

FESTIVAL INFO

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ASH WEDNESDAY

Ash Wednesday is a [Christian](#) holy day of [prayer](#) and [fasting](#). It is preceded by [Shrove Tuesday](#) and falls on the first day of [Lent](#),^[2] the six weeks of [penitence](#) before [Easter](#). Ash Wednesday is traditionally observed by [Western Christians](#). It is observed by [Catholics](#) in the [Roman Rite](#), [Anglicans](#), [Lutherans](#), [Methodists](#), [Moravians](#), [Nazarenes](#), and [Independent Catholics](#), as well as by many from the [Reformed](#) faith (inclusive of the [Congregationalist](#), [Continental Reformed](#), and [Presbyterian](#) traditions) and [United Protestants](#).^[3]

As it is the first day of Lent, many Christians begin Ash Wednesday by marking a [Lenten calendar](#), praying a [Lenten daily devotional](#), and making a [Lenten sacrifice](#) that they will not partake of until the arrival of [Eastertide](#).^{[4][5]}

Ash Wednesday derives its name from the placing of repentance [ashes](#) on the foreheads of participants to either the words "Repent, and believe in the Gospel" or the dictum "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return."^[6] The ashes are prepared by burning [palm leaves](#) from the previous year's [Palm Sunday](#) celebrations.

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