Dress Code and Decoration Protocol

I. DRESS AT MASSES OF THE ORDER OF MALTA

A Church Robe/Cape and the member's large decoration are worn at Order of Malta Masses and other liturgical events taking place in a church, esp. funerals of members (when requested) and at Lourdes. Church Robes/Capes are **never worn** without decorations.

Knights

A knight's Church Robe consists of the black robe and the large decoration of the Order (*i.e.* the Cross of the Order suspended around the neck and hanging above the center of the cross embroidered on the robe). The large decoration is tied or hooked at the back of the neck with the black neck band placed under the robe's white collar. If a Knight inadvertently neglects to bring his decoration to an event, he should **NOT** wear his Church Robe. Under the robe a knight should wear a pair of dark slacks with a shirt and tie, dark shoes and socks.

Dames

A dame's Church Cape consists of the black cape worn over a knee-length dress or skirt with dress shoes. The Dame wears the large decoration attached to the cape over her left breast. No other decoration is worn. If a Dame inadvertently neglects to bring her large decoration to an event, she should **NOT** wear her Church Cape.

II. DRESS AT FORMAL EVENTS OF THE ORDER

General principles of protocol state that Knights and Dames of the Order should wear their large decorations only when wearing the most formal attire (*i.e.*, white tie and tails/formal gown). Formal attire is always worn at the annual Investiture Gala. In all other circumstances only the miniature decoration is appropriate, except in the presence of the Grand Master, when the large decoration is always worn.

Knights

Formal wear (white tie and tails) for a knight consists of the large decoration of the Order worn around the neck suspended just below the white tie, with the black ribbon placed under the vest and jacket. Neither the lapel pin nor the miniature decoration is worn with the large decoration.

Dames

Formal wear for a dame (a formal gown) consists of wearing the large decoration with its ribbon over her left breast, pinned to her gown. If it is impractical (*e.g.* with a strapless gown) to wear the large decoration, the miniature representation of the decoration may be worn instead.

III. DRESS AT SEMI-FORMAL EVENTS OF THE ORDER

Knights

Semi-formal wear (black tie/tuxedo) for a knight consists of the miniature decoration, worn pinned to the center of the left breast pocket of the jacket, so that the top of the ribbon of the miniature decoration is on the sewn seam located about one-half inch below the top edge of the left breast pocket.

Alternatively, Knights may simply wear the lapel pin that denotes rank in the Order of Malta. The black lapel pin is worn so that the metal stick pin is inserted through the buttonhole of the left lapel, or, in the case of a jacket without a buttonhole, in the equivalent place. No other miniature decoration of any kind is ever worn.

Dames

Semi-formal wear for a dame (a cocktail dress) consists of the miniature decoration with bow and pin, pinned on the left breast of the dress.

IV. BUSINESS OR CASUAL DRESS AT EVENTS OF THE ORDER

Knights

Knights wearing business attire, or casual attire (with a jacket), may wear the lapel pin (*i.e.* the rosette), denoting rank in the Order of Malta. The lapel pin is worn so that the metal stick is inserted through the buttonhole of the left lapel, or in the case of a jacket without a buttonhole, in the equivalent place.

Knights wearing business attire and attending official functions of the Order or one of its divisions are expected to wear the black lapel pin denoting their rank in the Order.

Dames

Dames wearing business attire may wear the miniature decoration with bow, pinned over their left breast.

Dames wearing business attire and attending official functions of the Order or one of its divisions are expected to wear the miniature decoration. At present, there is no equivalent (for Dames) of the rosette worn in a Knight's lapel.

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8/17/2022