

Wearing Religious Clothes

Clothes tell a lot about who you are

For thousands of years faith-filled people have joined Religious Orders and wore clothes that clearly affirmed who they were and what they stood for.

Famous saints like St. Francis and St. Clare founded Religious Orders for men and women and designed the uniforms their members wore.

Their clothes are called *Habits* since the wearer promised to live the *habits* and mindset of their founder, and of course, be faithful to the teachings of Our Lord and His Catholic Church.

For example, Franciscans wear a plain brown garment to show that they follow the lifestyle of St. Francis who especially wanted to connect with the poor.

However, all uniforms of every Religious Order always affirm that their members faithfully follow the example of Jesus and His Church.

In order to qualify to wear these garments, candidates go through many years of education, training, supervision, and evaluation to make sure they are worthy, sincere, competent, and will always faithfully and authentically live the life of Our Lord that their garments visibly represent.

It simply made common sense that when their outward sign of faith, such as their uniform, authentically matched their interior fidelity to the teachings of Jesus, then candidates could wear them with true honesty and integrity.

Unfortunately, these garments are not copyrighted, and so anyone, no matter what their beliefs, and even atheists, can wear them. That can often cause great confusion. People see those who do not follow Catholicism at all wearing the same clothes as those that do.

Unfortunately, there are also groups today that use Religious Order sounding names and even dress in highly exaggerated and deeply irreverent caricatures of traditional Catholic Religious Order uniforms but are not part of the Catholic Church at all. They misuse and mock our honorable Catholic traditions and insult the Sisters who wear them honestly. Of course, groups almost never mock Islamic religious clothes or customs but often only mock Catholic traditions.

It is especially hurtful when groups that mock our Catholic faith, and real sisters, are actually honored.

In the USA, people are free and welcome to express their beliefs, and we are glad when they do so respectfully. We are even happier when they help in charitable works, but they should not wear religiously styled clothes that have for centuries clearly expressed faithfulness to Christ and His Church if they do not intend to follow His Church and its teachings. Clothes tell a lot about who you are.

If you do not follow Catholic teachings, do not mock the traditional clothes that say you do.



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ARCHBISHOP GOMEZ ON DODGER DECISION

The decision to honor a group that clearly mocks the Catholic faith and makes light of the sincere and holy vocations of our women religious who are an integral part of our Church is what has caused disappointment, concern, anger, and dismay from our Catholic community.

The ministries and vocations of our religious women should be honored and celebrated through genuine acts of appreciation, reverence, and respect for their sacred vows, and for all the good works of our nuns and sisters in service of the mission of the Catholic Church.

From providing a quality education for inner city students, to serving the sick, the homeless, the hungry and so many others in need, to caring for the souls of our faithful through prayer, our women religious have dedicated their lives to the Catholic faith and mission, sharing God's loving grace with others.

The Archdiocese stands against any actions that would disparage and diminish our Christian faith and those who dedicate their lives to Christ.

The Archdiocese calls on all Catholics and people of goodwill to stand against bigotry and hate in any form and to stand for respect for one another and for the religious beliefs of our communities of faith.

Let us also show our care and respect for our women religious by sending a message of support to their communities through phone calls, letters, and posts on their social channels, supporting vocations by donating to their orders, and/or making donations in their name to the programs they support.

Let us show the world how much our women religious mean to us and our Church.

