

PASTORAL SUGGESTIONS FOR KEEPING GREAT LENT

FASTING NORMS

- 1) During the week before Great Lent meat is forbidden, but eggs, cheese and other dairy products (and fish) may be eaten.
- 2) During the days of Great Lent and holy Week (with the exception of the Feast of the Annunciation, March 25 and Palm Sunday when fish is allowed) all meat and animal products (milk, cheese, butter, eggs, lard) and fish are not to be eaten.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

- 1) The traditional practices for Great Lent are recommended for all baptized Orthodox Faithful who are physically able to keep them.
- 2) The full strictness of the fast is lessened for the aged, the very young, those in poor health and pregnant mothers.
- 3) Most importantly we must remember that “the letter kills, but the spirit gives life.” (2 Cor. 3:6). It is LOVE, not the spirit of legalism that motivates our lenten practices.
- 4) Prepare yourself and make a Good Lenten Confession. (note: confessions can be made following the Great Vespers on Saturdays, before the weekly Presanctified Divine Liturgy, [please ask Fr. Alexander first], or at other specially arranged times.)
- 5) Along with dietary fasting we should also:
 - a. Practice a daily rule of prayer in the morning and evening.
 - b. Read the Holy Scriptures daily.
 - c. Make a concerted to attend Lenten services. Try to change your work and social schedules to accommodate the Church, not vice-versa.
 - d. Increase your concern and care for the sick, the poor and the homebound.
 - e. Fast not only with your stomach, but with your mouth, ears and eyes. Guard what you say, what you hear, what you watch
 - f. Prepare for and receive Holy Communion often.
 - g. Plan ahead for Holy Week. Make sure the preparation of traditional foods does not interfere with Holy Week services. We all belong in Church.

As always, if you have any questions about these suggestions—speak with your pastor.