

THE HOLY FACE NOVENA & SHROVE TUESDAY

Preparing Our Hearts for the Season of Lent

“Seek My Face.” — Psalm 27:8

As we approach the holy season of Lent, our parish joins the universal Church in turning our hearts toward repentance, reparation, and renewal. One beautiful and time-honoured way to prepare is through the Novena to the Holy Face of Jesus, which culminates on Shrove Tuesday, the day before Ash Wednesday.

What Is the Holy Face Devotion?

The Devotion to the Holy Face of Jesus invites the faithful to contemplate the suffering Face of Christ—bruised, spat upon, and disfigured during His Passion—and to offer prayers of reparation for sins that wound His Sacred Countenance. These include:

- Blasphemy
- Profanation of Sundays and holy days
- Indifference toward God
- Sins of irreverence and mockery

The devotion, rooted in 19th-century Carmelite spirituality and renewed in the 20th century through Blessed Maria Pierina de Micheli, has been warmly embraced by Catholics around the world.

Why Shrove Tuesday?

Traditionally, Shrove Tuesday (“Confession Tuesday”) was the day Catholics prepared for Lent by:

- Examining their conscience
- Going to confession
- Making peace with God before the penitential season

In many cultures, however, this day has become overshadowed by customs of excess and indulgence.

For this reason, Our Lord asked that Shrove Tuesday become the Feast of the Holy Face, a day of reparation for sins committed through irreverence, mockery, and worldliness.

The Holy Face Novena therefore ends on Shrove Tuesday, inviting us to begin Lent with purified hearts and renewed devotion.

A Call to Authentic Preparation

As we enter Lent, the Church urges us to reclaim the true meaning of Shrove Tuesday.

While cultural traditions such as “Mardi Gras” or pre-Lenten feasting have become widespread, they often distort the day’s purpose and can lead us away from the spirit of repentance.

Let us choose instead:

- Silence over noise
- Prayer over indulgence
- Reparation over revelry
- Confession over distraction

By honouring the Holy Face of Jesus, we prepare ourselves to walk with Him through the desert of Lent and toward the glory of Easter.

Join Us in Prayer

All parishioners are warmly invited to participate in the Novena to the Holy Face of Jesus, beginning Sunday, February 8th (nine days before Shrove Tuesday) and concluding on the Feast itself (Tuesday, February 17th).

Together, let us seek the Face of Christ, repair what sin has damaged, and enter Lent with hearts made ready for conversion.

“Look to Him and be radiant.” — Psalm 34:5

Acts of Reparation: What They Are

An act of reparation is any prayer, sacrifice, or good work offered specifically to:

- Make amends for sins committed against God
- Console the Heart of Christ
- Repair the spiritual damage caused by sin
- Offer love in place of the world's indifference or hostility toward God

Reparation is rooted in Scripture and tradition:

- "I looked for someone to stand in the breach." (Ezekiel 22:30)
- "Make up what is lacking in the sufferings of Christ." (Colossians 1:24)
- The Sacred Heart revelations to St. Margaret Mary
- The Holy Face revelations to Sr. Mary of St. Peter and Bl. Maria Pierina

Reparation is not about "earning" forgiveness — Christ alone redeems — but about joining our love to His, repairing what sin has damaged.

Why Acts of Reparation Matter

Because sin is not only personal — it is communal.

Blasphemy, sacrilege, indifference, and irreverence wound the Body of Christ.

Acts of reparation:

- Honour God where He has been dishonoured
- Offer love where He has been rejected
- Strengthen the Church
- Prepare the soul for deeper conversion

This is why the Holy Face devotion is so closely tied to Shrove Tuesday and the beginning of Lent.

Schedule:

- Sunday, Feb 8th at 6:00pm at Corpus Christi church. Novena begins. Reparation for blasphemy.
- Monday, Feb 9th at 6:00pm at Our Lady of Mount Carmel church. Reparation for profanation of Sundays.
- Tuesday, Feb 10th at 6:00pm at Corpus Christi church. Reparation for atheism and unbelief.
- Wednesday, Feb 11th at 6:00pm at Corpus Christi church. Reparation for sins against the Holy Name.
- Thursday, Feb 12th at 6:00pm at Corpus Christi church. Reparation for sins of the media.
- Friday, Feb 13th at 6:00pm at Corpus Christi church. Reparation for sins of pride.
- Saturday, Feb 14th at 6:00pm at Corpus Christi church. Reparation for sins of impurity.
- Sunday, Feb 15th at 6:00pm at Corpus Christi church. Reparation for sins against the Church.
- Monday, Feb 16th at 6:00pm at Our Lady of Mount Carmel church. Reparation for personal sins and the sins of the world.
- Tuesday, Feb 17th at 6:00pm at Our Lady of Mount Carmel church. Shrove Tuesday.
 - Mass to follow at 7:00pm.
 - One hour of Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, closing with Benediction at 8:30pm
 - Confessions at Corpus Christi church from 8:00am to 4:00pm
 - Confessions at Our Lady of Mount Carmel church from 6:00pm until Mass, then again during adoration of the Blessed Sacrament 7:30pm until 8:30pm