

Dear Padre,

When I was young, my parish covered all the statues during part of Lent. What did it mean exactly? Do any churches still do this?

In 2001, the US Conference of Catholic Bishops approved the practice of veiling statues and crosses during the last two weeks of the season of Lent, beginning on the fifth Sunday of Lent. This practice is optional, at the discretion of the local pastor. According to the Roman Missal, “Crosses remain covered until the end of the celebration of the Lord’s Passion on Good Friday, but images remain covered until the beginning of the Easter Vigil.”

Covering crosses and statues in violet cloth in the final weeks of Lent indicates a shift in the Church’s focus from Jesus in the desert (gospel for the first Sunday of Lent) to Christ during his Passion. Similar to other Lenten disciplines of penance and fasting that align us in solidarity with Christ, the veiling custom is meant to deepen our appreciation for Christ’s ultimate sacrifice. It represents our “fasting” from sacred depictions of the cross on which hung our salvation and from images of the saints, who glorify Christ and in whom he is glorified. This concealment creates an absence to make our hearts grow fonder for the Lord, who “bore our sins in his body upon the cross, so that, free from sin, we might live for righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed” (1 Peter 2:24). ●



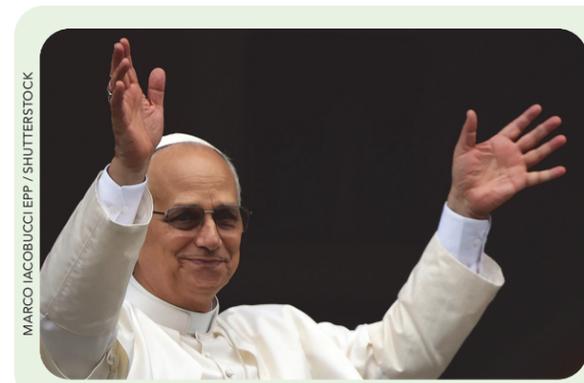
CATHOLIC

Fr. Byron J. Miller, CSsR / DearPadre.org

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
MARCH 9	MARCH 10	MARCH 11	MARCH 12	MARCH 13	MARCH 14	MARCH 15
Lenten Weekday	Lenten Weekday	Lenten Weekday	Lenten Weekday	Lenten Weekday	Lenten Weekday	Fourth Sunday of Lent
2 Kgs 5:1–15ab Lk 4:24–30	Dn 3:25, 34–43 Mt 18:21–35	Dt 4:1, 5–9 Mt 5:17–19	Jer 7:23–28 Lk 11:14–23	Hos 14:2–10 Mk 12:28–34	Hos 6:1–6 Lk 18:9–14	1 Sm 16:1b, 6–7, 10–13a Eph 5:8–14 Jn 9:1–41 or 9:1, 6–9, 13–17, 34–38

Do you have a question for the Padre?

Go to DearPadre.org to send your question and to learn more about *Dear Padre*.



A WORD FROM POPE LEO XIV

We feel a deep and burning thirst that no drink in this world can satisfy. Knowing this, let us not deceive our hearts by trying to satisfy them with cheap imitations!... Let us turn this thirst into a step stool, like children who stand on tiptoe, in order to peer through the window of encounter with God.

HOMILY, ROME, AUGUST 3, 2025

Our Parish COMMUNITY

March 8, 2026

Third Sunday of Lent (A)

Exodus 17:3–7 / Romans 5:1–2, 5–8 / John 4:5–42 or 4:5–15, 19b–26, 39a, 40–42



Are You Listening?

FR. THOMAS M. SANTA, CSSR

“If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.” (See Psalm 95.) Our psalm prayer invites us to respond to the Word of God. A positive response should be assumed as ordinary: very few among us would deliberately ignore God’s voice. The challenge is not in responding “yes” to the invitation of the Lord but rather in “hearing” his voice.

There are so many voices that daily compete for attention. We seem to be bombarded every waking moment with some kind of noise that demands attention and action. At one time, Neil Diamond might have been able to celebrate the “Beautiful Noise” of the city, but it is far more difficult for us today. Frankly, the noise around us is deafening, and most people long for true silence, a break in the pattern, a vacation from the frantic anxiety that seems to be present.

A wonderful Lenten practice—indeed, a spiritual practice that goes well beyond Lent—is to freely choose to disconnect from distraction. Resist the temptation to plug in the earbuds. Refrain from the distraction of social media content. Leave your cell phone in the living room, go sit in the backyard, and pay attention to nothing. “Be still and know that I am God” (Psalm 46:11), the psalmist reminds us. Listen for God’s voice, hear his call, and respond to the invitation. ●



LEARN ABOUT THE AUTHORS OF OUR PARISH COMMUNITY

The love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

ROMANS 5:5

Reflect

*Do I need more silence?
Do I find silence difficult?*