



Having a “Great” Lent at Any Stage of Life

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Ages and Stages

- ▶ College Students/Single Professionals
 - ▶ Parents with children in the home
 - ▶ Empty Nesters

How to approach Great Lent at Any Stage of Life:

- ▶ Balance prayer, fasting, almsgiving
 - ▶ Start where you are and increase.
- ▶ Think of your Lenten practices as **personal** and **communal**
 - ▶ KISS

The Lenten Almsgiving Challenge

**WHAT MIGHT BE SOME UNIQUE
CHALLENGES TO ALMSGIVING FOR EACH
STAGE OF LIFE?**

College Students/Single Professionals

Families

Empty Nesters

Spending Priorities

- ▶ If someone looked over your checkbook or your credit card bills, what would they say your spending priorities are?
- ▶ If you tallied up the number of different places you spend your money each month, what do you think that number would be?
- ▶ Do you ever look around your home and wonder how you ever accumulated so much STUFF???



**Goes to buy
shampoo**



**Spends \$150...
Forgets shampoo**

Every time

Almsgiving

► **St. Basil the Great taught:**

The **bread** in our cupboard belongs to the hungry man; the **coat** hanging unused belongs to the one who needs it; the **shoes** rotting in our closet belong to the one who has no shoes; and the **money** we hoard belongs to the poor.



The Lenten Almsgiving Challenge

- ▶ Eliminate 3 well trafficked vendors that usually get your expendable dough
- ▶ Choose 3 alternatives to spending
- ▶ **40 days/40 items challenge**
- ▶ Choose 3 causes that you want to support. Pick some local and some international.
- ▶ Donate your time also.

Not Enough Time for Lent?

- ▶ Americans spend over 10 hours a day consuming media via tablets, smartphones, personal computers, multimedia devices, video games, radios, DVDs, DVRs and TVs.
- ▶ Americans spend an average of 4 hours a day on mobile devices.
- ▶ Americans spend an average of almost 2 hours a day on Social Media

Prayer

Advice
for Growing in Christ in just
15 minutes a Day:

1. 5 minutes of scripture
2. 5 minutes of prayer
3. 5 minutes of silence

Lenten Worship Challenge

▶ Bring a friend

Fasting

Why Do We Fast?

- ▶ “When we do without food, we are reminded that the only true and lasting source of joy is spiritual.”
- ▶ “If we are truly to show compassion to the poor, we must experience within our own bodies the consequences of poverty. Fasting is thus an incentive toward generosity. And the money saved during a fast can readily be given to relieve the enforced hunger of others.”

--St. John Chrysostom

Fasting

“If a fast doesn’t include any sacrifices, then it’s not a fast. *The discomfort is where the magic happens.*”

-Jen Hatmaker

What are the Guidelines for Fasting?

- ▶ No Meat
- ▶ No Animal Products (dairy, eggs, lard, etc)
- ▶ No Fish with a backbone
- ▶ No Olive Oil or Wine

“Eat only what comes from the ground” --
Metropolitan Ware

THINK QUANTITY as well

Fasting Guidelines at Any Stage

- ▶ Start where you are and increase.
- ▶ Think of your Lenten practices as personal and communal
 - ▶ KISS

Non Food Fasts

In addition to NOT instead of the dietary fast:

- ▶ Television
- ▶ Radio/Music
- ▶ **Social Media**
- ▶ Video games
 - ▶ Gossip
- ▶ **Complaining**

Digital Fasting

- ▶ Evaluate your screen use, using the “screen time” monitor on your cell phone and set a goal for decreasing it
- ▶ Turn off app alerts on your phone
- ▶ Put your phone on silent after a set time at night; put kids and parents on “emergency bypass”
- ▶ Abstain from entertainment websites/apps/television
- ▶ Limit internet use to strictly work and studies
- ▶ Orthodox sites providing religious reading are ok, but better to read books and printed text

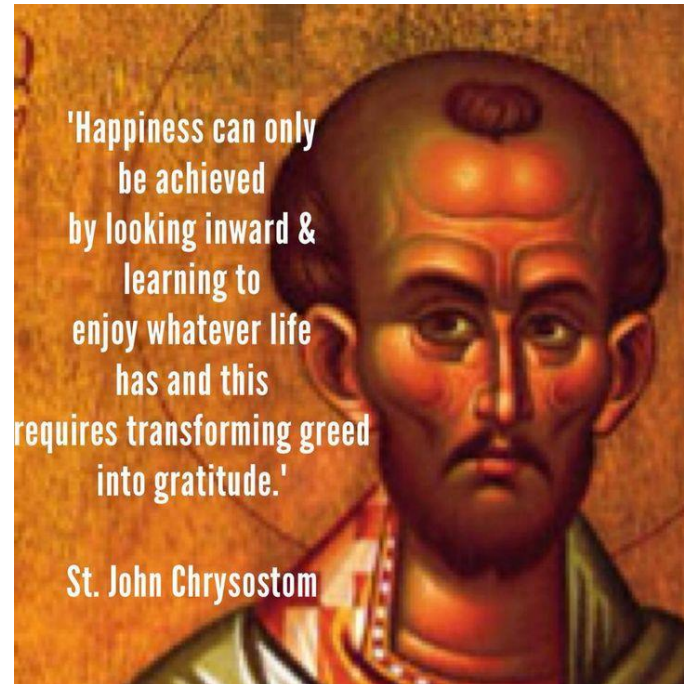
The Complaining Fast

Take The Challenge!

- ▶ No Complaining, Blaming or Justifying for all of Lent
- ▶ If you catch yourself, you have to put a quarter in a jar.
- ▶ Enlist a buddy to be your accountability partner to help you through the rough spots
- ▶ Put systems in place in the form of pictures, sticky notes - whatever it takes to remind yourself of your commitment.

Gratitude

▶ Gratitude Jar



Fasting FAQ's

ASK YOUR PRIEST

- ▶ Ok to use “substitute” foods, like vegan cream cheese, non dairy creamer, and meat substitutes?
- ▶ What age should children begin to fast?
- ▶ What if someone in the family is a picky eater?
- ▶ What if I have to follow a special diet that includes meat and dairy or limits carbs like breads and pastas?
- ▶ Why is shellfish a fasting food when it's so expensive?
- ▶ Do we have to fast when we're traveling? When we're at someone else's home?
- ▶ **Why can't I just “give up something” for Lent?**

The Lenten Spring Shines Forth

**“The grace of abstinence has shone forth,
Banishing the darkness of demons.
The power of the Fast disciplines our minds.
Lent brings the cure to our *crippling worldliness*.”**

From Cheesefare Thursay Matins