Celtic Cross to the left in the first picture was the inspiration for the vestment. It had been made by a parishioner for the priest and hung over his desk. His appreciation of the meaning of this Cross was communicated to another parishioner who then used the design for the vestment. The fabric is burlap lined in cotton, with an uncut corduroy panel backing the felt Cross. The priest commented that the fabric breathes and is cool to wear in the sometimes hot climate.

The red chasuble is also a patronal vestment and is of raw silk with the designs applied in velvet with twisted and couched gold cord. The front of the vestment has a single velvet pillar, with the lion of St. Mark outlined in gold on the pillar. The techniques used are traditional, but the design is so contemporary that it disturbed some of the traditional vestment makers of the Diocesan Altar Guild. The impetus for this set was supplied by a parish member who was a retired priest's wife. Before the set was completed, she died, and the ladies finished the vestments as a memorial to her.



## PLATE III

## BOLD DESIGN USING CELTIC CROSS

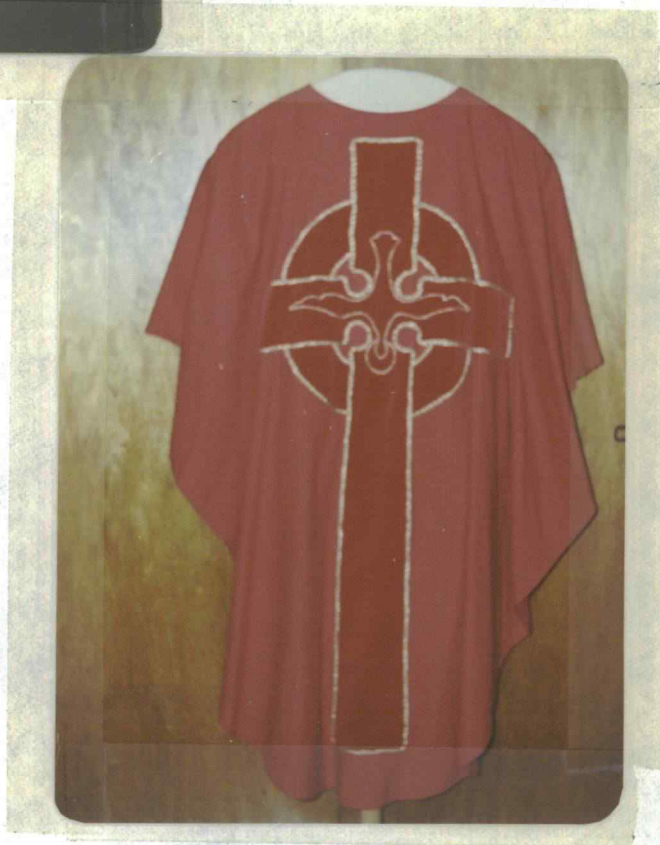


Plate IV is an example of a paint-and-paper artist's concepts translated to fabric. The artist designed large, seasonal fabric panels for the front of the church and vestments coordinated with these panels. The design is rather "busy" for a vestment. The leader of the sewing group making the vestments felt that the task had been unduly complicated for the seamstresses by the artist's lack of understanding of the nature of fabric. Many bias edges, some difficult fabrics, and extremely time-consuming techniques were required to translate the art to the vestments. This example is one of the complete set being made.

Plate V illustrates two boldly contemporary ways of using the cross. The pink, yellow and gold sunburst cross is made of felt stitched to the linen-type fabric. The gold is repeated in the lining. This chasuble was made for an Easter sunrise Folk Mass, when the priest observed that something other than traditional damask would be more appropriate. A parish member decided it was possible, even in three days.

The red vestment incorporates the fish and the symbols of bread and wine with the Cross. The design was done by the priest and the vestment made by his wife for his ordination. The design medium is appliqué and stitchery, with gold kid for the Cross. One priest and artist observer noted that the fish appears to be swallowing the Cross, and that there is a confusion of symbols.

## PLATE IV

PAPER ARTIST'S CONCEPT TRANSLATED TO FABRIC



## PLATE V

## BOLD CONTEMPORARY DESIGN USING CROSS

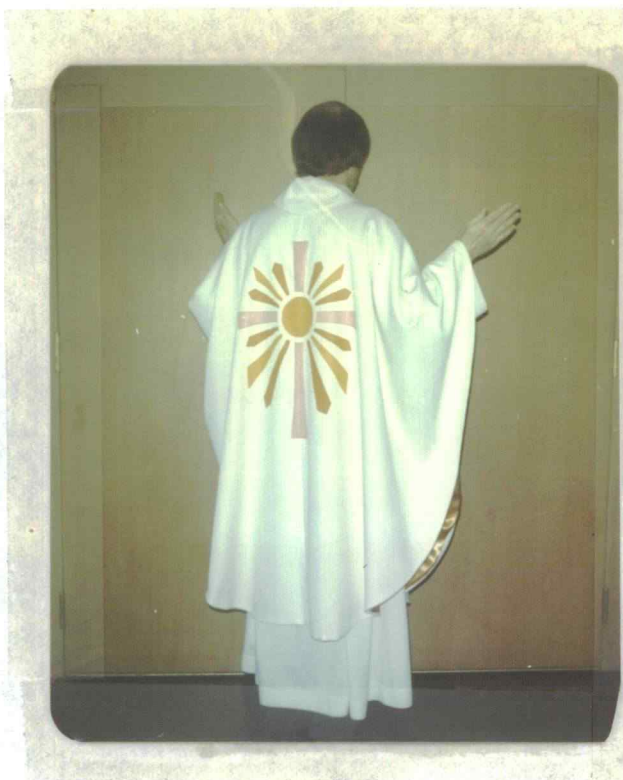


Plate VI illustrates that not all vestments communicate the religious symbol applied. The white chasuble made of polyester knit fabric is completely washable. The orphrey however puckers, detracting from the draping and appearance of the garment. The church in which this chasuble is used is a simple, in-the-round style, and the pale quality of the design falls short of compatibility. The maker observed that it was not quite right, but this was her first attempt.

The gold vestment partakes of the quality of opulence for its own sake. The cut and collar design as well as the repetitious design of the orphrey detract from a rich fabric. One observer felt that it looks more like a lady's evening coat than a liturgical vestment. The church in which it is used is of simple modern design.

### The Flame Symbol of the Holy Spirit

The use of the flame symbol of Pentecost would appear to be replacing the more classical descending dove in contemporary vestments. Plates VII and VIII show two examples of the work of San Francisco designer Anna Crossley. The natural raw silk chasuble on Plate VII tends towards a traditional vestment, having been made about ten years ago. The full cut and the free-form flame behind the Chi Rho Cross combine with the fabric to create a vestment with a contemporary feeling which is at home in its



## PLATE VI

CONSTRUCTION AND FABRIC DETRACTING FROM SYMBOL



## PLATE VII

A TRANSITIONAL VESTMENT USING FLAME  
SYMBOL

modern setting. The priest turns the chasuble back on the wrist, revealing additional color from the red silk lining.

The vestment on Plate VIII is made of Thai silk, and the flame design is made of layers of fine tulle in reds, yellow, orange, purple, and green. The priest is also an artist who feels that the design did not come out with the boldness which he desired, although the techniques of the designer are excellent.

Two other chasubles made on this theme by the same artist were also seen. Both designs placed flame symbols in a v-shape from the shoulders to the center back. One used couched blue and metallic gold threads in large, five-fingered flames on a red silk faille. Five of the flames appear on the back of the vestment, reaching well down the center. The fourth chasuble of this artist was a soft white wool. In this design, the flame symbols form a collar-like line about eight inches down the center back and form a v-shape to the shoulders. The design is worked in shades of yellow and gold. A pair of crossing gold lines is also embroidered around the edge of the chasuble. This design is rather small and dainty. The church in which the chasuble is presently used is a modern concrete one, and the delicacy of the design may well be lost.

Two very contemporary, free-form flame designs are seen on Plate IX. The upper chasuble is made of polyester knit, outlined in



## PLATE VIII

DESIRED BOLDNESS DIMINISHED BY DAINTY DESIGN



## PLATE IX

CONTEMPORARY FREE-FORM FLAME  
DESIGN

black soutache braid. The birds are made of a ribbed rayon fabric which reflects the light differently as the vestment moves. The set was designed for Pentecost and planned around a liturgical dance group.

The second picture is a chasuble made by Opus Anglicanum. The fabric is cut in the design and satin-stitched together, rather than layers appliquéd in the more common technique. The brilliant color and simplicity give a strong contemporary effect. The tunicle and dalmatic seen in the background also carry this flame design.

Plate X shows a highly stylized flame form accented with the gold kid pillar on the front and the gold cross and crown on the back. The parish where this vestment was made is predominantly Japanese. The vestment reflects somewhat the oriental design in the pointed cut and the way it is made. The silk is interlined to give body, and it feels somewhat like padded Japanese garments. The neck opening is smaller than is usually seen, and has a placket with large silk-covered snaps on one shoulder. The original design called for a complex Chi Rho Cross and crown on the back and a Japanese ideograph on the pillar. When the actual chasuble was being made, however, the cross design was simplified for better appearance and proportion, and the ideograph was dropped as giving too much of a signboard effect.

## PLATE X

## HIGHLY STYLIZED FLAME FORM

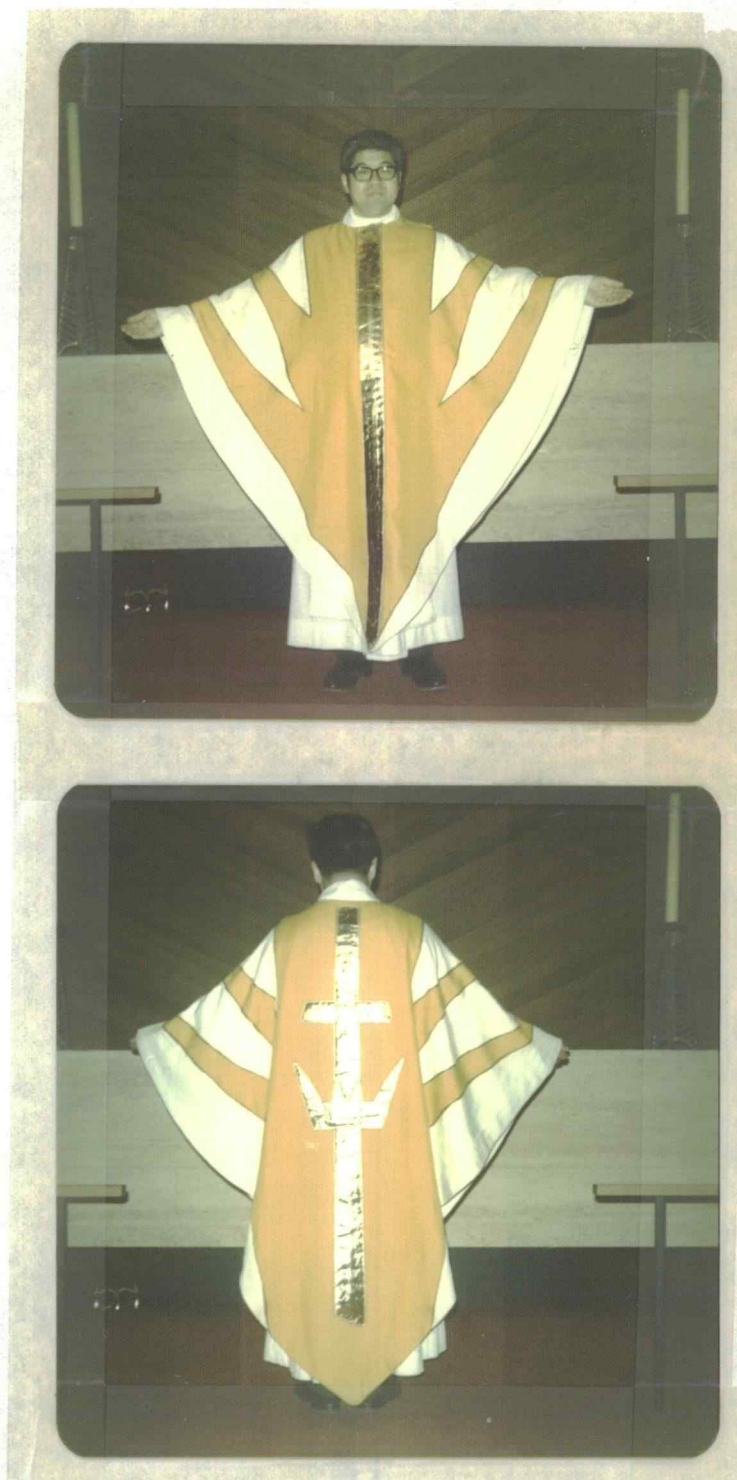


Plate XI shows two uses of felt flame designs. The white vestment is of wool and is rather warm and heavy. The design takes on the style of a banner more than that of a chasuble.

The red vestment uses yellow and orange felt in the seven-tongued flame. The chasuble is lined in a soft candlelight gold. This design is bold and visible without being overwhelming and banner-like.

### Conventional Designs

By virtue of the fabrics used, many vestments which were seen fulfilled the definition for contemporary vestments although the designs were quite traditional. Simple pillars, Y-orphreys of plain or woven design banding, medallion crosses and other designs characterize these vestments. Many of those seen in this classification are catalogue items of the various vestment houses, a circumstance which is not to be interpreted as negative or undesirable. For the most part, these vestments were full cut and very useful in their simplicity. Illustrations of these vestments were not included here as they are readily available elsewhere.

Three designs from vestment houses are somewhat different, however, and are noted here. One, from the firm of Mary Moore is a natural linen with a center panel of embroidered cut work. Behind this open work is a panel of seasonal color which is snapped



## PLATE XI

## USE OF FELT IN FLAME DESIGN



in, so that the vestment can be used for all seasons.

Plate XII shows two vestments which were made in the Netherlands and purchased for the parish when a modern church was built. The first vestment is natural textured fabric with maroon velvet and gold fabric appliquéd. Gold cord and white yarn are couched to accent the design.

The second chasuble is also natural silk, with a stiffened center panel. The dark blue is velvet, and the details are of gold leather. The standing collar is somewhat different from vestment collars usually seen in American-made vestments. These two vestments represent the 1950 or early 1960 styles.

#### Happenings: Vestments Which Grew

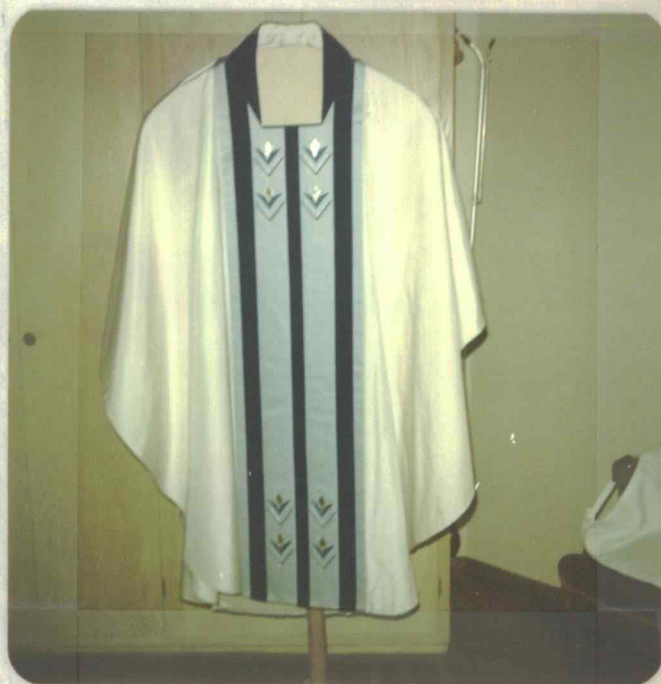
This classification of vestments was so designated because the common element is the involvement of many people or the making of very "now" types of vestments for particular occasions. A negative observation might be made that these are vestments which do not express a concern with liturgical unity as much as they express the individual concerns.

Plate XIII illustrates two chasubles made by children as part of sharing and learning processes. The second picture is a vestment made by a first Communion class.

Plate XIV shows in the first picture a tie-dyed chasuble made

## PLATE XII

## TRANSITIONAL DESIGN FROM THE NETHERLANDS





## PLATE XIII

## CHASUBLES ORNAMENTED BY CHILDREN



## PLATE XIV

## CHURCH SCHOOL AND YOUTH DESIGNS



as a surprise by the Church school classes on the occasion of the priest's ordination anniversary. The stole was made of felt, the chasuble of sheeting (which made it seamless and technically more "authentic" as the early chasubles had no seams).

The second picture is a chasuble made by a group of teenagers for a Sunrise service, and was described as an instant vestment. The sun, which appears at the left, is on the shoulder of the vestment and extends to the front. Rays from the sun complete the front design. This vestment makes up in enthusiasm that which it lacks in technical skill.

Plate XV shows a burlap vestment which was made in camp, reflecting things important to the youth. It is an interesting combination of the more traditional Christian symbols on the one side, and the contemporary peace cross, words and symbols on the other side.

Plate XVI shows examples of the intrusion of the world and politics upon the setting which should be focused upon the Word of God and the Sacramental Presence of Christ in the Eucharist. The peace sign of the first picture is a controversial symbol and does not focus upon the Prince of Peace in many persons' mental imagery. The use of national colors in a parade banner design for a liturgical vestment for a celebration which is above national loyalties is in contradiction to the many previous references which

## PLATE XV

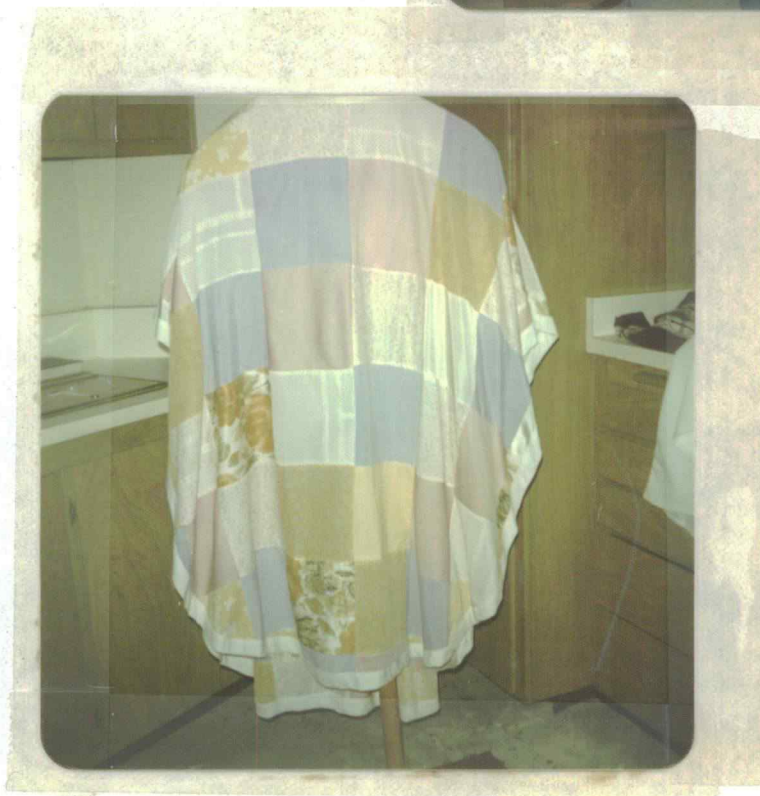
## CHASUBLE MADE FOR CAMP





## PLATE XVI

## INTRUSION OF NON-LITURGICAL SYMBOLS



point out that vestments must rise from the liturgy.

The second picture shows an example of super enthusiasm taking precedence over understanding and knowledge. The priest had said "make something different." The fabrics found in this woman's scrap bag no doubt call to mind events, daughter's dresses and other things which are meaningful to her. Applying Shepherd's definition of liturgical worship as that possessed in common by all the people, the symbolism here would seem to lack a common ground which would be necessary and appropriate for a liturgical vestment.

Plate XVII shows two examples of the "sign board" type of vestment. The upper vestment is carefully and well made. It is another of the Sunday school projects and is made of a print of a city map, with the various felt symbols applied by the children.

The second vestment is made of tablecloth fabric with the design in felt. The extent of overlapping felt makes an ungraceful flat effect reminiscent of Renaissance sandwich boards. One observer felt that the design reminded him of spilled paint. Another commented that a longer, fuller chasuble would at least have given better proportions between the design and the chasuble.

Plate XVIII shows two all-felt vestments. The first vestment was made as a Church school project during Advent, and was worn for Christmas services. The Tree of Jesse incorporates various

## PLATE XVII

## DESIGNS OF THE SIGNBOARD TYPE



## PLATE XVIII

CHASUBLES MADE COMPLETELY OF  
FELT



symbols relating to the prophecies of the coming of Christ. The front of the vestment has a large Christmas Rose design. In researching the symbols and choosing those to be used, everyone involved shared in the learning as well as the gift to the vicar.

The second picture is a vestment made by a parish family. The symbols used were carefully chosen, and an explanatory leaflet was circulated in the parish. The Jesus monogram and sun as Sun of Righteousness is central. The other symbols of the vestment refer principally to Christ or to the Sacrament. The symbols are glued on, and, according to the priest, require some maintenance from time to time. It was also noted that a problem with felt is that it tends to stretch, particularly at the neckline and also at the shoulders when hung on a coat hanger.

### Plain Fabrics

This group of vestments includes those without symbols, orphreys or pillars added to the basic chasuble. We are reminded of Jacopin's statement that chasubles were not ornamented until the eleventh century and do not have to be ornamented now. It remains then for the cut and drape of the fabric, the lining or the printed design to speak for itself, successfully or otherwise.

Plate XIX shows two vestments of printed fabric. The upper one is relatively subdued and the pattern is such that pious souls can

## PLATE XIX

## SUBDUED AND BOLD PRINTED FABRIC



read much symbolism into it. The second vestment is bold and festive but when slightly off center, as in this picture, it would well have a negative effect upon the congregation with the definite stripe on an angle. The factor of aligning a vestment with such obvious vertical designs needs to be considered since many priests now put on the chasuble at the offertory, wearing the alb and stole until that time. Not being in the sacristy with a mirror, such details are easily overlooked.

Plate XX is an example of handwoven vestments. The orphrey is not sewn down, but given weight by the tassel. The fabric is woven in rosepath design, and the vestment is lined. The sweater-type yarn results in a rather heavy vestment, a factor which has been commented upon by some who likened it to a horse blanket. However, the priest for whom it was made finds it well balanced, not given to shifting, and likes it quite well. This points up another factor to be considered when making or choosing vestments, that of weight in relation to climate and personal preferences.

Plate XXI illustrates the effect of fabric in the draping of a chasuble. Both vestments were made from the same basic pattern. The first is made of four-by-four monk's cloth, notorious for its tendency to stretch and shrink. The fabric was washed before being cut, and is lined in a lightweight cotton-polyester fabric.

## PLATE XX

## HANDWOVEN CHASUBLE



## PLATE XXI

## EFFECT OF FABRIC IN DRAPE OF CHASUBLE



The vestment was made for a Church school service which was to simulate the Eucharist as it might have been in the ages when Christians worshipped in secret in the Catacombs; hence the total simplicity of the design. The fabric drapes softly and gracefully, not unlike those seen in early art works of that period of history during which Christians were in danger.

The second vestment does not have the same soft draping quality but tends to fold more crisply, as the fabric is a firm cotton-polyester. The vestment was designed for "green seasons," but with an all-season possibility. A red piping at the joinings of the major sections provides an accent to the simple design.

Plate XXII shows creative use of fabric by entirely different means. The upper vestment is designed to speak of something less than the utter gloom for funerals where black is insisted upon. The Church is moving away from the use of black as being inappropriate to a service marking the entry of the soul into larger life. However, traditions die hard, and this solution of flashes of green and gold to relieve the black speaks rather eloquently of that which is hidden beyond.

The purple set is hand corded in a balanced but not symmetrical pattern. Threads in the base cotton fabric were drawn, and darker, heavier thread were woven in. The vestments were not received with much enthusiasm at first, but time has seen them "grow" upon



## PLATE XXII

## EFFECTIVE USE OF FABRIC



the congregation.

Plate XXIII shows two of five vestments made by judicious cutting from contemporary screen printed cottons from the Finnish firm Marimekko. The Church for which these vestments were made is contemporary concrete, and the bright fabrics are in keeping with the setting. One might wonder, however, what the effect upon the congregation might be, since these fabrics were recently featured for resort and lounge wear in a popular pattern book.

#### Symbols Applied to Printed Fabrics

This small group was considered separately because of the popular notion that the application of Christian symbols to a garment is all that is required to make a vestment. In judging the success, we must remember the factors of unity and perhaps Hammond's statement that a giant Cross does not necessarily make a hall into a Church.

The first vestment on Plate XXIV gives the visual effect of a symbol hung in front of a drapery. The second vestment uses an indefinite framing of the Cross. The blue of the printed pattern tends to blur the applied design. Both vestments appear to be cut rather narrow with little draping quality when compared to others. If they were made to scale for a small man, this would be appropriate.

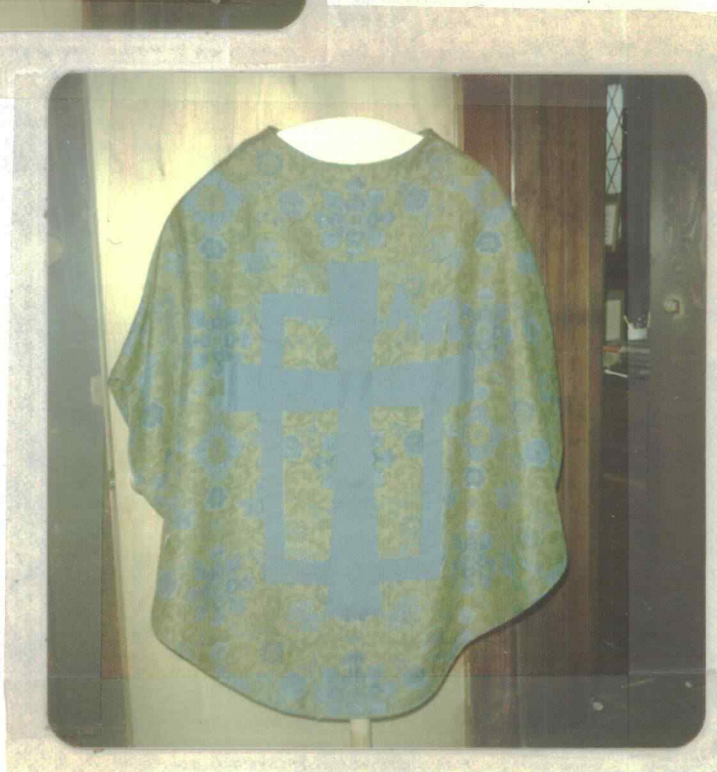


## PLATE XXIII

SCREEN PRINTS CUT FOR CHASUBLE DESIGN



## PLATE XXIV

INCOMPATIBILITY OF SYMBOL AND PRINTED  
FABRIC

### Other Symbols and Designs

Among the many vestments seen, many interesting designs were found, among them this group which encompasses a number of varied concepts, fabrics and techniques.

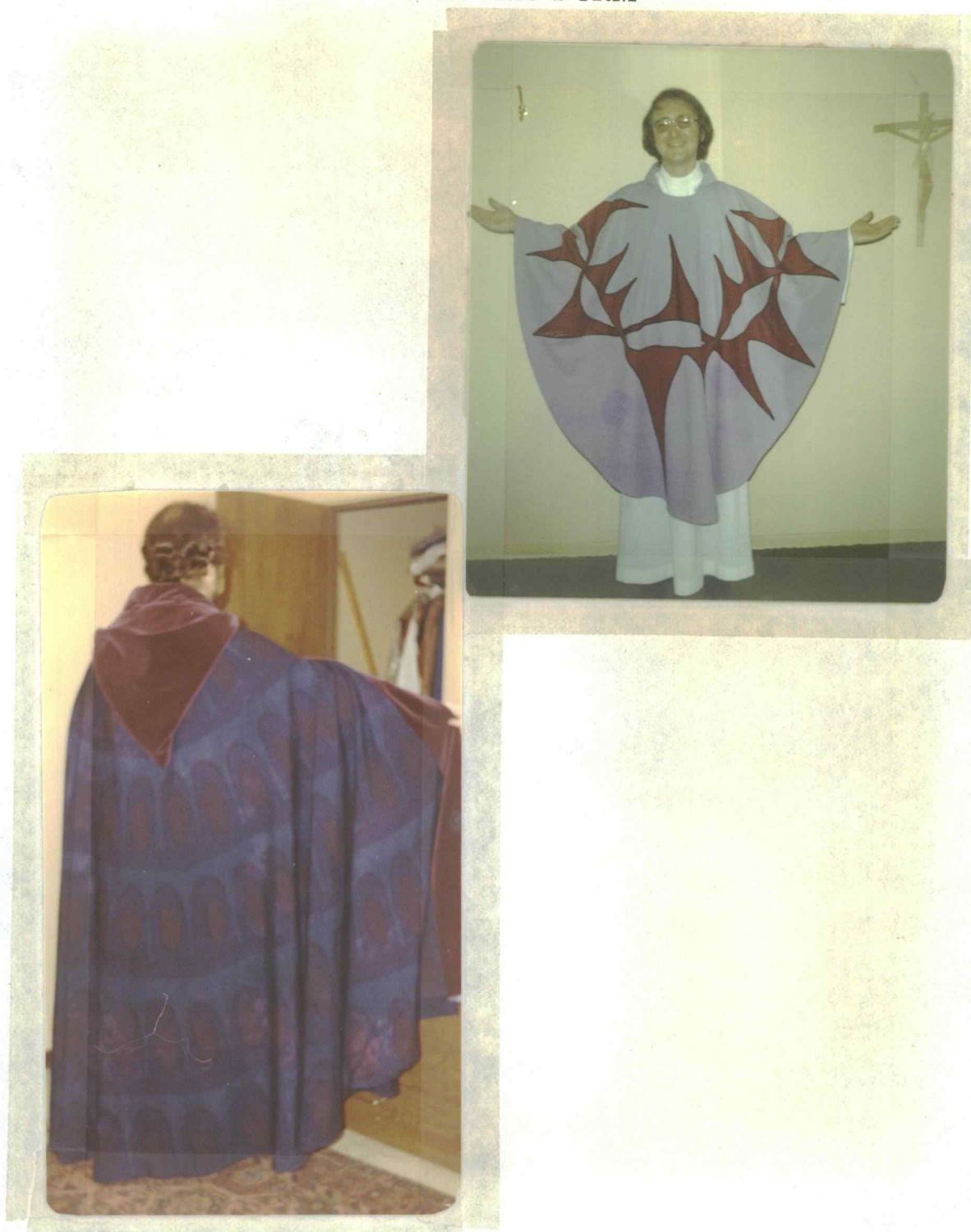
The first vestment on Plate XXV is made of polyester knit, with the crown of thorns appliquéd and outlined in black. The vestment was made in response to a need created by a burglary of the church in which the vestments were taken. It is an excellent example of a traditional symbol treated in a bold and modern way.

The second picture is included in the study although it is in fact a cope, rather than chasuble, because the chasuble of the set is to be made in the future, and the design was one of the outstanding vestments seen. The fabric is silk shantung, cut in one circular piece with the batik design equally balanced from top to hem. It is the work of Fr. Carskadden of Opus Anglicanum, a young priest who combines an understanding of liturgy and the wholeness of worship with a considerable artistic talent.

Plate XXVI shows two unusual vestments made in the parish. The first chasuble is for Folk Masses and carries a medieval minstrel quality in the design. The wording on it is from the Psalms. One artist-observer felt that it displayed a "hankering after relevance" but only succeeded in nineteenth century Romanticism,

## PLATE XXV

## CONTEMPORARY DESIGN IN SYMBOLIC AND NON-SYMBOLIC FORM





## PLATE XXVI

DESIGNS OF RELEVANCE RATHER THAN OF LITURGICAL ORIGIN



since harps and horns are not the instruments of the present day Folk Mass.

The second vestment is one which speaks to this congregation of the things which are indigenous to the area. The traditional pillar is replaced with the redwood tree. At the base, around the hem are worked flowers native to the area and the significant dates in the history of the parish. On the shoulders are the birds which are characteristic of the area. It is an unusual use of symbols which surround the life of the people, and is perhaps more meaningful in speaking to them of God than more traditional symbols. However, the design of this vestment was observed by a Holy Cross monk as being "psychologically unfortunate."

The butterfly, ancient symbol of Resurrection, has been interpreted in many ways. Two of these appear on Plate XXVII. The upper picture was designed by the writer and the priest for whom it was made. The butterflies and border were appliquéd on a base which was then appliquéd to the chasuble. Shading of the blues and greens was done by layers of three colors of nylon organ-dy. The yellow and orange utilized the grain of the fabrics which reflected light differently at different angles. The chasuble was made of a textured drapery fabric with a built-in lining, which was chosen to prevent the yellow of the chasuble lining from dulling the white.

## PLATE XXVII

## CONTRASTING EXPRESSIONS OF THE BUTTERFLY SYMBOL



The second vestment, intended for Folk Masses, is made of a Kettlecloth type of fabric, lined in soft blue cotton. The butterfly is made of felt and woven fabrics, with acrylic yarn used for the antennae. This vestment is much bolder than the first one, and manages not to be as stiff as another similar design which has been seen in a magazine illustration.

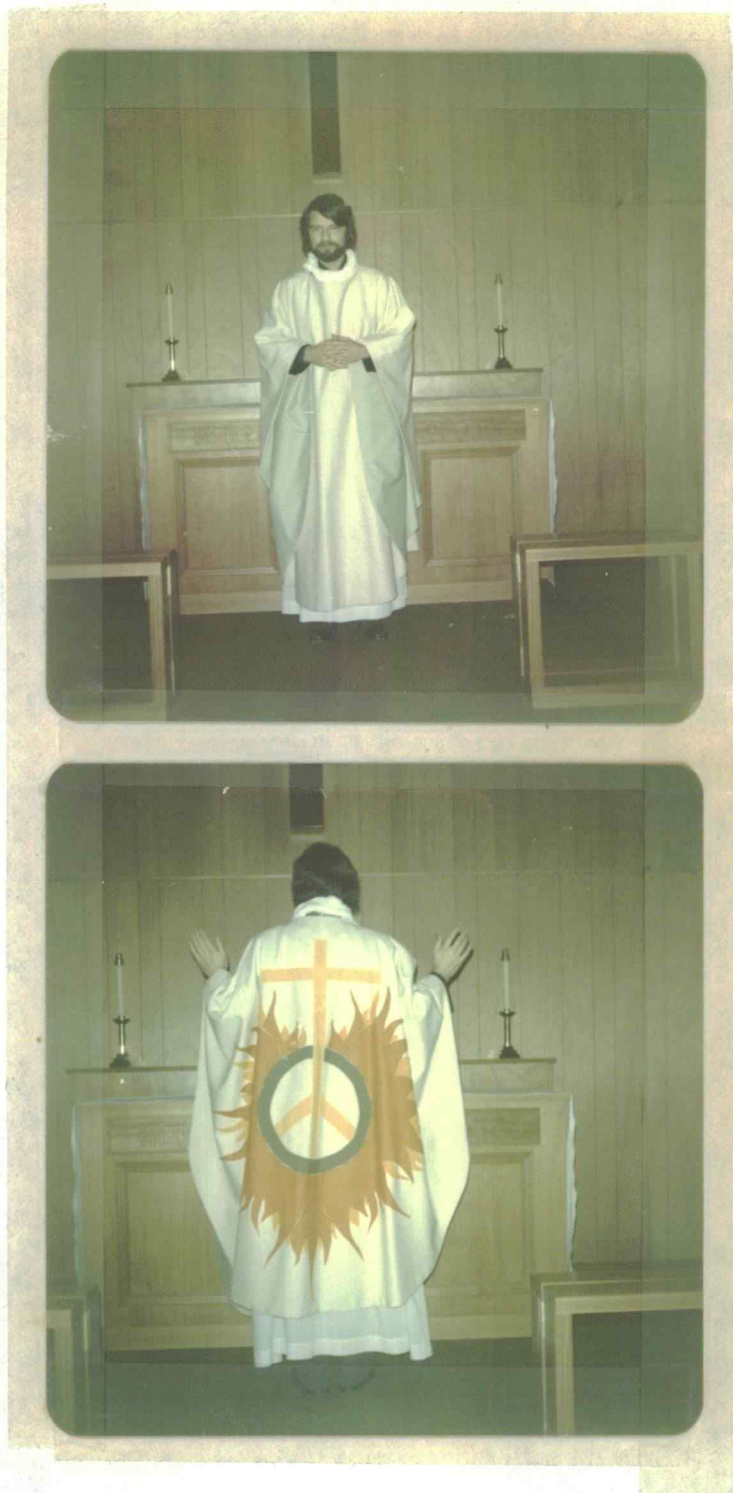
Plate XXVIII is a vestment which was made by high school students, using natural denim. The flaming sun surrounding the peace cross is meant to enhance the idea behind it that peace in the world comes through Jesus Christ. The long, full shape is exceptionally well done, especially among vestments made by young people. The soft green lining shown in the front view illustrates the principle of simplicity and the effect of color and fabric, while the back of the chasuble speaks boldly of youth's concern for peace through Christ. This use of the peace symbol may be contrasted with that on the vestment on Plate XVI.

Plate XXIX shows two contrasting types of vestments frequently found. The upper picture is done with spindly line drawings and signs which undoubtedly derive from the piety of the embroiderer. While not wishing to negate the importance of personal commitment in a vestment maker, a greater awareness of the chasuble's purpose is needed. The design all but disappears in a short distance, so is ineffective in any but the smallest chapel.



## PLATE XXVIII

VESTMENT MADE BY YOUTH COMBINING SIMPLICITY AND  
BOLDNESS



## PLATE XXIX

VESTMENTS SHOWING TRIUMPH OF PIETY AND ENTHUSIASM



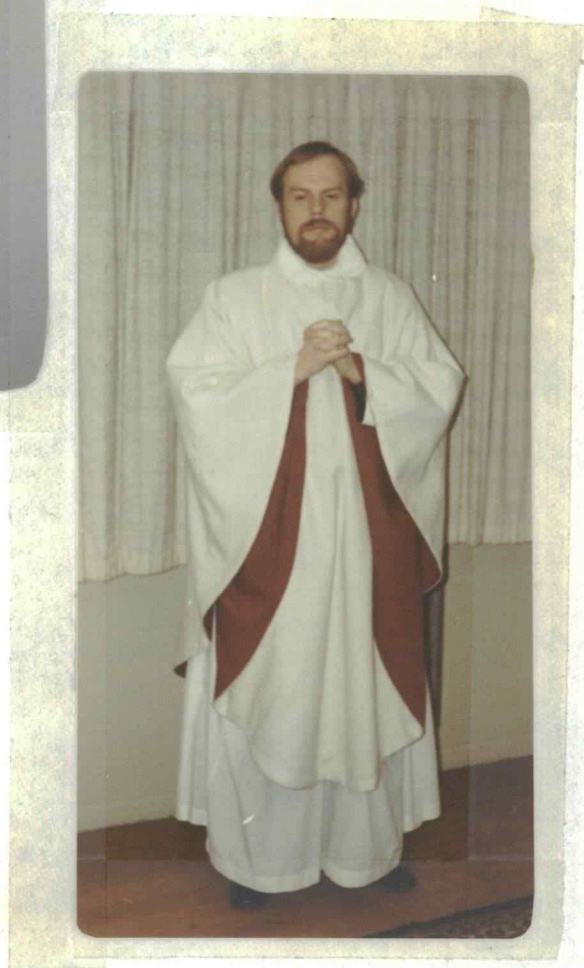
The other vestment is a very wide one of burlap with appliquéd flowers. It is a bold design which would be appropriate for a Folk Mass in a modern setting perhaps, but for use in the massive granite and redwood cathedral church for which it was made, the sense of appropriateness to the setting is missing. Perhaps its greatest flaw as a liturgical vestment is one which does not show in the picture. At the center hem of the chasuble in letters at least three inches high is the name of the maker. This is a custom of artists, not of vestment makers. Notation should be made here of the numerous references cited which emphasize that vestments are to be liturgical garments, designed for the needs of the liturgy and not as artistic display boards.

Plate XXX shows two examples of contemporary "sackcloth" used for Lenten vestments. The first vestment is made of burlap lined in cotton. The priest for whom it was made commented upon the appropriateness of burlap for Lent as a returning to the ancient concept of sackcloth and ashes as penitential symbols. The flattened nail shapes on the front of the chasuble and on the ends of the stole were specially made by a silversmith. They are sterling silver and were being allowed to tarnish in order to subdue the shiny effect and to be more in keeping with the penitential nature of Lent.

The second vestment is of heavy cotton fabric in natural and oxblood colors. This vestment is reversible for use through both

## PLATE XXX

## CONTEMPORARY SACKCLOTH FOR LENTEN VESTMENTS



Lent and Holy Week. A crown of thorns is to be applied by stitchery, using handspun wool and mohair. On the chasuble from which this vestment was copied, the techniques used for the crown of thorns design proved to be unsuccessful, and other techniques are being explored before completing the embellishment of this chasuble.

## V SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The use of Eucharistic vestments in the Episcopal churches of the West Coast is an established custom in most parishes. The appearance of contemporary vestments is not limited to one area or diocese or to any age group, although statistical evidence shows that younger clergy are changing to non-traditional fabrics and designs in vestments more frequently than older clergy.

The worship life of many parishes is undergoing change not only in the rites of the Celebration of Holy Eucharist, but also in the frequency of Celebration. These changing patterns of worship also include the informal "Folk Mass" which is appearing in many churches. Because of the informality of the setting and music, clergy are noting that many traditional damask vestments are out of place. At the present time, the Services for Trial Use, Second Service, is more widely and more frequently used by younger priests than by older priests. It was found statistically that the use of this service and of non-traditional vestments are significantly correlated.

Many priests as well as parish members are also noting that new architecture and building materials are creating increased need for new vestments which are compatible with these buildings in order to create a unified setting for worship. In this study,

however, the design and color of the church were not found to be principal considerations in the design of the vestments.

The younger clergy, some finally-to-be-adopted revision of the Book of Common Prayer as well as the new churches and the present younger generation of the Church will be the predominant factors in the development of parish life in the foreseeable future. Since we have established that the factors of younger clergy and liturgical revision have a degree of correlation with the use of contemporary vestments, it is reasonable to conclude that those who are concerned with and trained as textile artists and craftsmen will be needed to make the vestments for the modern church. In addition, vestments will be worn more with the increased frequency of the Celebration of Holy Eucharist. This factor will also increase the opportunity for the skilled vestment maker.

The data reveal that contemporary vestments are presently being used in a much higher proportion of churches than anticipated. As expected, a great variety of fabric, design and ornamentation was found to be used in these vestments, although there was less traditional symbolism than expected. This evidence that the Church is no longer restricting itself to vestments of traditional design and embroidery also indicates that work of skilled textile artists and craftsmen in contemporary modes will find acceptance for liturgical vestments.

The field investigation of this study revealed that the understanding of liturgy, artistic skill, and textile craftsmanship are not always concurrently present in those who make liturgical vestments. Since clergy vary widely in their approach to the important elements in the life of the Church and in what they will accept as meaningful, it can be anticipated that vestments which can only be classified as "disasters" from a liturgical standpoint will continue to appear.

There are areas in the church where the concern for contemporary expression supersedes the awareness of the fundamental heritage, meaning and unity of the Eucharistic celebration. Horn expressed this problem as one of celebrating now, which is not a common experience. That is to say, the now which one person sees (the vestment maker who comes forth with a patriotic parade banner or a quilt pattern) may be totally irrelevant to the now which another sees. In an age where the novel, bizarre, and plainly exhibitionist are employed in a type of liturgical gamesmanship, the concerned churchman and liturgist is plainly up against a vigorously demonstrative element of the culture.

In opposition to these findings of the study are those which revealed a sense of appropriateness, dignity and creativity. Within the Church there are artistic and creative people, committed to the concept that the Eucharist is the central point, not only of worship, but of all of life, and that worship is not just a pious adjunct to the



"real world." With this commitment, there are vestment makers who are creating bold yet simple designs which add beauty to the Eucharistic Celebration and clothe the priest in the robe of his office without making him the center of attention or distraction.

In the conversations with clergy in the course of this study it became evident that there are many priests who have a varying degree of artistic expertise and are well aware of the liturgical implications and artistic factors necessary for appropriate vestments. There are others who acknowledge the need for vestments which are in unity with the total setting for the Eucharist but, because of various cultural and social pressures and concerns, have found the matter of vestments one which could be set aside. There are also those who find no need to be concerned and will accept almost anything for a chasuble regardless of its liturgical appropriateness or artistic compatibility with the surroundings.

The use of vestment making as a project in Christian education classes is one about which I feel a considerable amount of conflict. While it is a valuable experience for the children to make something for the priest and to see it worn, most of these creations emerge as a collage of the things which are important to the children but which would make a much better banner. As vestments, the usual designs are not things which would speak to a congregation of the transcendent God who became Incarnate in Jesus Christ, and

remains with His Church through the power of the Holy Spirit.

To be sure, no vestment is supposed to speak of the totality of the Christian Gospel, for it is only a part of the setting of the Liturgy which is the drama of Redemption. On the other hand, the vestments must not detract from this central act of worship.

The same must be said of various individual efforts which have found their way into the vestment closets of too many parishes. Some of these indicate that seamstresses are attempting to speak a language which they do not know, and without an understanding of the liturgical center from which vestments must derive. Vestments are neither the family album of the life of the parish, nor are they expressions of an individual's concern for the world. They are part of the total setting for the Celebration of Holy Eucharist, and must be in harmony with the physical setting and in unity with the liturgical nature of their use. It should be noted that all vestments made as Christian education projects do not fall into the personal expression of non-understanding categories. Some show the result of careful study and selection of symbols (within the capabilities of the students) which result in a vestment appropriate to the season or feast to be celebrated.

Jacopin called upon weavers to set aside their personal tastes to produce cloth worthy of divine service. The same admonition should be made to those who would create vestments within the

parish. Unfortunately, many clergy have neither the time nor inclination to guide their parishioners in the study of the traditions and history of the Church and the Liturgy before they begin a vestment. Most laymen are not sufficiently schooled in these disciplines to realize their importance to the creation of vestments. It is also unfortunate that many priests are not aware of the potential for both positive and negative communication in worship through the vestments.

In 1961, textile artist Grete Lein was quoted as saying that fortunately it no longer happens that ecclesiastical fabrics are embroidered by well meaning but untrained ladies. From the evidence seen in this study, the well meaning souls are back, appliquéeing all manner of designs on chasubles, and creating, in some cases, a vibrant splash on the ecclesiastical landscape which is called creativity by some, while others use considerably less charitable adjectives.

Skilled design is one factor in vestment making and one which is difficult to evaluate. Skill in construction giving evidence of an understanding of the nature of fabric, of grain lines, and ways of handling curves and bias edges is more easily assessed. A puckered seam or hem, a poorly rolling collar, or a drooping lining is easily spotted. Vestments were seen in this study which united the simplest of fabrics with the evident skill of the maker, and the result

was an effective and beautiful chasuble.

In summation of the evidence found in this study, contemporary textiles and designs are being used in increasing numbers in the Episcopal churches of California, Oregon, and Washington. All degrees of skill and understanding of purpose and relationship to total setting are evident in the vestments seen. As in past ages, no parish quickly discards an older vestment, so that a mixture of old and new will continue to be seen in many places. Two implications may be drawn from the evidence. There is a definite place for the knowledgeable and skilled textile artist and craftsman in the field of vestment making. There is also a great need for those within the Church who have these skills to be aware that a degree of liturgical understanding must be combined with the art and construction skill. It is possible to discover those clergy and laymen with awareness and willingness to direct others in acquiring these understandings. It is perhaps the role of the textile craftsman or artist who is also a knowledgeable churchman to step forward whenever possible to call attention to the needs of the modern church for vestments which are appropriate to the Celebration of Holy Eucharist which is both rooted in antiquity and also an act and experience of the present. Neither factor can be forgotten, despite the frequent cry for relevance and the desire of many to limit their experience to a celebration of now.

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## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A - Definition of Terms

- Celebrant:** The chief sacramental minister who presides in the Great Thanksgiving (Prayer of Consecration), the breaking of the Bread, and the ministration of Holy Communion.
- Corporate Worship:** The worship of the gathered community of the people of God, as contrasted to personal and private devotion.
- Diocese:** A jurisdictional unit of the Church, the chief pastor of which is the Bishop, and which is designated by a geographical area.
- Eucharistic Vestments:** The garments worn by the priest who is the celebrant for the Service of Holy Eucharist. For the purpose of this study, attention is focused on those parts of the vesture which change in color and design according to the season and feast being observed. These include the chasuble and stole worn by the priest and the Chalice Veil and Burse used upon the Chalice on the Altar.
- Liturgy:** The Rites and Ceremonies of the church for public worship of God, including the participation of priest and people.
- Traditional Use:** Limitation of fabrics and designs used in vestments to those of approved ecclesiastical colors, historic symbols, and rich or ornate fabrics of silk or rayon.
- Contemporary Use:** Use of fabrics, designs or colors which depart from traditional usage, which may include cottons, linens, wools, free designs, symbols meaningful to a particular parish, or other variations from traditional use.
- Holy Eucharist:** the principal act of Christian Worship on the Lord's day. The service includes the proclamation of the Word of God, prayers for the Church and the world, the offering of gifts of Bread and Wine which are consecrated by the celebrant to be the Body and Blood of Christ, the breaking of the Bread, and Communion of the People, and thanksgiving.

## APPENDIX B

1008 W. 36th Avenue  
Albany, Oregon 97321  
November 20, 1972

Dear Father:

May I enlist your help in a research study on current developments in the use of Eucharistic vestments in the Episcopal Church? My study focuses upon changes which are appearing in fabric and design of these vestments and is part of the Master's thesis which I am preparing at Oregon State University.

Please complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it in the envelope provided. Please be sure your name and the name of your parish are in the space indicated, to assist in determining distribution of the sample. (Data will be tabulated and analyzed independently of names, however.)

Additional comments especially in reference to vestment use and designs will be welcome.

Thank you very much for taking time from your busy schedule and for your assistance with my research.

Sincerely,

Marjorie C. Reppeto  
(Mrs. Roger Reppeto)

A Study on the  
Usage of  
Eucharistic  
Vestments follows  
on pgs. 149-152.

# A Study of the Usage of Eucharistic Vestments

1972

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Church: \_\_\_\_\_

Position:           Rector or Vicar  
                  Associate or Curate

Except where otherwise instructed, please check the answer which MOST NEARLY describes your usual practice or preference.

## Section 1

1. When celebrating Holy Communion, do you wear Eucharistic Vestments or surplice and stole?

- ☐ Eucharistic Vestments
- ☐ Surplice and Stole

Does this usage reflect your personal preference or the established custom of the parish?

- ☐ Personal preference
- ☐ Custom of parish
- ☐ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

2. If used, how long have Eucharistic Vestments been worn in your parish?

- ☐ Worn only on special feasts
- ☐ 1-2 years
- ☐ 3-5 years
- ☐ 5-10 years
- ☐ More than 10 years
- ☐ Don't know

3. If the use of Eucharistic vestments is a recent change, (1-5 years) to what do you attribute this change? (Check AS MANY as apply)

- ☐ New priest in parish
- ☐ Interest in congregation
- ☐ Change in emphasis upon Eucharist
- ☐ Introduction of Folk Mass
- ☐ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ No change

4. If Eucharistic Vestments are not currently the norm in your parish, would you prefer their use?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Does not matter

For the purposes of the study, please consider "traditional" and "contemporary" as applied to vestments in light of the following definitions, considering the chasuble as the example.

**TRADITIONAL FABRICS:** Rich or ornate fabrics such as damask, brocade, velvet; of silk or silk-like material, usually with Christian symbols as the woven design, such as customarily are purchased from church supply houses.

**TRADITIONAL DESIGNS:** Christian symbols or ornament applied as



Orphreys



Pillars



Medallions or Central Design

**CONTEMPORARY FABRICS:** Those available from many sources in many textures and plain weaves, including wool, cotton, and synthetic fibers; linen and linen-like fabrics, corduroy, burlap type fabrics, handwoven wools, etc.

**CONTEMPORARY DESIGN:** Free designs not restricted to orphreys, pillars, or medallions; designs using plaids, stripes, or variously printed patterns, which may not be further ornamented.

5. Do you presently wear contemporary vestments?

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

IF YES, for approximately what percentage of Sunday celebrations of Holy Eucharist do you wear contemporary vestments?

- ☐ All or most of the time  
☐ About 75% of the time  
☐ About 50% of the time  
☐ About 25% of the time  
☐ Occasionally

IF NO, would you like contemporary vestments if they were available?

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Possibly  
☐ Occasionally

For those who HAVE contemporary vestments in their parish, please complete Section 2 and Section 3.  
For those who DO NOT HAVE contemporary vestments, please continue with Section 3.

## Section 2

6. How many sets of contemporary vestments are available to you?

- ☐ 1 or 2  
☐ 3 to 5  
☐ More than 5

7. How recently have these vestments been introduced?

- ☐ Within last 2 years  
☐ Within last 3-5 years  
☐ Over 5 years ago

8. Were such vestments provided for the church or for a specific priest?

- ☐ For church  
☐ For priest  
☐ For both

9. Were such vestments designed to coordinate with the style of architecture and interior color and design of the church building?

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Partially

FOR ITEMS 10 THROUGH 14, PLEASE CHECK AS MANY AS ARE APPROPRIATE

10. Who selected your contemporary vestments?

- ☐ Architect  
☐ Professional designer  
☐ Priest  
☐ Altar Guild  
☐ Committee of parish members  
☐ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

11. From what sources were your vestments obtained?

- ☐ Church supply house  
☐ Local professional designer  
☐ Member of the parish  
☐ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

12. Please identify the type(s) of contemporary vestments which you have: (See definitions)

- ☐ Contemporary fabric with traditional design  
☐ Contemporary fabric with contemporary design  
☐ Contemporary fabric with no additional ornament

13. Which of the following types of fabrics are used?

- ☐ Hand woven
- ☐ Batik prints or tie-dye (done expressly for the vestment)
- ☐ Commercially printed fabrics
- ☐ Corduroy
- ☐ Linen or linen-like fabric
- ☐ Burlap-type fabric
- ☐ Textured materials, such as nubby drapery fabric
- ☐ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

14. What type of ornamental techniques are represented?

- ☐ No applied designs
- ☐ Embroidery
- ☐ Applique (Designs or symbols sewn onto main fabric)
- ☐ Woven designs
- ☐ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

15. Please describe or sketch particular designs or symbols of your contemporary vestments which you feel are meaningful especially to you, to your congregation, or of general interest.

### Section 3

16. How many services are usually held in your parish each Sunday?

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ More than 4

17. How many of these services are usually Celebrations of Holy Eucharist?

- ☐ All services
- ☐ Varies as follows:

Services					
Sundays	1	2	3	4	
1st					
2nd					
3rd					
4th					
5th					

**EXAMPLE:** If there are 2 services with Eucharist at the 1st service every Sunday, and at the 2nd service on 1st and 3rd Sundays:

Services					
Sundays	1	2	3	4	
1st	✓	✓			
2nd	✓				
3rd	✓	✓			
4th	✓				
5th	✓				

18. Are the "Services for Trial Use" (Green Book) presently being used regularly for the Celebration of Holy Eucharist in your parish?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

19. If Yes, please estimate the number of Sunday Services of Holy Eucharist per month for which you generally use the following:

\_\_\_\_\_ First Service, Green Book  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Second Service, Green Book  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 1928 Prayer Book

20. In the past four years, has there been a change in the frequency of the Celebration of Holy Communion in your parish?

- ☐ More often
- ☐ Less often
- ☐ No change

21. If there has been a change, with what do you associate the change?

- ☐ New priest in the parish
- ☐ Desire of congregation
- ☐ Introduction of "Services for Trial Use"
- ☐ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

22. To help in the analysis of our data, what is your age? \_\_\_\_\_

THANK YOU very much for your time  
and assistance with this study.



## APPENDIX C - Tables of Data

Table 1. Distribution and Return of Usable Questionnaires by Diocese.

Diocese	Number sent	Number of usable returns
California	76	39
Los Angeles	93	45
Northern California	24	14
San Joaquin	18	9
Eastern Oregon	8	4
Oregon	34	24
Olympia	34	24
Spokane	13	8
Total	300	167*

\* Represents 55.7% of sample, 20.8% of population.

Table 2. Length of Time Eucharistic Vestments Have Been Worn in Parishes.

Diocese	Number of years worn					Not worn
	1-2	3-5	5-10	Over 10	Unknown	
California	2	-	6*	28	-	3
Los Angeles	1	1	6	30	4	3**
Northern California	-	1	3	9	-	1
San Joaquin	1	2	1	4*	-	1
Eastern Oregon	-	-	1	1	-	2
Oregon	-	1	-	20	2	1
Olympia	1	1	3	15	2	2
Spokane	1	1	-	3	-	3
Total	6	7	20	110	8	16

\* Indicates one priest reported use of Eucharistic vestments only on special feasts.

\*\* Three priests reported use of Eucharistic vestments only on special feasts.

Table 3. Percentage Use of Contemporary Vestments.

Diocese	Percentage of Sunday celebrations used						
	0%	4%	10%	25%	50%	75%	100%
California	8	-	6	9	5	3	8
Los Angeles	23	-	4	3	9	2	4
Northern California	5	-	1	-	2	1	5
San Joaquin	5	-	1	-	2	-	1
Eastern Oregon	3	-	-	-	-	-	1
Oregon	14	1	2	2	3	1	1
Olympia	12	-	4	-	3	4	1
Spokane	5	-	1	-	1	1	-
Total	75	1	19	14	25	12	21
Percent	44.6	0.6	11.9	8.3	14.9	7.1	12.5

Table 4. Number of Years Contemporary Vestments Have Been Used.

Diocese	2 years or less	3-5 years	Over 5 years
California	11	8	12
Los Angeles	4	10	7
Northern California	2	6	2
San Joaquin	3	1	-
Eastern Oregon	1	-	-
Oregon	3	4	2
Olympia	2	7	2
Spokane	1	-	2
Total	27	36	27
Percent	30	40	30

Table 5. Increased Frequency of Celebration of Holy Eucharist and Associated Factors of Change.

Diocese	Total number responding	Increased frequency	Associated factors of change		
			New priest	Wish of people	Services for Trial Use
California	39	23	11	9	9
Los Angeles	45	20	12	6	3
Northern California	14	4	4	3	3
San Joaquin	9	5	4	-	-
Eastern Oregon	4	2	1	-	1
Oregon	24	12	8	6	8
Olympia	24	15	9	7	5
Spokane	8	2	3	3	2
Total	167	83	52	34	31
Percent	--	49.7	62.6	40.9	37.3

Table 6. Distribution of Ages Represented in Sample.

Diocese	Under 30 years	30-39 years	40-49 years	50-59 years	60-65 years	Over 65 years
California	-	9	20	9	1	-
Los Angeles	-	5	16	15	4	5
Northern California	2	3	2	5	-	-
San Joaquin	-	2	4	3	-	-
Eastern Oregon	-	2	-	1	-	1
Oregon	1	4	8	9	1	1
Olympia	2	8	7	6	1	-
Spokane	-	1	4	2	1	-
Total	5	34	61	50	10	7
Percent	3	20.4	36.5	30	6	4.2

Table 7. Extent of Variation of Vestment Designs Expressed by Type of Ornamentation and Extent of Variation Within One Parish.

Diocese	Ornamentation type			Extent of variation		
	Contemporary	Traditional	None	Three types	Two types	One type
California	22	15	8	3	11	14
Los Angeles	12	13	6	2	6	14
Northern California	7	6	2	1	2	8
San Joaquin	4	2	-	-	2	2
Eastern Oregon	-	1	-	-	-	1
Oregon	8	5	5	3	2	5
Olympia	8	3	2	1	2	8
Spokane	2	1	-	-	1	1
Total	63	46	23	10	26	53

Table 8. Coordination of Vestments With Church Design.

Diocese	Coordinated	Not coordinated	Partially coordinated
California	12	14	7
Los Angeles	5	13	2
Northern California	2	4	5
San Joaquin	1	4	1
Eastern Oregon	-	1	-
Oregon	2	6	1
Olympia	2	5	4
Spokane	-	2	1
Total	24	49	21
Percent	25.6	52.1	24.3