



Greeley 40 Days for Life Fasting Guide

Do you wish your prayer to fly toward God?

Make for it two wings: fasting and almsgiving. – Saint Augustine

Fasting is a central part of our mission to end abortion. The sacrifices we make during this time, both in fasting and in the almsgiving that is community outreach, are ways of telling God what it is that we want. Jesus Himself reminds us that certain demons can only be driven out by prayer and fasting. Fasting empowers our prayer, not by manipulating God, but rather by setting our own hearts aright and exposing (for better or worse) our true priorities.

Which is more important to us? The lives of the babies in our town or... desserts or meat or entertainment or social media? Fasting enables us to answer this question and to pray ever more fervently. May we fast in humility, not because God will love us or those we are praying for more... but so that we ourselves will be more filled with His love for them.

If you are new to fasting it can be daunting, but it doesn't have to be! Just follow these steps:

1. **Choose your type and level of fasting.** (Some types of fasting are shown below) Make sure your chosen fast is something that challenges you, but that is totally attainable. Excessive fasting can rob us of the spiritual benefit. Remember to fast in all humility, not pridefully taking on more than you can bear. (But mistakes happen! If you do take on too much, thank God for it, and humbly lighten your fast. Then you have a good baseline for next time!)
2. **Write down your intention.** Make it specific. What will you do, when will you do it and for how long? To what extent will you be fasting? Will you simply reduce or totally abstain? Why are you fasting? Is your intention pure? Have a talk with the Lord and write out what you decide.
3. **Ask your spiritual father or mother for a blessing.** If you are under the spiritual care of a priest, pastor or monastic, go to them with your fasting intention and receive a blessing. If you do not have a spiritual guide, go to a trusted, wise Christian brother or sister – perhaps a godparent or small group leader.

My Fast for Sept. 27th – Nov. 5th...



Types of Fasting...

The following are examples of different fasting rules that one might follow. Feel free to take what is helpful and leave what isn't. These are intended solely to give you an example of what others have done successfully and to inspire the spiritual creativity of those who have not fasted before.

- **Total Abstinence:** No food (and sometimes no water). Although it has been done, very few reach the spiritual level to accomplish this for 40 consecutive days. Try these to begin with:
 - Example 1: Abstaining from all food and drink until 3:00pm every day.
 - Example 2: Abstaining from food on Mondays, when you have signed up to pray.
- **Traditional Fast:** The Church has a long history of fasting. Historically, faithful Christians fasted on certain days of the week and during fasting periods from meat, fish, eggs, dairy, oil and alcohol. This is a rigorous fast, while maintaining enough nutritional and caloric content to continue it for extended periods of time.
 - Example 1: Fast from meat, fish and eggs for all 40 days of the vigil.
 - Example 2: Fast from meat, fish, eggs, dairy, oil and alcohol for weekdays during the vigil, relax the fast on weekends to allow for oil and fish.
- **Dry Fasting:** Also known as the "Daniel Fast", this type of fasting also has a long Biblical history and precedent in the Church. This diet typically includes raw fruits, vegetables nuts and seeds. There are, of course, variations on this but the general idea is simplicity and light eating.
 - Example 1: Eat only raw fruits, vegetables, nuts and seeds on weekdays during the vigil. Allow cooked foods on the weekend.
 - Example 2: Abstain from food on Fridays, Greeley's abortion day, but allow fruits and vegetables as needed for intense hunger or to elevate blood sugar levels.
- **Liquid Fasting:** Sometimes drinking juice and vegetable broth can enable someone to fast from food for an extended period, while still getting some vitamins and minerals that are required. As with total abstinence, use caution and discretion and always seek counsel.
 - Example 1: Maintain a traditional fast most days of the week, and move to liquid fasting on scheduled vigil days.
 - Example 2: Drink juice and broth for the first three days of the campaign, switch to dry fasting for the remainder of the 40 days.
- **Misc. Food Fasts:** There are lots of other ways to fast from food! Some people fast on bread and water. Others take out fatty foods or remove desserts or snacks from their diet. For some, simply fasting from alcohol is rigorous enough a commitment. It is also possible to reduce what you eat, rather than abstaining totally. Limiting yourself to one serving of food, or abstaining from "seconds" is a surprisingly challenging fast.
- **Non-Food Fasting:** While there are plenty of ways to fast that can fit into almost any lifestyle or dietary need, bringing fasting into other areas of our life is a beneficial practice as well. And, in this time we live in, there are plenty of options to choose from:
 - Fasting from harsh words
 - Fasting from gossip
 - Fasting from entertainment
 - Fasting from movies or games
 - Fasting from social media
 - Fasting from the internet
 - Fasting from secular music
 - Fasting from complaining

