# World leaders’ dress code deviations at Pope Francis’s funeral reveal political symbolism



World leaders gathered in Vatican City to attend the funeral of Pope Francis, observing a traditional sombre dress code. The prescribed attire for men was a black suit, black tie, and white shirt, while women were advised to wear long black dresses accompanied by gloves and a veil. Despite this, some prominent figures chose to deviate from these guidelines. Notably, US President Donald Trump wore a blue suit instead of the expected black, and Ukraine’s President Volodymyr Zelensky appeared in a black jacket, black shirt, and trousers without a tie.

President Zelensky’s choice of attire is consistent with his ongoing preference for a military-style dress code, which he uses as a symbolic gesture to reflect Ukraine's current state of conflict. This style is meant to serve as a visible signal that "Ukraine is at war and I am part of this fight," according to Elvira Gasanova, a designer from the clothing brand Damirli, which supplies some of the president’s outfits.

The Ukrainian leader’s sartorial approach has occasionally drawn criticism, including during a tense meeting at the White House in February. At that time, Brian Glenn, a reporter for Real America’s Voice and partner of US political figure Marjorie Taylor Greene, questioned Zelensky about his attire. Glenn asked, “Why don’t you wear a suit? You’re at the highest level in this country’s office, and you refuse to wear a suit. Do you own a suit?” Zelensky responded with a pointed remark during the encounter, stating, “I will wear costume after this war will finish. Maybe something like yours, maybe something better. We will see, maybe something cheaper.”

Ms Gasanova elaborated that the insistence on formal suits can be interpreted as a push for Ukraine "to return to the usual format of political dialogue," implying a desire for the conflict to conclude through negotiation. She noted that under the circumstances of martial law, Mr Zelensky is not only the president but also "the supreme commander of the army and civilians," a role that informs his choice of military-inspired clothing.

Meanwhile, Donald Trump’s decision to wear a blue suit rather than the standard black outfit was another deviation from the funeral’s dress expectations, highlighting varied interpretations of appropriate funeral attire among attending world leaders. The Express reports these details, highlighting the symbolic and diplomatic nuances behind the dress choices at this significant international event.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.noahwire.com> - Provides the original article about the funeral of Pope Francis and the dress choices of world leaders like US President Donald Trump and Ukraine’s President Volodymyr Zelensky.
2. <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2025-04/pope-francis-is-buried-in-st-mary-major.html> - Reports on the burial of Pope Francis at the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore, providing context for the event where world leaders gathered.
3. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/pope-francis-funeral-photos/> - Includes photos of the funeral procession and confirms that world leaders, including kings and queens, presidents, and prime ministers, attended the ceremony.
4. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=otLRr7oQQgU> - Vatican News coverage of the funeral Mass for Pope Francis, highlighting the gathering of international dignitaries at the Vatican.
5. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WKCrieyrgaE> - Live coverage of Pope Francis' funeral from St. Peter’s Basilica, which includes details about the attendance and formalities observed during the event.
6. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pope_Francis> - Provides background on Pope Francis, including his role and legacy, which served as a context for the international attention and participation in his funeral.
7. <https://www.express.co.uk/life-style/style/2047237/why-volodymyr-zelensky-not-in-suit> - Please view link - unable to able to access data