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**PAPAL SECRETARIAT  
OF STATE**

**INSTRUCTION  
on the  
DRESS OF CARDINALS, BISHOPS  
AND OTHER PRELATES**

**March 31, 1969**

**UNITED STATES CATHOLIC CONFERENCE**



# **PAPAL SECRETARIAT OF STATE**

## **INSTRUCTION on the DRESS OF CARDINALS, BISHOPS AND OTHER PRELATES**

In the diligent exercise of his vigilance over all the Church, and the observance of the indications and spirit of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, His Holiness Pope Paul VI has not failed to dedicate his attention also to certain exterior forms of ecclesiastical life, with the intention of bringing them into closer correspondence with the changing circumstances of the times, and of making them now accord better with higher spiritual values which they should express and promote.

This is well known to be a subject to which the modern mentality is particularly sensitive, one that demands the avoidance of possible extremes in one direction or the other, and an ability to bring correctness and decorum into harmony with simplicity, practicality, and the spirit of humility and poverty, which must always and preeminently shine forth in those who, by their investiture in ecclesiastical offices, have some special responsibility in the service of the People of God.

It is on the basis of such criteria that, in the course of the last two years, the Holy Father has given directions for the

publication of certain rules on the dress and other prerogatives of Cardinals (Reference No. 3711 of the Sacred Congregation for Ceremonial, dated June 6, 1967), of a Motu Proprio on the Reorganization of the Pontifical Household ("Pontificalis Domus" of March 28, 1968), and of another Motu Proprio, complemented by an Instruction of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, on the use of pontifical insignia ("Pontificalia Insignia" of June 21, 1968; Instruction of the same date, Reference No. R.32/968).

Wishing now to renew further and on a broader scale the discipline on dress, titles and coats-of-arms of Cardinals, Bishops and lesser Prelates, His Holiness charged a special Commission of Cardinals and his Secretariat of State to study the matter with care, taking account, at the same time and in just measure, of tradition, modern needs, and the deeper values implicit in certain forms of living, exterior and contingent though they be.

The fruit of that labour is the present Instruction, which the Holy Father deigned to approve in the Audience granted to the undersigned Cardinal Secretary of State on the twenty-eighth day of March, 1969, disposing likewise that it should come into force on the thirteenth day of April, Low Sunday, 1969.

## Part One: Dress

### A) For the Cardinals:

1. The following continue in use: the cassock of red wool or similar material, with trimmings, lining, buttons and thread of red silk, and the mozzetta of the same material and colour as the cassock but without the small hood.

The mantelletta is abolished.

2. The use is also continued of the black cassock with trimmings, lining, buttonholes and buttons of red silk, but without the upper half-sleeves.

The elbow-length cape, trimmed in the same manner as this cassock, may be worn over it.

3. With both the red cassock and the red-trimmed black cassock there is worn the sash of red watered-silk ribbon, with silk fringes at the two ends.

The sash with tassels is abolished.

4. When the red cassock is worn, red hose are also worn. With the red-trimmed black cassock the wearing of red hose is optional.

5. The dress for ordinary use may be the black cassock without red trim. With this black cassock, red hose are not worn. The red "collare" (rabat or rabbi) and the red watered-silk skull-cap may be worn, even with the black cassock without red trim.

6. The red watered-silk biretta is to be worn only with choral dress, and not as common headdress.

7. The use of the red watered-silk cloak ("ferraiuolo") is no longer obligatory for papal audiences and ceremonies held in the presence of the Holy Father. Its use is optional in other cases also, but should always be restricted to circumstances of special solemnity.

8. The red cloak ("Tabarro") is abolished. In its place a decorous black cloak, even with cape, can be used.

9. The red cardinalial hat ("galero") and the red plush hat are abolished. The black plush hat is retained. When appropriate, it can be adorned with the red and gold cord and tassels.

10. The use of red shoes and of buckles, even the silver buckles on black shoes, is suppressed.

11. The rochet of linen, or similar material, is retained. The surplice or cotta is never worn over the rochet.

12. The cappa magna, always without ermine, is no longer obligatory; it can be used only outside Rome, in circumstances of very special solemnity.

13. The use of the cord and of the chain for the pectoral cross is retained. The cord must be used only when the red cassock or sacred vestments are worn.

#### B) For Bishops:

14. By analogy with what has been allowed for cardinals, the purple cassock, the mozzetta without the small hood, and the black cassock with red trim are retained.

The mozzetta can be worn anywhere, even by titular bishops.



The mantelletta is abolished.

The red-trimmed black cassock is no longer obligatory as ordinary dress. The red-trimmed cape may be worn over it.

15. With regard to the sash, hose, ordinary dress, collare (rabat), skull-cap, biretta, "ferraiuolo," cloak ("tabarro"), buckles, rochet, the rules laid down in Nos. 3-8 and 10-13 above are to be followed.

16. The use of the black plush hat with green cord and tassels, the same for all bishops, both residential and titular, is retained.

17. Bishops named from Religious Orders and Congregations will use the purple cassock, and the cassocks with red trim and without red trim, in all respects the same as other bishops.

C) For lesser Prelates:

18. For the superior prelates of the offices of the Roman Curia who have not episcopal rank; for the Auditors of the Rota; for the Promotor General of Justice and the Defender of the Bond of the Apostolic Signatura; for the apostolic protonotaries "de numero" and the four Clerics of the Camera, the purple cassock, the purple mantelletta, the rochet, the red-trimmed black cassock without cape, the purple sash with fringes of silk at the two ends, the purple "ferraiuolo" (non-obligatory), and the red tuft on the biretta are all retained.

The sash with tassels, coloured hose and shoe-buckles are abolished.

19. For the apostolic protonotaries supernumerary, and for the prelates of honor of His Holiness, the purple mantelletta, the sash with tassels, colored hose, shoe-buckles and the red tuft on the biretta are all abolished.

But there are retained the purple cassock, the red-trimmed black cassock without cape, and the sash with fringes. When appropriate, the unpleated surplice (cotta) can be worn over the purple cassock, instead of the rochet.

The purple "ferraiuolo," although not obligatory, is retained for the supernumerary apostolic protonotaries, but not for the prelates of honor.

20. For the chaplains of His Holiness the purple-trimmed black cassock with purple sash is retained, to be used also in sacred ceremonies.

The purple cassock, the "mantellone" of the same colour, the sash with tassels and the buckles on shoes are abolished.

## Part Two: Titles and Coat-of-arms

21. The so-called titles of kinship used by the Supreme Pontiff with reference to cardinals, bishops and other ecclesiastics will be, respectively, only the following: "Our Venerable Brother," "Venerable Brother" and "Beloved son."

22. There may still be used, for cardinals and bishops respectively, the titles "Eminence" and "Excellency," which may also be qualified by the adjectival phrase "Most Reverend."

23. In addressing a cardinal or a bishop there may be used respectively the simple titles "Lord Cardinal" and "Monsignor."

24. The title "Monsignor" used in addressing bishops may be accompanied by the adjectival phrase "Most Reverend."

25. For the prelates enumerated in No. 18, the title of "Monsignor" may be accompanied by the adjectival phrase "Most Reverend."

For the dean of the Sacred Roman Rota and the secretary of the Apostolic Signatura, there may also be used the title "Excellency," without the addition of "Most Reverend."

26. For supernumerary apostolic protonotaries, prelates of honor and chaplains of His Holiness there may be used the title "Monsignor," preceded, where appropriate, by "Reverend."

27. In formal written address, the expressions "kissing the Sacred Purple," "kissing the Sacred Ring" may be omitted.

28. The use of coats-of-arms by cardinals and bishops is permitted.

The shield of the coat-of-arms must conform to the rules of heraldry and must be simple and clear.

The use of the crozier and mitre in the coat-of-arms is suppressed.

29. Cardinals may place their coats-of-arms on the exterior of the churches of their title or diaconate.

From these churches the portrait of the titular cardinal shall be removed. In the interior, near the main door, the name of the titular cardinal may be placed in a suitable frame which will harmonize with the style of the sacred building.

#### Additional Provisions

30. With regard to the dress and titles of cardinals and patriarchs of the Oriental Rite, the traditional usages of those rites shall be followed.

31. Patriarchs of the Latin Rite who are not cardinals will dress like other bishops.

32. Pontifical representatives, whether bishops or not, will follow the rules laid down above for bishops.

Nevertheless, in the area of their jurisdiction, they may use the sash, zucchetto, biretta and ferraiuolo of watered silk.

They will be accorded the title of "Venerable Brother," as mentioned in No. 21, only if they are bishops.

33. Those prelates and abbots "nullius," apostolic administrators, vicars and prefects apostolic, who are not bishops, may dress like bishops.

34. In the matter of titles, episcopal conferences may lay down suitable rules which take into account local usages, while at the same time following the dispositions and criteria contained in the present Instruction.

35. Concerning the dress and titles of canons, holders of benefices and parish priests, suitable norms will be issued by the Sacred Congregation for the Clergy, following the criteria of simplification contained in the present document.

From the Vatican, March 31, 1969.