

What's With All the Purple?

As Easter approaches, we enter into a time called, “Passiontide.”

Crucifixes are covered. Sacred images that once filled the space are now hidden.

If you’ve ever walked into a church and wondered, “*Why is everything covered in purple?*” you’re not alone.

This tradition is deeply meaningful and especially important for Catholics to understand as they prepare their hearts during Lent.

What Is Passiontide?

- Passiontide is the final two weeks of Lent, beginning on the Fifth Sunday of Lent and leading directly into Holy Week.
 - It is a time when the Church intensifies its focus on the suffering and sacrifice of Jesus Christ — His Passion.
 - Everything in the liturgy becomes more solemn, more intentional and yes, more hidden.
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Why Are Sacred Images Veiled?

1. To Focus Our Attention on Christ's Passion

- During most of the year, sacred art helps lift our minds to Heaven. But during Passiontide, the Church temporarily removes these visual aids.
- Why? So nothing distracts us from the central mystery: Christ's suffering and sacrifice.
- When statues and images are veiled, we're invited to enter more deeply into what Jesus endured without comfort, without glory, and often, without being fully seen or understood.

2. To Reflect the “Hiddenness” of Christ

- The veiling of images echoes a powerful moment in Scripture. In the Gospel accounts, as opposition to Jesus grows, He begins to withdraw and hide Himself from public view.
- The Church mirrors this reality visually.
- Christ, who is usually clearly visible in our churches, now appears hidden—just as He was in the days leading up to His crucifixion.

3. To Build Anticipation for Easter

- There’s also a very human reason behind this tradition: **we notice absence.**
- When something familiar is taken away, we long for its return.
- By veiling sacred images, the Church helps us *feel* the longing for joy, beauty, and glory that will be fully revealed again at Easter.
- When the veils are finally removed, especially during the Easter Vigil, it’s not just visual. It’s powerful!
- It’s a reminder that resurrection follows sacrifice. That light breaks through darkness.

4. To Invite a More Interior Faith

- In a world full of constant noise and visual stimulation, this tradition gently invites us inward.
- Without images to rely on, we’re encouraged to pray more deeply, reflect more intentionally, and enter into a personal encounter with Christ.
- This can be a meaningful reset, stepping away from distractions and into something deeper.

Passiontide isn’t just a tradition; it’s an opportunity for us all to enter into the meaning of sacrifice and love and prepare our hearts more intentionally for the joy of Easter. Let us experience the rhythms of the Church together on our final steps to Calvary.