
	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>GENERAL ASSEMBLY</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>2024 ASSEMBLY</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>THE IMPORTANCE OF FASTING AS AN EXERCISE OF CHRISTIAN FAITH</u></p>	<p>31/March/2024</p>  <p>Circular nº 185/2024</p>
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Dear brethren,

The Peace of God.

The act of fasting is to abstain from food for a period of time. The length of the fast is decided by the individual, and is between him or her and God, although it should not be extended to the point that one's health is jeopardized. This is particularly important in cases of illness. Any brother or sister who is sick should consider whether they can go through this time of consecration without harming their already weakened body.

A fast should not be undertaken as a form of sacrifice – the final sacrifice required by the law of Moses was fulfilled by Jesus Christ on the cross. Fasting should be understood as a temporary and voluntary mortification of our flesh, to seek a greater spiritual communion with God.

We should not deliberately show others that we are fasting (an exception is our family, where it is not easy nor necessary to hide.) The Word teaches us:

“Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.” (Mathew 6:16)



The main purpose of a fast is for the Christian to achieve a closer communion with God, leading to greater consecration and personal sanctification. Fasting can be very beneficial for the believer and there are many examples in the scriptures of marvelous works that were attained after the brethren fasted and prayed. The book of Acts records that God sent an angel to speak to Cornelius after a time of prayer and fasting.

“And Cornelius said, Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and, behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing, And said, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God.” (Acts 10:30-31)

Fasting, when done in communion with God, is a powerful tool to fight the forces of evil. When accompanied by prayer, it is an effective weapon to defeat certain kinds of demons. This was taught by the Lord and is recorded in the gospels.

“Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.” (Mathew 17:21)

“And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.” (Mark 9:29)

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We know that the hosts of evil spirits never stop their efforts to ensnare the people of God. Fasting and prayer are powerful weapons against this evil force.

Jesus spoke that his disciples would fast in the future when He would no longer be with them in the flesh. He left this teaching:

“And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? as long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days.” (Mark 2: 19-20)

In the past, Holy men of God fasted to receive direction and strength to fulfill their missions. In the book of Acts, we read:

“As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.” (Acts 13:2)

“Now when much time was spent, and when sailing was now dangerous, because the fast was now already past, Paul admonished them,” (Acts 27:9)

Fasting is mentioned again in Paul's second letter to the Corinthians:

“In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.” (2 Corinthians 11:27)

Based on the scriptures above, we see the benefit of fasting for all those who choose to seek a greater consecration to God in these difficult times.

However, this guidance should not be seen as a command or a ritual obligation, but rather as a free and spontaneous choice.

Your brothers in Christ,

Council of Senior Elders