



## What is a Parament?

The term **parament** was derived from the Latin word *paramentum* which simply means adornment. During the early years in the Church, 'parament' referred to the embellishments, or adornments hung in a room to add sophistication and beauty.

In modern times, paraments are used as embellishments in many churches to adorn the sanctuary. They are made of different colors of cloth with different symbols and designs. Paraments most commonly adorn the altar (we use an antependium), pulpit frontlet, baptismal font frontlet and banners are displayed on the walls near the altar.

A specific parament color is associated with the liturgical seasons of the church. Our church year starts with the first Sunday in Advent.

**Blue** is the liturgical color for Advent, symbolizing penitence as we await the birth of Jesus. Blue is used until Christmas Eve.

**White** is the liturgical color symbolizing purity, holiness, and virtue, as well as respect and reverence. White is first used on Christmas Eve and through Epiphany and Jesus' baptism. White is used on other Church celebrations such as the Transfiguration of our Lord, Easter Sunday (and remains throughout the Easter Season), Holy Trinity Sunday, All Saints Sunday and Christ the King Sunday. It is also the color used for funerals.

**Green** is the liturgical color for the season of Epiphany and symbolizes the renewal of vegetation, living things and the promise of new life. It is used during the ordinary Time between Holy Trinity Sunday until Reformation Sunday.

**Purple** is the liturgical color for the Season of Lent, symbolizing pain, suffering, mourning and penitence as we await the crucifixion of Jesus.

**Red** is the liturgical color of fire and symbolizes the presence of God on Pentecost when we celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit. Red is also used for Reformation Day as celebrated in the Lutheran church.

When a new set of paraments is displayed for the first time, we dedicate, or consecrate, the set to our loving and gracious God. We ask God's blessing on the paraments and banner as we dedicate the gift of the adornments to His Glory, that they may be an enduring reminder before all His people and that our lives may be consecrated to His service. We pray that these paraments continue to remind us of the rich history and tradition of our church. All this we pray the name of our Risen Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

The green set of paraments on the table today have been in use for many years. Green paraments are used for the longest period of in our church year and over time, the wear and tear is evident.

These paraments were dedicated and consecrated to the Glory of God when first displayed and, sadly, the time has come to retire this set. After research, burning the paraments is the proper way to end their use.

Today, we thank God for the beautiful reminder to dedicate our lives to God's glory. We will have a "retirement ceremony" following our St. Thomas Mass, where we will burn this set. The ashes will be spread in our flower gardens around the church building in a reverent manner.