

Religion

# The Season of Lent:

## A Journey of Faith, Tradition, and Cultural Influence

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Photo Credit: [tiffany@threshingnews.com](mailto:tiffany@threshingnews.com) March 10, 2025 *The Season of Lent* PNG

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### Introduction to Lent

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Every year, millions of Christians around the world participate in Lent, a significant religious observance marking a 40-day period of fasting, self-denial, and reflection. Lent begins with Ash Wednesday and concludes at Easter, commemorating the resurrection of Jesus Christ according to Christian beliefs.

## Origins and Practices of Lent

Lent typically lasts 40 days, mirroring the biblical account of Jesus fasting in the wilderness. It begins with Ash Wednesday, during which clergy in the Catholic Church and other Christian denominations place ashes on the foreheads of participants as a sign of repentance and humility. The ashes traditionally come from palms used in the previous year's Palm Sunday observances ([Source: Britannica, https://www.britannica.com/topic/Ash-Wednesday-Christian-holy-day](https://www.britannica.com/topic/Ash-Wednesday-Christian-holy-day)).

## Notable Figures Observing Lent

Key figures observing Lent publicly include prominent individuals such as U.S. President Joe Biden and celebrities like actors Chris Pratt, Mark Wahlberg, and TV personality Stephen Colbert ([Source: CNN, https://www.cnn.com/2022/03/02/us/ash-wednesday-lent-meaning-explainer-cec/index.html](https://www.cnn.com/2022/03/02/us/ash-wednesday-lent-meaning-explainer-cec/index.html)). Their participation highlights Lent's cultural and religious significance in contemporary society.

## Role of the Catholic Church

The Catholic Church plays a central role in administering Lent, with clergy leading various rites and ceremonies. Priests and bishops conduct Ash Wednesday services, guide congregants through spiritual practices such as prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, and provide teachings aimed at fostering spiritual renewal. The Vatican, under the leadership of the Pope, often issues messages and directives encouraging Catholics worldwide to embrace Lent as a period of deeper spiritual introspection ([Source: Vatican News, https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2023-02/pope-francis-message-lent-2023.html](https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2023-02/pope-francis-message-lent-2023.html)).

## Cultural Influence of Lent

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Lenten practices extend beyond individual reflection, often involving communal activities such as charitable giving, volunteer service, and attending special religious services like Stations of the Cross, which commemorates Christ's journey to crucifixion. While deeply religious, Lent has also developed broader cultural resonance, influencing secular aspects of spring traditions in various cultures globally.

### **Lent's Broader Social Impact**

Although rooted firmly in Catholic theology and tradition, Lent and its associated practices continue to have significant social and cultural influence far beyond strictly religious communities.