

## Do Priests Really Wear Pink Vestments at Church?

The simple answer to this is, "it's complicated!"

Yes, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent and on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent, the heavier, darker colors of Advent and Lent give way to a lighter shade or *rose*. Since not all parishes have rose vestments, this is not a universal thing.

The official liturgical color is rose – *not* "bubble gum pink" that you might see on some Social Media posts!

These two Sundays – Gaudete Sunday in Advent and Laetare Sunday in Lent – both serve the same purpose. Because both Advent and Lent are considered "Penitential Seasons" of the Church, these two Sundays mark the nearness of the holy day (Christmas or Easter) for which we have been preparing.

Both Latin terms, Gaudete (pronounced "gow-DET-eh") and Laetare ("LAY-tah-ray"), simply mean, "rejoice." We rejoice at the nearness of God's coming into our lives in new and unparalleled ways. These Sundays signify the joy and anticipation that is to come and mark a brighter tone within the penitential seasons.

Historically, since both Advent and Lent included periods of fasting (smaller portion of food) and abstinence (refraining from types of foods), these days the fast and abstinence were allowed to be relaxed.

Over time, the Latin names were replaced with other, more descriptive names like, Refreshment Sunday and Rose Sunday. In some places in the world, the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent is known as Mid-Lent Sunday and, in England, Mothering Sunday.

Here at Holy Family, we will celebrate Laetare or Rose Sunday with rose-colored vestments and some modifications in the liturgy. For example, we will replace the Litany of Reconciliation with a shorter Penitential prayer.

- Father Frank