

The Veiling of Images and Crosses

OFFICE OF DIVINE WORSHIP - ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Veiling

The third typical edition of the *Roman Missal* provides a rubric at the beginning of the texts for the Fifth Sunday of Lent, which allows that: “the practice of covering crosses and images in the Church from the Fifth Sunday of Lent is permitted, according to the judgement of the Conferences of Bishops. Crosses remain veiled until the end of the celebration of the Lord’s Passion on Good Friday; images remain veiled until the beginning of the Easter Vigil.” In 2001, the USCCB approved an adaptation of the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* allowing for the veiling of crosses and images in this manner.

The option of veiling images and crosses is left to the discretion of the local pastor and is not a required practice. If it is decided to cover crosses and statues, it is not to be done until the Fifth Sunday of Lent.

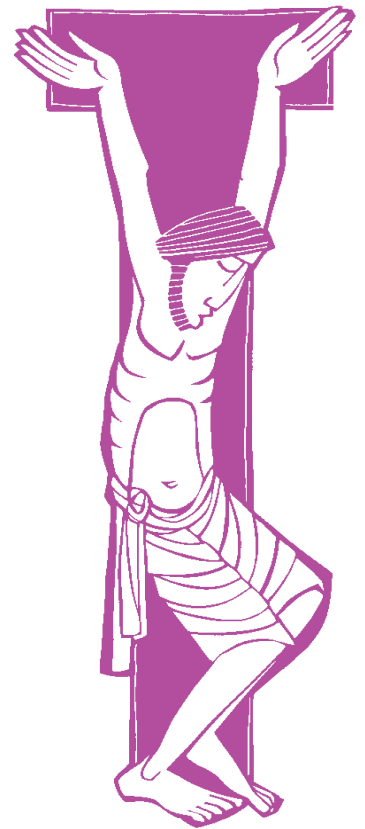
Unveiling

Crosses are unveiled following the Good Friday liturgy. Since the cross is the focus of attention on Good Friday, it is logical that all crosses would be unveiled after the celebration of the Passion of the Lord for the veneration of the faithful.

Statues are unveiled *before* the beginning of the Easter Vigil. The veiling and unveiling of statues is not done as part of any liturgy, including the Easter Vigil. Statues are to be unveiled *before* the Easter Vigil begins.

Veils

While liturgical law does not prescribe the form or color of such veils, they have traditionally been made of simple, lightweight purple cloth, without ornament.



Holy Thursday

The concluding rubrics following the Mass of the Lord’s Supper (41) indicate that “at an opportune time the altar is stripped and, if it is possible, crosses are removed from the church. It is fitting that crosses which remain in the church be veiled.” After the Evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper, then, it is permitted to cover crosses if this has not been done at the Fifth Sunday of Lent. This practice is optional. The decision to cover the crosses is left up to the discretion of the local pastor.