

*Here is what the Russian Church's "Nastol'naya Kniga Sviashchenno-sluzhitelia" says about colors:*

The most important Feasts of the Orthodox Church and the sacred events for which specific colors of vestments have been established, can be united into six basic groups.

1. 1. The group of Feasts and days commemorating Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Prophets, the Apostles and the Holy Hierarchs. Vestment color: Gold (yellow) of all shades.
2. 2. The group of Feasts and days commemorating the Most Holy Mother of God, the Bodiless Powers and Virgins. Vestment color: Light Blue and White.
3. 3. The group of Feasts and days commemorating the Cross of Our Lord. Vestment color: Purple or Dark Red.
4. 4. The group of Feasts and days commemorating Martyrs. Vestment color: Red. [On Great and Holy Thursday, Dark Red vestments are worn, even though the church is still covered with black and the Holy (Altar) Table is covered with a white cloth.
5. 5. The group of Feasts and days commemorating Monastic Saints, Ascetics and Fools for Christ. Vestment color: Green. The Entrance of Our Lord into Jerusalem (Palm Sunday), Holy Trinity Day (Pentecost) and Holy Spirit Day (Monday after Pentecost) are, as a rule, celebrated in Green vestments of all shades.
6. 6. During the Lenten periods, the vestment colors are: Dark Blue, Purple, Dark Green, Dark Red and Black. This last color is used essentially for the days of Great Lent. During the first week of that Lent and on the weekdays of the following weeks, the vestment color is Black. On Sundays and feast-days of this period, the vestments are of a dark color with Gold or colored ornaments.

Funerals, as a rule, are done in White vestments. In earlier times, there were no Black vestments in the Orthodox Church, although the everyday clothing of the clergy, especially the Monastics, was Black. In ancient times, both in the Greek and in the Russian Churches, the clergy wore, according to the Typikon, "Crimson Vestments": Dark (Blood) Red vestments. In Russia, it was first proposed to the clergy of Saint Petersburg to wear Black Vestments, if possible, to participate in the Funeral of Emperor Peter II [1821]. From that time on, Black Vestments became customary for Funerals and the weekday Services of Great Lent.

Also, please note that there are two shades of red which are worn liturgically; dark red for Lenten periods, to signify the blood of Martyrs, and on Holy Thursday - the symbolism of the color of blood is evident - and bright red, worn in some places in the Russian Church at Liturgy on Pascha and on the Nativity of the Lord. The words for 'red' and 'beauty' being the same in the Russian language, bright red is worn as the sign of supreme joy. In some places, where the changeover to black was not 'legislatable,' dark red or blood red continues to be worn as THE Lenten color - in the Ukrainian Church, notably.

