

# Holy Lent Spiritual Journey

Second week of the Holy Great Fast

Theme of the week  
**THE FEATURES OF THE PROCESSION**

Nature of Procession "Struggle"



"You shall **worship** the LORD Your God, and Him  
only you shall **serve**"

Luke 4:8



**ST. MARY** COPTIC  
ORTHODOX CHURCH  
OTTAWA

# READINGS

Day	Prophecies	Matins	Mass	Know your Bible Map
Monday	Ex 3:6-14; Is 4:2-5:7	Psalm 40:11 Mark 9:25-29	Rom 1:18-25 Jude 1:1-8 Acts 4:36-5:11 Psalm 29:1-2 Luke 18:1-8	Joshua 14-16
Tuesday	Job 19:1-27, Is 5:7-16	Psalm 41:4,13 Luke 12:22-31	2Cor 9:6-15 James 1:1-12 Acts 4:13-22 Psalm 41:1 Mark 10:17-27	Joshua 17-19
Wednesday	Ex 2:11-20; Is 5:17-25; Mal 1:6-3:6	Psalm 18:17-18 Matt 5:17-24	Rom 3:1-17 2 John 1:8-13 Acts 5:3-11 Psalm 18:1-2 Matt 15:32-38	Joshua 20-22
Thursday	Deut 5:15-22; Is 6:1-12; Josh 2:1-6:27	Psalm 28:9 Matt 11:20-30	Rom 16:17-27 James 3:1-12 Acts 12:12-23 Psalm 48:10-11 Matt 19:16-30	Joshua 23-24
Friday	Deut 8:1-9:4; 1 Sam 17:1-18:4; Is 7:1-14; Job 11:1-20	Psalm 116:7-8 Matt 15:39-16:12	Heb 12:28-13:16 1 Pet 4:7-16 Acts 15:22-31 Psalm 29:10-11 Luke 6:39-49	Judges 1-3
Saturday	-	Psalm 25:7-8,11 Mark 9:43-50	Rom 14:1-18 James 1:22-27 Acts 22:17-30 Psalm 118:19-20 Matt 7:13-21	Judges 4-5
Sunday	-	Psalm 57:1 Luke 4:1-13	Rom 14:19-15:7 James 2:1-13 Acts 23:1-11 Psalm 27:8-9 Matt 4:1-11	Judges 6-8

Fasting	Metanias	Jesus Prayer
11:30	7 times /day	15 times morning 15 times night

## MONDAY - PRAY ALWAYS

Prayer is opening the heart to God, so He would enter and purify it. It reminds us of the prayer of the tax collector who lifted up a contrite heart before God, asking for His mercy and so he went back to his house justified. Therefore, you should pray to acquire purity of the heart, while you say to God in your prayer: "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean, wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow" (Psalm 50). Is not He the one who said, "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you... I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes" (Ezek 36:26-27). Ask Him in your prayers to fulfill this promise. Prayer is consecrating the lips and the thoughts and it is the sanctifying of the soul. Furthermore, it is reconciliation with God. It is natural for the one who has a dispute between him and God, not to talk to Him. He does not pray. He does not have the intimacy to talk with God. If he starts to pray, it means that he wants to reconcile with God, and if he prayed, he will be humbled by his talk with God and ashamed to defile his thoughts which were with God not so long ago. He will then reach modesty of the thoughts, which is a healthy, spiritual sign. And so by praying, bad thoughts are abolished, as one continues to pray and uses prayer to enter into a spiritual atmosphere, far from the forces of darkness.

Prayer is the horror of the devils and the strongest weapon against them. The devil fears the person who prays, for he will escape his grasp. He fears that through his prayer, this person may gain strength by which he could fight and defeat him. The devil would also envy him for having such a relationship with God, which he has been deprived of. Therefore, the devil fights prayer by all means. He tries to stop it by insinuating to the person that he is too busy and has no time, or he would make him feel tired and his body becomes heavy. If the person insisted on praying, the devil would try to distract his thoughts so that his mind would stray.

"The Spiritual Means", His Holiness Pope Shenouda III.

### *Church Father Quote*

❖ Even if we have thousands of acts of great virtue to our credit, our confidence in being heard must be based on God's mercy and His love for men. Even if we stand at the very summit of virtue, it is by mercy that we shall be saved. St. John Chrysostom

### *Practice*

Arm yourself with patience and prayer in time of temptation.

## TUESDAY - FOLLOW CHRIST

Between the Eternities: We are all travelers in this world. From the sweet grass to the packing house, birth till death, we travel between the eternities." We are travelers— pilgrims—in a world that offers no lasting peace or rest. And while there is only one eternity, we travel between eternity past and eternity future, waiting for promises of a home and a hope that will last forever—promises yet to be fulfilled. In those times of struggle and despair when our pilgrimage of life is difficult, it is helpful to remember that though we are pilgrims who travel between the eternities, we have a Savior who is the Lord and Master of eternity. He has offered us the promise of life with Him forever and has secured that promise with His own sacrifice. This was the promise spoken of by the writer of Hebrews 11:13. We are locked into the moments and hours and days of life, but we look ahead by faith in Christ. One day, we will experience the promises of eternity when faith will become sight as we see Him. That hope is what lifts us beyond life between the eternities to a joy that is eternal. For time and eternity, Jesus is all we need.

Daily Bread, 21st February 2008

Lord, what is my confidence which I have in this life? Or what is my greatest solace among all the things that appear under Heaven? Is it not You, my Lord God, whose mercies are numberless? Where was it ever well with me without You? Or when was it ever ill with me when You were present? I had rather be poor for Your sake, than rich without You.

I prefer rather to sojourn upon earth with You than to possess Heaven without You. Where You are, there is Heaven; and there is death and hell where You are not. You are my whole desire, and therefore I must need sigh after You and cry and pray.

In short, I cannot fully confide in anyone to bring my opportune help in my necessities save only in You, my God. You are my hope, my confidence, my comforter and in all things most faithful.

The Imitation of Christ, Thomas A Kempis (Chapter 59).

### ***Church Father Quote***

❖ Always remember that at the Last Judgement we are judged for loving Him, or failing to love Him.

### ***Practice***

Call upon God whenever adversity befalls you.

## WEDNESDAY - ASSURANCE

Lent: A time for Fasting and a time for Feasting.

Fast from judging others; feast on Christ indwelling them.

Fast from emphasis on differences; feast on the unity of all life.

Fast from apparent darkness; feast on the reality of light.

Fast from thoughts of illness; feast on the healing power of God.

Fast from words that pollute; feast on phrases that purify.

Fast from complaining; feast on appreciation.

Fast from negative; feast on affirmatives.

Fast from unrelenting pressures; feast on unceasing prayer.

Fast from hostility; feast on non-resistance.

Fast from bitterness; feast on forgiveness.

Fast from self-concern; feast on compassion for others.

Fast from personal anxiety; feast on eternal truth.

Fast from facts that depress; feast on verities that uplifts.

Fast from lethargy; feast on enthusiasm.

Fast from suspicion; feast on truth.

Fast from thoughts that weaken; feast on promises that inspire.

Fast from shadows of sorrow; feast on the sunlight of serenity.

Fast from idle gossips; feast on purposeful silence.

Fast from problems that overwhelm; feast on prayer that under grids.

### *Church Father Quote*

❖ The saints are like a group of trees, each bearing different fruit, but watered from the same source. The practices of one saint differ from those of another, but it is the same Spirit that works in all of them.

### *Practice*

Turn away from temporal honours and worldly applause, in which much vanity is found.

## THURSDAY - REJECT, GIVE & FOLLOW

A group of English writers were discussing what they would do if certain heroes of history were suddenly to enter the room. What would they do if Shakespeare or Dante were to appear before them? Finally someone asked, "What would we do if Jesus were to appear before us?" One member of the group, Charles Lamb, replied, "If Shakespeare were to enter this room, I should rise up to do him honour, but if Jesus Christ were to enter, I should fall down and give Him worship."

The Nicene Creed states correctly what Orthodox Christians believe about Jesus when it says we believe: "...in One Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all ages. Light out of light, True God out of True God, begotten not made, consubstantial with the Father, through Whom all things were made."

St. John, in his Gospel, repeatedly refers to Christ as the Word. The term is most appropriate. Unless a man speaks a word, we cannot know him. Words communicate meaning. They enable others to know what is on our mind. As words express our inner thoughts, so Christ – the Word of God – communicates to us the thoughts of God. He came to earth to be God's 'language' in speaking to man. In Christ, dialogue with God is re-established.

"Introducing the Orthodox Church: Its Life and Faith." Anthony Coniaris, (pp17)

### *Church Father Quote*

- ✦ Is it feasible to think that where there is no fasting and prayer, there already is a demon? Yes, it is.

### *Practice*

Love God above all things and do not let worldly pleasures draw you from the love of God.



## FRIDAY - BUILD ON ROCK

Spirit Of God, My wonderful Companion! Spirit of God, be my sole Companion! Guide my steps, and lead me to a victorious battle! Shelter my heart as a cloud, that protects me from the heat of temptation, and cool me with Your rich oil of grace.

Spirit of God, grant me a new and rejuvenated outlet, so that I may be saved daily, from the slavery of the devil, and pass through the cruel wilderness of this world, and enjoy the heavenly Canaan. Spirit of God, I beg of You to stay behind me, to protect me from the unknown! Defend me, O Spirit of God, as I do not depend on the strength of man, prestige, power or any materialistic matters. Enter my heart, O Spirit of God, so that I may rejoice in Your glory! The world then will find no room in my heart, neither will sin be able to overpower me, nor the enemy to lure me away from You, as I will rejoice in Your grace! Spirit of God, escort my footsteps, wherever I go. Bless my heart, thoughts and senses. Bless my inner and outer deeds. Bless me, O Holy One! Spirit of God, be with me and within me! Guide me and I will follow You. Defend me from the unknown. Abide in my heart and escort my movements. For You are my wonderful and sweet Companion!

"The Fiery Spirit." Father Tadros Malaty (pp 19-20).

### *Church Father Quote*

❖ A man who fasts wisely . . . wins purity and comes to humility . . . and proves himself a skillful builder

### *Practice*

Subject yourself willingly to God's service and you will find peace.

## SATURDAY - DIFFICULTIES ON THE ROAD

I want nothing of the world, for the world does not give me benefit but with purpose to subjugate me. Those who received what the world gave them became slaves to the world. It gave them the pleasures of the body and took from them the purity of the spirit.

The world gave them the worldly enjoyment and took from them the blessing of the heavenly Kingdom. As for me, "I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ." (Phil. 3:8). This world takes more than what it gives. It subjects those who desire it. So I want nothing of the world, for I am superior to it. I am a son of God - in the image of God and after His likeness. I am a temple for the Holy Spirit and a place of dwelling for God. I am the only creature who partakes of His holy flesh and blood. For I have the keys of the heavens and earth. I, whom God, in His loving-kindness and humbleness, willed to make me the light of the world and the salt of the earth (Matt. 5:13,14). I want nothing of the world, because I want to live as my fathers did; those whom the earth did not deserve to tread on. They lived so, received nothing of the world. On the other hand they were a blessing to the world. For the sake of their prayers God sent water on the earth and preserved the world till today. I want nothing of the world, because sin entered it and corrupted it. In the beginning God saw everything and behold it was very good, as sin had not yet entered the world. Even the great sea creatures were blessed by God to be fruitful and to multiply. But now, the marvelous picture which God has drawn is scarred. Therefore I reject the world which loves the darkness more than the light and I no longer desire anything of it. I want nothing of the world, because I want You alone; You who loved me till the end and gave Yourself up for me; You who formed me out of nothing and was not in need of my service but it is rather I who was in need of your sovereignty. Therefore I want to be released from the world and be united to You, who gave me the gift of knowing You.

"Release of the Spirit." His Holiness Pope Shenouda III. (Chapter 14, pp89-91).

## SUNDAY - VICTORY

Temptation along the way— anything of value is attained by struggle and strife. War is bound to be a nuisance if it is waged for its own sake. But it is mighty delightful if it is waged for the purpose of spiritual growth and adherence to God. It is a delightful war because victory is certain. It is a war with a ferocious enemy conquered formerly by God. Satan tempted Christ with food, with vanity, telling Him to cast Himself down from a pinnacle of the temple then he tempted Him with abandoning the Cross and pursuit of the easy path, saying: "I will give you all the kingdoms of the world "if thou wilt fall down and worship me" instead of reigning over the human souls by the Cross. But God has triumphed for us. God will surely save the whole Church if there is only one individual who is truly fasting with self-denial. The devil will surely be put to shame. What we do by fasting is to mobilize our forces in preparation for war. We have nothing to worry about because our equipment is capable with Christ's support to erase all fortifications and subject all thought to the dominancy of Christ. Lent is our way of mobilizing forces in a victorious battle, Christ our Lord will confirm us and make us triumph. We will seek no truce, but triumph we shall achieve.

"The Pilgrimage of the Holy Days of Fasting." Father Tadros Malaty (pp12).

Satan's temptations increase during your fasting; thus we must be careful of the lust of the body, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life (1 John 2:16). We take our Lord as an example how He defeated Satan who fled away, and then angels came to serve Him. The Pauline epistle tells us to beware of stumbling any one. The Catholic epistle speaks about avoiding partiality that offends others, and the Acts reading asks us to be cautious of divisions, which take away peace.