

The “Silent Treatment” ... the conscious effort to ignore another person ... even going so far as to pretend they aren’t around ... has been played out in movies, and television for years: in comedies and dramas; live shows and cartoons. It’s often funny to watch, and when well-played can keep an audience laughing.

Yet it is also has a dark side. It is seen as a passive form of bullying and social abuse. The extreme form of the “silent treatment” can be found in shunning - where a person finds themselves afloat in a world without basic emotional or social support.

In today’s reading, we hear Our Lord in a discussion about the “greatest commandment” ... which begins “Hear, O Israel ...” and in the Psalm response “I am the Lord your God: hear my voice.”

Often times, we can get very good at ignoring God. And for several thousand years of Judeo-Christian religion, the first line of the greatest commandment has been “hear.”

As we approach the mid-point of Lent, let us shake the dust out of our own ears ... let us set aside an appropriate time for silence - not just external silence filled with internal noise - but true silence ... and invite the Lord to speak in the depths of our hearts.