



LENT

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Lent

People often say, "I'm giving it up for Lent".
But what does "LENT" mean?

Lent

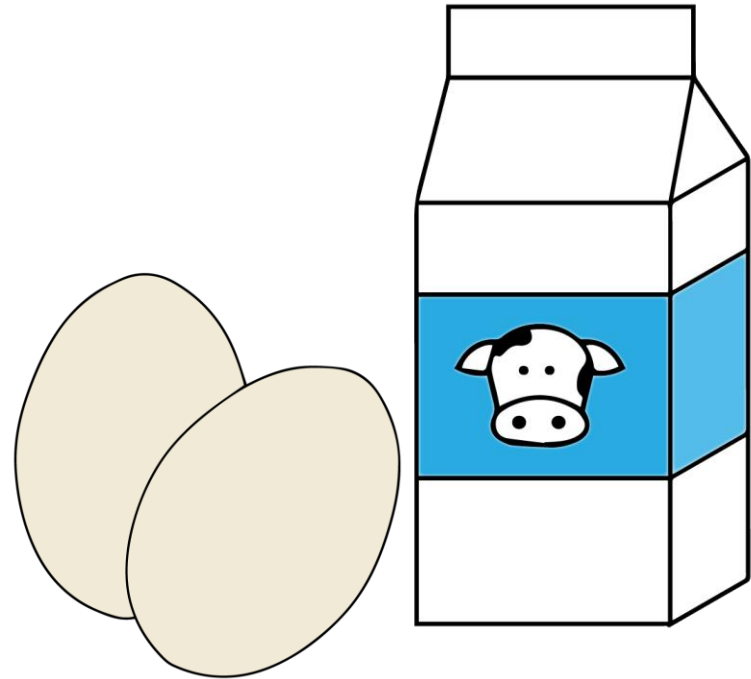
LENT

Lent is the name given to the forty days before Easter (excluding Sundays). It reminds us of the forty days Jesus spent in the desert before he began his work of teaching and healing.

LENT

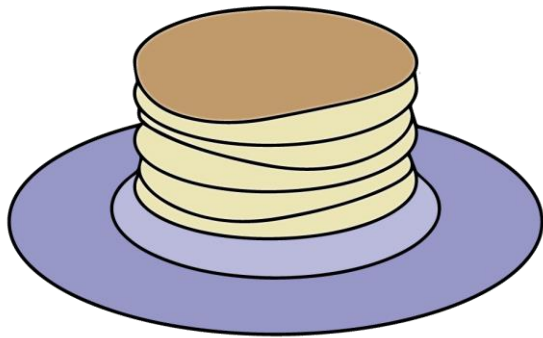
Lent

In the Middle Ages, Lent was a time of fasting. This meant that people went without such food as meat, eggs and cream.



Lent

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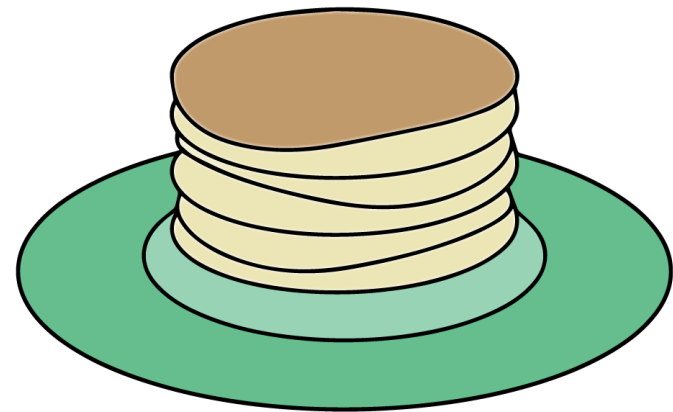


On the day before Lent began, they used up all the fats in the house by making pancakes and enjoying the kinds of food they would go without until Easter. All sorts of games were played in the streets to celebrate before the fast began.

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Mardi Gras

In some countries the day before Lent is called "Mardi Gras" – Fat Tuesday – and in other countries it is called "Pancake Tuesday" or "Shrove Tuesday".



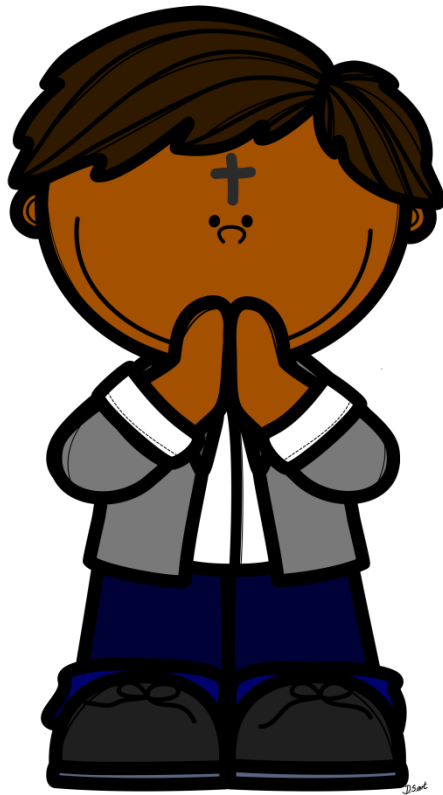
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Shrove Tuesday

Shrove Tuesday got its name because people went to church on the day before Lent began to ask God to forgive them for all the things they had done wrong. The word for this was “shriving” and the word “Shrove” comes from that.

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Ash Wednesday



The first day of Lent is called "Ash Wednesday". It gets its name from a custom which began in the sixth century when Gregory was pope.

LENT

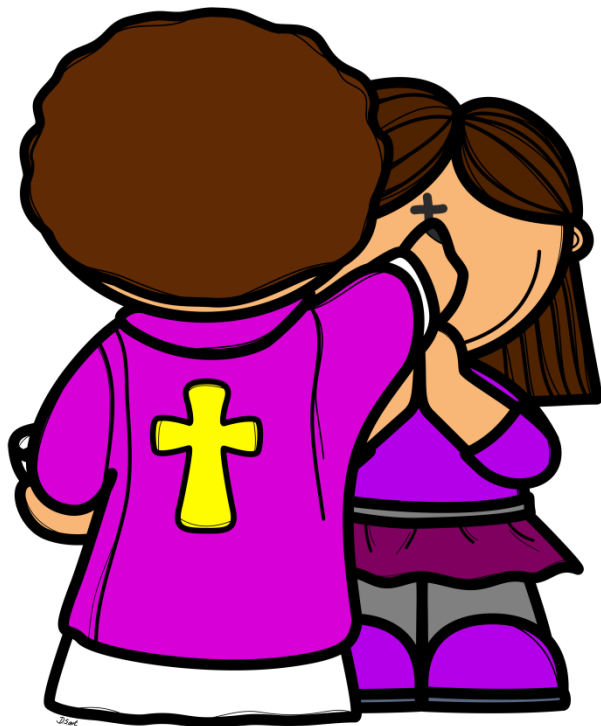
Ash Wednesday

Pope Gregory suggested that as a sign that someone was really sorry for doing, saying or thinking something wrong, they should not wear fine clothes on that day. Instead, they should sprinkle ashes on their head and wear clothes made of sackcloth.



LENT

Ash Wednesday



On Ash Wednesday, the priest blesses the ashes made from last year's palm branches. The sign of the cross is made as ashes are put on the forehead.

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Ash Wednesday

The priest says:
“Dust thou art, and into
dust thou shalt return”.

Or

“Turn away from sin and
be faithful to the
Gospel”.



LENT

Ash Wednesday

Wearing ashes is a sign that we are sorry for our sins. It's also a sign that we're going to do something to get ready for Lent.



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