

Resources for Lent

- **HOW TO FAST: A GUIDE FOR NEW CHRISTIAN ORTHODOX**

<https://orthodoxfasting.com/5968/how-to-fast-a-guide-for-new-christian-orthodox/>

- **TOOLS TO SUPPORT YOUR LENTEN JOURNEY**

<https://ioecc.org/take-action/get-resources/lenten-resources>

- **OBSERVING THE TRIODION & PREPARING FOR GREAT LENT**

<https://www.parousiapress.com/blogs/resources/observing-the-triodion-preparing-for-great-lent?srsltid=AfmBOorjJ-hQLGPWV916A3oQ0EJwjXIRlgSOB9SbFkdm2bk4m1GMSWLc>

- **LENTEN READING LIST**

https://www.parousiapress.com/blogs/resources/lenten-reading-list-for-the-orthodox-christian?srsltid=AfmBOorEDHhViL3mH8sm_8CRFz7FpW4IA2U7VpLJGr29LCbWQbwN4xHZ

- **GREAT LENT RESOURCE PAGE**

<https://www.johnsanidopoulos.com/2011/03/great-lent-resource-page.html>

How to approach fasting

Remember that Fasting serves several purposes:

Spiritual Growth: Fasting strengthens our prayer life and helps us open our hearts to the Holy Spirit.

Repentance: It's a time to reflect on our sins and seek forgiveness.

Preparation: It readies us for the great feasts, such as Pascha (Easter), Nativity (Christmas), and the Feast of the Transfiguration.

By practicing fasting, we imitate the ascetic fasting of the saints and align ourselves with the traditions of the Orthodox Church.

Fasting is not only about what you eat but also how much you eat. Limiting yourself to smaller portions or one full meal per day is a way to practice self-control and humility. The goal is to align our physical hunger with spiritual hunger for God.

Replace, Don't Just Remove

Let's say you're fasting from social media. You'll have extra time, so fill it with purposeful activities. Pray, read Scripture, play board games with the kids, call a relative you haven't talked to in a while. If you merely remove a passion without replacing it, you'll likely slip back into old habits.

Possible Fasting Replacements

Prayer for Social Media: Each time you think about checking notifications, say a short prayer.

Acts of Kindness for Anger: Do one kind act each day for someone you find annoying or difficult.

Healthy Activities for Laziness: Go for a family walk, read a spiritual book, or volunteer at church.

Fasting isn't about impressing others with how strictly you can avoid meat products or how flawlessly you follow the rules of fasting on strict fasting day. It's about letting go of whatever is holding you back from God—be it animal products, social media, or a short temper—and allowing the Holy Spirit to work in your heart. Orthodox Christians fast to grow spiritually, to fight our passions, and to align ourselves more closely with the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. This journey is long and sometimes tough, but it's also filled with joy and hope.

Remember:

Start simple: Focus on a few passions and the general rules of dietary fasting.

Seek community support: Whether it's your family, your parish, or an online group, don't do this alone.

Pray persistently: Make prayer the center of your fasting discipline.

Embrace growth: Expect to stumble but get back up. The reward is a deeper connection to God.