



THE HIGH PLAINS PREACHER

Welcome to the High Plains Preacher, stories about the Bible, high wind, fast horses, lack, of moisture and other elements of life in the Texas Panhandle

What Should I Wear?

by Fr. Jim Schmitmeyer

My father always wore a tie to church. He wasn't a businessman. He wasn't a professional. But he wore a tie to church.

Did he put on a tie to "put on airs?" I'm here to tell you, my dad could not have put on airs if he had wanted to! He never made it past the third grade and, for most of his life, he never owned the land that he farmed. But my father was proud to be a farmer and he wore a tie to church.

Am I'm suggesting that everyone needs to dress up to go to church? No. But when the Lord invites us to His banquet, we need to show up with a strong sense of who we are and why we were invited. One of Jesus' parables tells of a man in shabby clothes getting kicked out of a wedding reception, not because of what he wore, but because *he had nothing to say!* In other words, he had no clue about who he was or why he was there.

If truth be told, the clothes we wear do reflect our identity and our sense of purpose. You don't jump into a swimming pool, for instance, wearing sweat pants. You don't hike a mountain trail in a business suit. Our outer garments express our inner dispositions.

What disposition do you wear to the Lord's Banquet?

In a Youtube video, Chris Stephanick, a Catholic youth leader, talks about getting a text from a friend of his in Iraq. This is what she wrote: "Chris, please pray for our parish! Al-Qaeda has surrounded the church and is threatening to kill everyone inside." The next Sunday, Chris took his family to church here in the U.S., grateful to God that they did not have to fear for their lives. In the back pew of the church, all through Mass, was a kid playing a video game, oblivious to what was going on and why he was there.

On the day of your baptism, Christ clothed you with the garment of salvation. Call it a garment, call it a gown, call it a uniform, call it whatever you want. But wear it often. Wear it with pride. Wear every time you step inside the banquet hall of the Lord.