

# Can Catholics eat corned beef on St. Patrick's Day during Lent?



**St. Patrick's Day falls on a Friday during Lent, typically meaning Catholics would not be eating meat – but as the luck of the Irish would have it, there is a way out of this dilemma. Diocesan bishops can give the faithful a dispensation to allow them to eat meat on March 17<sup>th</sup>.**

Lent lasts 40 days starting on Ash Wednesday, which was Feb. 22 this year, and ends at sundown on Holy Thursday, April 6. It's then followed by Good Friday. It is often known that this is the time when Catholics abstain from eating meat on Fridays or give up "luxuries."

"We are called not only to abstain from luxuries during Lent, but to a true inner conversion of heart as we seek to follow Christ's will more faithfully," the United State Conference of Catholic Bishops' website states. " ... Many know of the tradition of abstaining from meat on Fridays during Lent, but we are also called to practice self-discipline and fast in other ways throughout the season."

However, St. Patrick's Day, often celebrated with corned beef, could make things a bit tricky for some Catholics. St. Patrick's Day falls on a Friday this year, for the first time since 2017. But Archbishop Rodi gave a dispensation from the Lenten meat abstinence stating:

"This year March 17, the Memorial of St. Patrick, occurs on a Friday. This great Saint, patron of Ireland and Nigeria, is deeply honored by many throughout the world. Celebrations of his day are widespread. I have been requested to dispense from the requirement of abstaining from meat on March 17. **I hereby do so with the condition that those who make use of this dispensation substitute another Lenten penance.**"

**May the road rise to meet you, May the wind be at your back, May the sun shine warmly on your face... and May God hold you in the palms of His hands.**