

# PRAVERS DURING PRIESTLY VESTING AND THE MEANING OF VESTMENTS

As the priest prepares to dress himself in the sacred garments for Mass, it has been a long-standing tradition in the Church that he recites the following prayers:

## Washing of hands

*Give virtue to my hands, O Lord, that being cleansed from all stain I might serve you with purity of mind and body.*

**1** **AMICE** – a rectangular neck cloth which serves to protect the valuable chasuble and stole, but is used only if the alb does not cover the ordinary clothing at the neck.

### Prayer

*Place, O Lord, the helmet of salvation upon my head, to repel the assaults of the devil.*

**2** **ALB** – a long white garment worn by the priest to represent the new and immaculate vestment that has been received through baptism.

### Prayer

*Cleanse me, O Lord, and purify my heart, that washed in the Blood of the Lamb I may attain everlasting joy.*

**3** **CINCTURE** – a cord used as a belt to tighten the alb symbolizing the virtue of chastity and continence, and is the same color as the chasuble.

### Prayer

*Gird me, O Lord, with the cincture of purity and quench in me the fire of concupiscence, that the virtue of continence and chastity may remain in me.*

**4** **STOLE** – a long narrow band, several inches wide and about 80 inches long (and of the same color as the chasuble) which is worn as a sign that the priest is serving in his official liturgical role.

### Prayer

*Return to me, O Lord, the stole of immortality, which I have lost in the sin of my first parent; and although I, unworthy, approach Thy sacred mystery, grant to me, nevertheless, everlasting joy.*

**5** **CHASUBLE** – the final vestment of the priest that is worn over all the others and symbolizes the virtue of charity and the yoke of unselfish love.

### Prayer

*O Lord, who hast said, My yoke is easy and My burden light; grant that I may be able so to bear it, that I may obtain Thy grace. Amen.*

