



ABSTINENCE

Abstinence is a penitential practice consisting of refraining from the consumption of meat and is to be observed by all Catholics who are 14 years of age and older. Ash Wednesday, Good Friday and the Fridays during Lent are days of abstinence.

FAST AND ABSTINENCE

In addition to abstinence, fasting is to be observed by all Catholics between the ages of 18 and 59 years old (inclusive). On Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, one full meal is allowed. Two smaller meals, sufficient to maintain strength, may be taken according to one's needs, but together they should not equal another full meal. Eating between meals is not permitted, but liquids are allowed. Note: Those who are unable to observe the above regulations due to ill health or other serious reasons are urged to practice other forms of self-denial that are suitable to their condition.

Lent is the 40-day period leading up to Easter (excluding Sundays) that starts on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday, the day before Easter. The 40 days of Lent involve fasting, prayer, and almsgiving as a way to connect deeper with God. Commonly observed by Catholics, Eastern, and some Protestant churches, many use the 40 days of Lent as a time of personal reflection to prepare your heart and mind for Good Friday and Easter.

Shrove Tuesday is the day before Ash Wednesday, marking the start of Lent. Traditionally, it's a time for confession, repentance, and feasting before the fasting season. The name "Shrove" comes from the Old English word *shriven*, meaning to confess sins and receive absolution.

The Biblical support for this observation comes from the following verses:

Then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking him by prayer and pleas for mercy with fasting and sackcloth and ashes ([Daniel 9:3](#)).

There was great mourning among the Jews, with fasting and weeping and lamenting, and many of them lay in sackcloth and ashes ([Esther 4:3](#)