



# Vestments and symbols of the Office of the Cardinal

When Archbishop Frank Leo becomes Frank Cardinal Leo the principal colour of his vestments will become scarlet to symbolize the blood that a cardinal is willing to shed for his faith. Scarlet was installed as the colour for cardinals by Pope Gregory X at the Second Council of Lyon in 1274. The vestments of a cardinal have evolved over the decades and the current standards were set in 1969 under Pope Paul VI.

## BIRETTA

A square, ridged cap worn over the zucchetto. The colour of the biretta indicates the rank of cleric. The cardinal's biretta is cardinalatial red.

## CHOIR DRESS

Scarlet choir dress vestments are worn for public prayer apart from the celebration of Mass or when attending Mass but not as a celebrant. When in choir dress, a Latinrite cardinal wears his scarlet cassock, mozzetta, zucchetto and biretta. He also wears a rochet, which is always white. Unlike the other vestments, which are always the same for all cardinals, the rochet can differ in design and intricacies.

## ROCHET

A garment of jurisdiction which reaches below the knee made of linen, lace or linen embroidery.

## CASSOCK

Full-length, form-fitting red garment. The choir cassock used for public ceremonies of the church, is made of watered silk. 33 buttons are used to close the garment, regardless of the height of the wearer, to symbolize the 33 years Christ spent on this Earth. Each sleeve has five buttons, symbolizing the five wounds of Christ.

## ZUCCHETTO

Close-fitting, saucer shaped, skull cap.

## SIMAR

Cardinals wear a simar at non-liturgical functions. Black with scarlet piping, silk stitching and buttons, simars are like a cassock but have an optional elbow-length shoulder cape. A simar is worn with a scarlet sash made of silk and it may be worn with a scarlet skullcap but not with a biretta.

## MOZZETTA

A short, elbow length, cape that completely encircles the prelate. It closes in the front with 12 silkcovered buttons which represent the 12 apostles.

## MITRE

When in the presence of the Pope, cardinals wear a mitre made of layered white damask silk.

## FERRAIUOLO

Unlike other vestments, the Ferraiuolo (a full cape) is optional. It is scarlet watered silk that is worn at solemn, non-liturgical occasions.

## EPISCOPAL RING

To symbolize their bond with the papacy, the Pope gives each newly appointed cardinal a gold ring. When someone kisses the ring it is done as a sign of respect for the position of cardinal and of the authority in the faith that comes with the position.

