

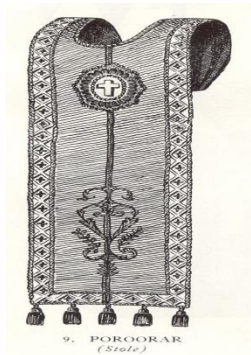
# Church Vestments

In the Armenian Church, part of the physical preparation for the Divine Liturgy is vesting of the priest when he puts on vestments which show he is God's special servant about to begin a sacred path. As the priest puts on each vestment, he says a special prayer successively asking for salvation, righteousness, cleanliness of heart, faith and strength to serve God.

| The Deacon:   | The Priest:   |
|---|---|
| Again in peace let us beseech the Lord:<br>Receive us, save us, and have mercy on us. | Blessing and glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and always and unto the ages of ages. Amen. |
| Yev yevus khaghaghootyan uzDer<br>aghachestzook. Ungal getzo yev voghormia.           | Orhnootyun yev park Hor yev Vortvo yev Hokvooyh Surpoh,<br>ajjhm yev mishd yev havidyans havidenitz. Amen.              |
| Եւ եւս խաղաղութեան գՏԵր աղաչեսցուք.<br>Ընկալ, կեցո եւ ողորմեա:                        | Օրհնութիւն եւ փառք Յօր եւ Որդւոյ եւ Յօգւոյն Սրբոյ, Այժմ<br>եւ միշտ...Ամէն:  |

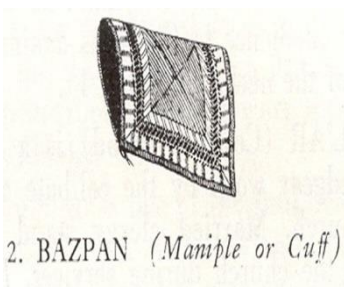
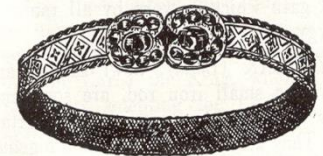
## Vestments Worn in the Divine Liturgy

**Shabig (Alb)** is a long extending tunic down to the ankle. The Celebrant's *Shabig* worn during the Divine Liturgy is always plain and made of white linene. It is the first vestment to be put on beneath the others. It shows the gladness of spirit with which the priest must approach the Lord's Table. The white *Shabig* also symbolises purity.



**Poroorar (Stole)** is about nine inches wide and four feet six inches long. It is of the same material as the cope. At one end it has an opening for the neck and it hangs down in front over the *Shabig*. It is in fact the deacon's stole worn round the neck with the two stripes.

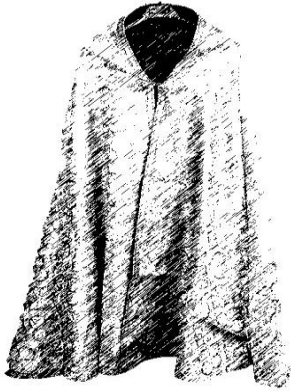
**Kodi (Zone or Cincture)** is a band of about two or three inches wide and long enough to go round the waist. Usually it is of the same material as the cope. It has a buckle in front. It is worn by the celebrant over the *Shabig* and *Poroorar*, at the waist. It symbolises faith which gives strength to the soul and the priestly authority of binding and loosing.



**Pazban (Maniple or Cuff)** is about five or six inches wide and long enough to go round the fore part of the forearm, over the sleeves of the alb (*Shabig*). It is of the same material as the cope. *Pazbans* are worn by the celebrant during the Divine Liturgy, symbolising moral cleanliness as well as strength which enable Christians to serve the Lord.

**Vagas (Superhumeral or Amice)** is a hard flexible piece, covered with the same material as that of the cope, or of a colour to match with the cope or the crown. It has a linen piece, long enough so that one end is attached to the top edge of the *Vagas* from inside. The cope is put on this hanging piece of linen, so that the *Vagas* is kept well in place. The *Vagas* symbolises righteousness in obedience to Christ as against the "stiffness of the neck", and also the "blocking" of temptations from view and hearing.





**Shoorchar (Cope)** is a piece, semi-circular in shape and made of fine rich material of any colour or colours, provided one colour is dominating. The *Shoorchar* is worn by a priest or bishop during the Divine Liturgy. It is also worn during other services for reading the Gospel or for special solemnities. Symbolically it represents the glory of the new spiritual life and of the faith, as shield and defence against the attacks of the Evil One.

**Saghavard (Crown or Helmet)** is a tall bulbous headdress, covered with fine rich silk or velvet cloth. The crown is worn by the Celebrant at certain times during the Liturgy. It symbolises the salvation of the soul from the bondage of the spiritual enemy and the royal attribute of Christ the King, whom the priest represents, enabling the Christian to fight against the Evil One.



S. SALAVART  
(Crown)

### Other Vestments

**Shabig (Tunic)** is long extending down to the ankle which is worn by clerks and deacons in the church during all services except Lent and other penitential days. It can be of any colour and symbolises purity of mind and of heart with which all who serve the Lord must be clothed.

**Oorar (Stole)** is a band of about nine feet long and four inches wide. It must be of rich material of the colours, with a cross sewn on where it rests on the shoulder and two other crosses, one in front and one at the back. It is worn on the left shoulder and hangs down loosely in front and at the back. It is the distinctive vestment of ordained deacons, but permission to wear it is often given by the bishop to persons in minor orders, together with the permission to perform some of the duties of a deacon.

**Verargoo (Schema or Cassock)** is a long vestment of plain black material with wide sleeves, without a waistline, coming down to the ankles. *Verargoo* is the clerical garb worn by all ranks of the clergy and at all times.

**Pilon (Phelonian)** is a vestment of the same shape as the cope, made of plain black material. It is worn by priests while attending any service. Some priests (married or unmarried) and all bishops wear the same in silk, black on fast days and purple on other days. This vestment symbolises the spiritual defence of the soul against the attacks of the evil One.

**Veghar (Cowl)** is a black silken headgear worn by the celibate clergy in the church. Married clergy stand bare-headed in the church during services. *Veghar* symbolises humility and the denial of the world.

**Lanchakhach (Pectoral Cross)** is a small metal cross studded with precious stones suspended from the neck on the chest. It is worn by priests as well as bishops. The right to wear the pectoral cross is granted by the Catholicos or the Patriarch, in recognition of long or distinguished service to the church.