

DO YOU KNOW?

Part 3

By Mary Ogilvie

The colour purple has always been associated with kingship and royalty as it is the most difficult and expensive to produce. To remind Christians of the promised victory over death, it is used in the church for the altar hangings and vestments during Lent, a time of repentance and prayer. Until 2002 we also used purple for Advent but as Advent is a time of preparation and anticipation, we choose to go back in time to the ancient liturgical colour of blue and developed hangings and vestments to better symbolize truth and eternity. The symbols of trumpet, angel, natal star, dove and olive branch were more readily recognizable to enable to help us get ready for the Christmas season.

Our purple set of hangings is all in Tudor Rose fabric. Our burse and veil are very unique as they were hand embroidered by Pauline Sevier, a retired teacher and loyal parishioner who served as St. Mark's first secretary. Like many members still do at St. Mark's, she volunteered her time every week. Although the typing in her Sunday bulletins left a lot to be desired, she and her sister Geraldine, a deaconess, were very generous to St. Mark's. Not only did they give the lovely St. Mark's window, it was their bequest that help established the Endowment Fund.

Our altar hanging, ambo antependium, wall hanging, burse and veil all are embellished with forms of Patonce crosses. The three petals represent the Trinity and the total twelve petals represent the Apostles. In the middle of the altar hanging is The Crown and Cross- the reward of the faithful in the life after death to those who believe in the crucified Saviour.

As we didn't have a purple chasuble or stole, Jim Sutton had a modern set made featuring a rugged cross and nails. He also has a stole given to him by the people of a previous congregation that he served. It features a Jerusalem Cross at the neck and ornate tassels at the ends.

Why are priests' stoles different from deacon's stoles? A priest's stole is worn around the neck to signify the yoke of obedience to Christ. A deacon's stole is worn over the left shoulder, symbolizing a towel as the deacon's role is that of service. John Ogilvie's purple stole features a Star of David- showing how as a youth he was nurtured by people of the Jewish faith during his summers at a Jewish Boy Scout camp. The Crown of Thorns is a symbol of humiliation and suffering of our Lord.

On the Third Sunday of Advent and the Fourth Sunday of Lent, John wears a rose-coloured stole made for him by Dorothy Balsdon. The Third Sunday in Advent is 'Gaudete' or Rejoice Sunday. We light the pink candle of Joy on the Advent Wreath in joyful anticipation of our Lord's birth. The Fourth Sunday in Lent is 'Laetare' Sunday. We are more than half way through Lent and it is a day of hope that Easter is coming quickly. The Fourth Sunday in Lent is also 'Mothering' Sunday. As Mary is indicated in both these joyous days, her symbol of a Lily is most appropriate.

Sources: The Sanctuary, by Virginia Gosling Mainprize, Anglican Book Centre, Toronto; Symbols of the Church, edited by Carroll E. Whittemore, published by Hodder and Stoughton Ltd. Great Britain and Wikipedia