



## Why is purple so important during Lent?

In the early days of the Church, church clothing was not so different from the dress of ordinary people.

Later Holy men and monks decided to wear drab brown and grey garments to show that they had chosen a life of devotion to prayer and penance.

At some point during the fourth century some of the clergy began to see the value of differentiating themselves and adopted special clothing for identification purposes. As time went on, specific colours were chosen for specific times and festivals.

### Purple

There are several aspects of symbolism for the use of the colour purple during Lent, During His passion, Jesus was dressed in a purple robe. This robe likely belonged to Herod palace and it was the most expensive colour available in the Roman Empire. People who wore purple were generally royalty because they were the only ones who could afford it. Since Jesus is the King of Kings, the mocking gesture of dressing Him in a purple robe was actually indicative of His royal dignity. On His cross, Jesus had a sign that called Him the "King of the Jews."

Thus, the association of purple with royalty is critical to our liturgical use of it during Lent.

The colour purple is also a symbol of the offense surrounding our sins. Just like Jesus was mocked about being royal, it is also indicative of our sinful nature.

Purple represents penance, reparation, and sacrifice.

It is also often worn at funerals because of its connection to mourning, to remind the funeral-goers to pray for the penance and absolution of the departed.

You may wonder why there is a 'Y' shape pattern on the chasuble.

This is a remembrance of Jesus on the Cross and how His body and arms formed the letter 'Y'

IHS is a monogram or symbol for the name 'Jesus' and is a contraction of the Greek word for Jesus.