



## The Catholic Roots of Mardi Gras


Did you know that Mardi Gras actually has its roots in Catholic tradition?

While best known for parties, costumes and beads, Mardi Gras has religious origins in the Catholic calendar as well as in pre-Christian pagan celebrations. Mardi Gras (French for 'Fat Tuesday') is actually the final day of the festivities known as *Carnival*.

The Latin root of the word Carnival is carne vale, which means "farewell to meat"—a reference to the upcoming 40 day fast of Lent that commences at midnight on Mardi Gras. Fat Tuesday was named because it was a time of extravagant feasting of rich foods such as meat or pancakes before the upcoming fast. According to the Catholic calendar, the season of Carnival actually starts on the 12th day of Christmas, known as the Epiphany (January 6<sup>th</sup>). And in Germany, where Carnival is known as Fasching, festivities start on Epiphany and build toward Mardi Gras.

Fat Tuesday is also known as Shrove Tuesday, a reference to "shriving" or confession, which was meant to prepare Christians for the fast ahead. Some communities use Shrove Tuesday to burn palm fronds from the previous year's Palm Sunday to create the ashes that are used on Ash Wednesday. Ash Wednesday is the first day of the season of penitence and fasting that leads to Good Friday and Easter. Ash Wednesday is a solemn observance when many Christians receive ashes on the foreheads and are reminded that "they are dust and to dust they shall return."

[mercyhealthpa.wordpress.com](http://mercyhealthpa.wordpress.com)




### Shrove Tuesday

**Shrove Tuesday** is the name of the day before the start of Lent on Ash Wednesday.

The word "shrove" is the past tense of the English verb "shrive" which means **to obtain absolution for one's sins** by way of confession and by doing penance.

On this day, Catholics are encouraged to go to confession in preparation for the penitential Season.

 Catholic Fortress

ASH  
WEDNESDAY



Remember that  
You are dust, and to  
dust you shall return.

Ecclesiastes 3:20  
Catholic.org

# Ash Wednesday Mass Schedule

March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025

8 a.m. Mass - **St. Bridget**

12 Noon Mass - **St. Bridget**

6 p.m. Mass - **St. Thomas the Apostle**

## Fast & Abstinence During the Lenten Season

- Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are obligatory days of fasting and abstinence.
- In addition, Fridays during Lent are obligatory days of abstinence.
- The norms on fasting are obligatory from age 18 until 59.
- When fasting, a person is permitted to eat one full meal, as well as two smaller meals that together are not equal to a full meal.
- The norms concerning abstinence from meat are from age 14 onwards.

## Stations of the Cross

Every Friday during Lent

12 Noon at **St. Bridget** & 6 p.m. at **St. Thomas the Apostle**

