



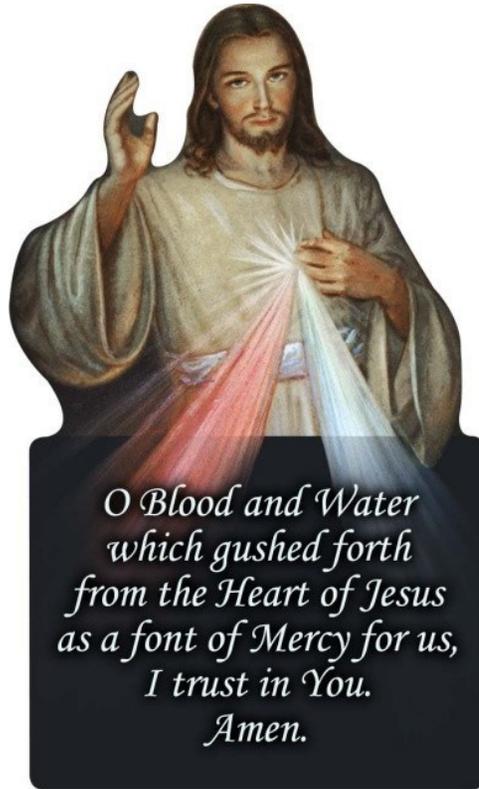
WHY ARE STATUES COVERED DURING THE LAST TWO WEEKS OF LENT?

We lose things during Lent. We are being pruned through the liturgy. Holy Church experiences liturgical death before the feast of the Resurrection. The *Alleluia* and the *Gloria* are discontinued at the beginning of Lent. The organ is not recommended to be used during Lent. Flowers are no longer placed on the altar from Ash Wednesday on. Since the 10th century in the Church, statues, crosses and images are draped in purple. The statues are hidden, because this was the time in which Jesus would hide before His upcoming Crucifixion. “*Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple*” (Jn 8:59). In this Biblical passage, the Jews attempt to stone Jesus because of His claims of being the Son of God, but He hides from view. In some places, statues and crosses are actually removed from the church and not simply veiled. The removal or veiling of images is a sign of great mourning in times of death. In rural Ireland, for instance, it was the custom to mark a death in the family by turning pictures towards the wall. In many cultures, women veil themselves at funerals as a mark of mourning. Traditionally, by covering images with purple clothes, we put emphasis on the solemnity and sadness of this time as we prepare for the Passion and Death of Jesus. It illustrates the increasing tension in the Liturgy as we move toward the Lord's own Paschal Mystery (His suffering, death, Resurrection and Ascension). As this tension develops, the universal Church's Ordo published by the Holy See has an indication that images can be veiled from the 5th Sunday of Lent. This old custom of veiling religious images is a way of focusing on the penitential aspect of this liturgical season. It reminds us in a visual way that our faith is made possible only through the work of Christ in his suffering and death on the cross, and we would not have saints or even go to heaven if it were not for Our Lord's death and Resurrection.

The tradition is often practiced during the last two weeks before Easter, starting on Passion Sunday (now called the Fifth Sunday of Lent, the Sunday prior to Palm Sunday) and ending on Good Friday. This time period was originally called *Passiontide* because the prayers of the Church at Mass prepare us for the upcoming celebration of the Passion of Jesus. Traditionally Crosses may be covered until the end of the celebration of the Lord's Passion on Good Friday, and images such as statues may be covered until the beginning of the Easter Vigil. The pruning cuts more deeply as we march into the Triduum. After the Mass on Holy Thursday the Blessed Sacrament is removed from the main altar, which itself is stripped and bells are replaced with wooden noise makers (bells are not to be rung during Holy Thursday Mass). On Good Friday there isn't even a Mass, only the Celebration of the Passion, the Venerating of the Cross and a Holy Communion Service. At the beginning of the Vigil we are deprived of light itself! It is as if the Church herself were completely dead with the Lord in His tomb. This liturgical death of the Church reveals how Christ emptied Himself of His glory in order to save us from our sins and to teach us who we are. The Church then gloriously springs to life again at the Vigil of Easter. The Alleluia is solemnly sung. The Gloria returns. Flowers are placed throughout the Church. The statues and Crosses are once again seen. In ancient times, the Vigil was celebrated in the depth of night. Today, the Vigil is to be celebrated only after it is completely dark. This is because according to scripture, the earliest Jesus rose from the dead was some time before dawn. In the darkness a single spark would be struck from flint and spread into the flames. The flames spread through the whole Church as the Easter Candle processes through the church and the people's candles are lit with it. The light from the Easter Candle represents Jesus, the light of the world coming forth from the tomb to give light to the whole world. The renewal of our baptismal vows remind us that we became disciples of Jesus when we received the life giving waters. The celebration of Baptism, Confirmation & First Communion of those entering the Church reveal God's saving work affecting the lives of people today.

Holy Week Schedule

- Holy Monday:** Confessions 7:30am, Holy Mass at 8am
Monday 7pm Parish Penance Service with 3 Priests Hearing Confessions
- Holy Tuesday:** Confessions 7:30am, Holy Mass at 8am
- Holy Wednesday:** Confessions 6:30pm, Holy Mass at 7pm
- Holy Thursday:** Confessions 6:30pm. Holy Mass at 7pm, 1 Hour Vigil after Mass
- Good Friday:** Confessions 6pm, Stations of the Cross 6:30pm,
Celebration of the Passion at 7pm
- Holy Saturday:** Confessions 7:30pm to 8:15pm, Easter Vigil Mass 8:30pm(2 Hours)
- Easter Sunday:** Confessions 30 min. before Masses, Holy Mass 8:30am and 11am



*O Blood and Water
which gushed forth
from the Heart of Jesus
as a font of Mercy for us,
I trust in You.
Amen.*

Divine Mercy Sunday, Sunday after Easter

Holy Hour at 3pm with Sung Chaplet of Divine Mercy

9 Day Novena of Divine Mercy

Novena Begins Good Friday and Ends Holy Saturday

See Novena pamphlet mailed to your home.

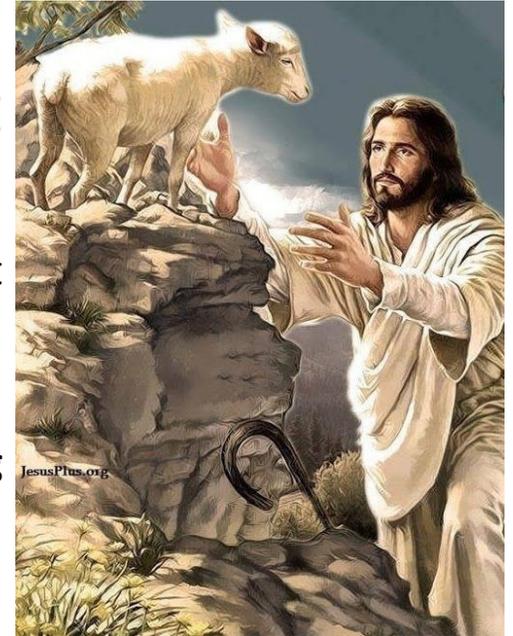
Jesus said to Faustina: *“Whoever approaches the Fountain of Life on this day will be granted complete forgiveness of sins and punishment. (Diary 300) I want the image solemnly blessed on the first Sunday after Easter, and I want it to be venerated publicly so that every soul may know about it. (Diary 341) This Feast emerged from the very depths of My mercy, and it is confirmed in the vast depths of my tender mercies. (Diary 420)”*



SACRED HEART PARISH PENANCE SERVICE

Monday, March 21st
7pm

**Three Priests Hearing
Confessions**



If we come to Confession sometime during Lent before Divine Mercy Sunday and receive Holy Communion on the weekend of the Sunday after Easter in the state of grace, all of our venial sins and all punishment due to our sins are washed away in the ocean of God’s Mercy. The floodgates of Divine Mercy are opened wide.