



7th Episcopal District: The Carolina Region & The New York Washington Region Boards of Evangelism and Missions

The Fasting & Prayer Journal:

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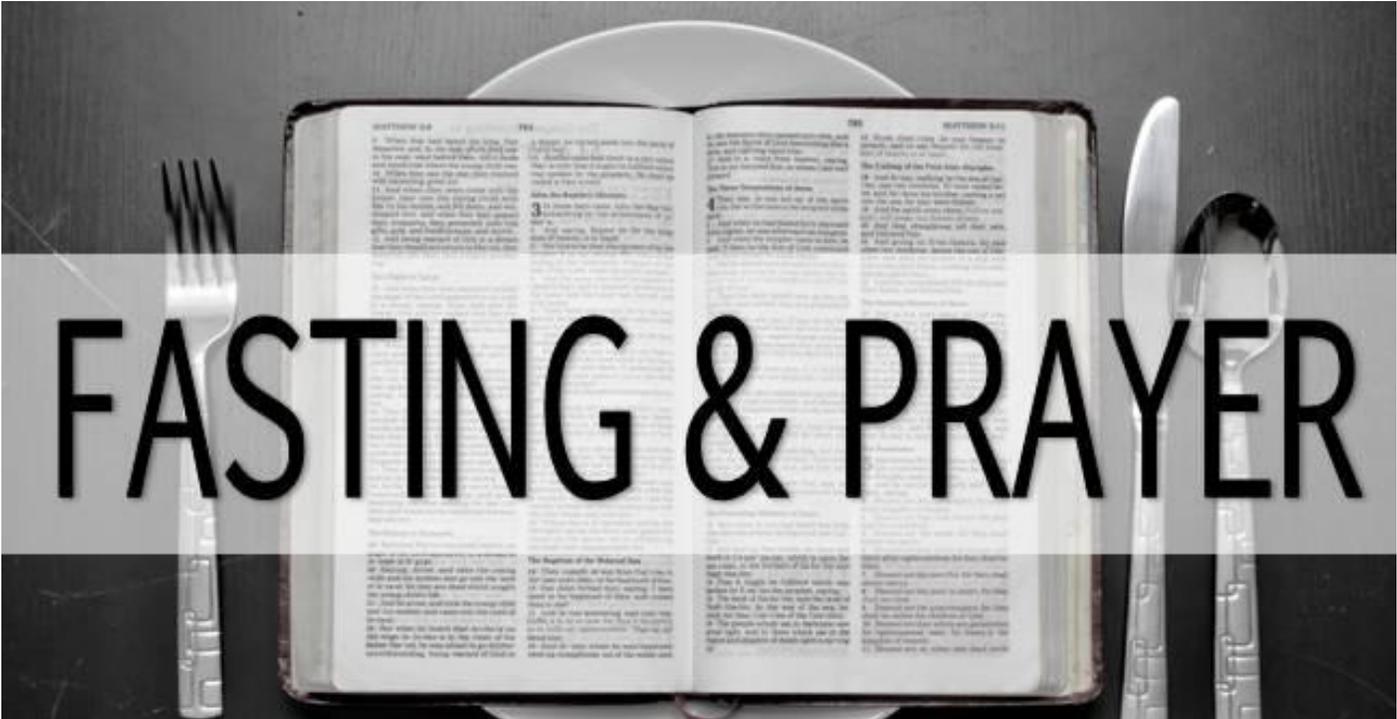
Bishop James B. Walker, Presiding Prelate

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Welcome to Your Fasting & Prayer Journey: This journal is designed to be a companion, not a comprehensive encyclopedia. Please understand that the insights found within these pages are not intended to be the "be-all, end-all" of spiritual disciplines. We have carefully **pooled together tools and materials** that have been successfully used over the years by both of the **Regional Directors** to create a simple, focused guide for your spiritual and personal growth. Our goal is to provide you with a systematic approach to prayer and fasting, with the hope that your heart will open to the voice of God.

⚠ A Note on Physical Safety: While spiritual discipline is vital, your physical health is a priority. **All forms of food fasting should be consulted with your personal doctors before you begin this journey.** Physical preparation and professional medical supervision are essential. Therefore, individuals with health conditions, including diabetes, pregnancy, eating disorders, and any other chronic ailments, should consult their physicians before participating. Those who take medication should also consult their physician before they begin this spiritual journey.

May this journal serve as a spiritual roadmap as you seek God's direction and guidance for direction and a "New Vision" for your life.



FASTING & PRAYER

Let's get started!

Congratulations! You have decided to take the first step of faith through prayer and fasting. Your decision is life-changing and will open doors for you to experience God in ways that you have never seen before. May this sacred time deepen your dependence on God, strengthen your spiritual discipline, and open your heart to His guidance and grace.

WHAT IS THE PRACTICE OF FASTING: Fasting is the intentional abstaining from food, or certain activities. Fasting is for a set period of time to seek spiritual focus, discipline the body, and draw closer to God through prayer and dependence on Him. You should always begin your fast with a clear purpose. Remember, God is not impressed just because you stop eating. The success of your fast is not measured by what enters the stomach but by what comes out of the heart. God looks at the heart of His people.

WHAT IS YOUR OBJECTIVE: Any time we engage in the spiritual discipline of fasting, the objective is to hear from God and how He communicates. God speaks in and through various ways, and our fasting positions us to find clarity, understanding, and wisdom in our situations.

WHY SHOULD WE FAST? There are several reasons for participating in this spiritual discipline, but here are three top reasons for engaging in this practice:

1. To deepen our intimacy with God. Fasting should heighten spiritual sensitivity and dependence on God by reducing distractions of the flesh. **(Matthew 6:16-18).**
2. To seek divine direction and clarity. Fasting positions believers to hear God more clearly when facing decisions, transitions, or seasons of uncertainty. **(Acts 13:2-3).**
3. To cultivate repentance, humility, and spiritual discipline. Fasting helps align our hearts with God by acknowledging human weakness and fostering repentance and self-control. **(Joel 2:12-12; Isaiah 58:6).**

Other reasons for fasting include spiritual renewal, guidance, healing, resolving problems, and receiving special grace to handle difficult situations. The Holy Spirit was given to us to help us obtain clarity as He leads us. Submitting ourselves to God through fasting will enable us to pray more specifically and strategically.

WHAT IS EXPECTED WHEN I BEGIN TO FAST? Naturally, if you have never participated in this spiritual discipline, you are likely to give up when it becomes challenging. For many, fasting can be difficult and hard to sustain if you're not focused and prayerful. Keep in mind that if you are not used to prayer and fasting, moments of discomfort, temptation, and all kinds of distractions will try to throw you off track. When this happens, just regroup and start again. You are working to align your mind, body, and spirit to operate in harmony during a fast. So do not be surprised if you get easily distracted from the process. God will help you and carry you forward.

Here are a few things you can do to stay on track while fasting:

1. **Establish a Clear Purpose** – Define your “why” for fasting. If necessary, write down your why and post it on the bulletin board or the bathroom mirror as a reminder of why you have decided to fast. Some reasons include spiritual growth, guidance, healing, intercession, or repentance. A clear purpose sustains focus when challenges arise.
2. **Commit to a Plan** – Decide in advance the type (see below) and duration of the fast. When we have structure, it reduces uncertainty and prevents impulsive decisions.
3. **Anchor The Fast in Prayer and Scripture** – Replace the normal mealtime with prayer, meditation, and simply reading the Word to keep the fast spiritually centered.
4. **Limit Distractions** – We live in a digital world, and our devices occupy much of our attention. Reduce unnecessary media use, social engagements, and other activities that distract from spiritual focus.
5. **Stay Hydrated and Rest Adequately** – Athletes pride themselves on staying hydrated as they perform. Proper hydration and rest help maintain physical stability and mental clarity during fasting.

Here Are (5) Kinds of Fasts to Choose: **Remember, you should consult with your doctor before engaging in this fasting process.¹*

1. **The Normal Fast** is going without food for a definite period during which you ingest only liquids (water and/or juice). The duration can be one day, three days, one week, one month or 40 days.
2. **The Absolute Fast** allows no food or water at all and should be short. Moses fasted for 40 days, but this would kill anyone without supernatural intervention and should never be attempted today.
3. **The Partial Fast** is one that omits certain foods or is on a schedule that includes limited eating. It may involve skipping one meal per day. Eating only fresh vegetables for several days is also a good partial fast.
4. **Wesleyan Fast** is a weekly spiritual discipline part of the Partial fast, championed by Methodism founder John Wesley, involving abstinence from solid food from *Thursday evening(sundown) after dinner until mid-afternoon (around 3:00 p.m.) on Friday*. The Wesleyan Fast is not about

¹ Fasting for Spiritual Breakthrough, A Practical Guide to Nine Biblical Fasts, Elmer L. Towns, Bethany House Publishers, Grand Rapids, Michigan. 1996. p.22-23

endurance, but it is a practice of prayer and self-denial aimed at personal holiness, cultivating prayer, repentance, deepening one's relationship with God, and connecting with the Holy Spirit.

Key Aspects of the Wesleyan Fast:

- a. **Timing:** Begins after the evening meal on Thursday and lasts until 3:00 p.m. on Friday.
 - b. **Method:** Participants skip breakfast and lunch on Friday, usually consuming only water or tea.
 - c. **Purpose:** It is not for dieting but for focusing on prayer, scripture study, and spiritual reflection.
 - d. **Significance:** The Wesleyan Fast is not about endurance, but about building discipline, cultivating prayer, repentance, and attentiveness to God. Wesley viewed it as a "means of grace."
5. **The Rotational Fast** consists of eating or omitting certain families of foods for designated periods. For example, grains may be eaten only every fourth day. The various food families are rotated so that some food is available each day.

9 Biblical Fasts for Spiritual Breakthrough to Assist You in Your Time Of Fasting.²

1. **The Disciple's Fast (Matthew 17:20-21)** – Fasting for freedom from addiction. If we fast, we can overcome the besetting sins that limit our freedom in Christ.
2. **The Ezra Fast (Ezra 8:21-23)** – Fasting to solve problems. If we fast for a specific purpose, we may solve a debilitating problem.
3. **The Samuel Fast (1 Samuel 7:1-8)** – Fasting to win people to Christ. If we fast and pray for revival, God will pour out His Spirit on His people.
4. **The Elijah Fast (1 Kings 19:2-18)** – Fasting to break crippling fears and other mental problems. Through fasting, God will show us how to overcome negative emotional and personal habits.
5. **The Widow's Fast (1 Kings 17:12)** – Fasting to provide for the needy. When we set aside our own physical needs, God enables us to focus on and meet the needs of others.
6. **The Saint Paul Fast (Acts 9:9-10)** – Fasting for insight and decision making. If we fast to subject our will to God's, He will reveal His will to us.
7. **The Daniel Fast (Daniel 1:12-20)** – Fasting for health and physical healing. When we fast for physical well-being, God will touch our bodies and enrich our souls.
8. **The John the Baptist Fast (Matthew 3:4; Luke 1:15)** – Fasting for an influential testimony. If we fast for the influence of our testimonies, God will deliver.
9. **The Esther Fast (Esther 4:16)** – Fasting for protection from the evil one. If we fast for protection and deliverance from Satan, God will deliver us from evil.

² Fasting for Spiritual Breakthrough, A Practical Guide to Nine Biblical Fasts, Elmer L. Towns, Bethany House Publishers, Grand Rapids, Michigan. 1996. p. 5-6

Need a Different Approach! **(Ideas of Things to Do for the Youth and Others Who CANNOT Do Food Fasting during these 40 days).*

Non-Traditional Soul Fasting Guide of Ideas:

1. **Sins To Give Up**: lying, gossiping, being angry, arguing, drinking, smoking, cursing, laziness, complaining, negativity, judging people, and making smart remarks.
2. **Habits To Give Up**: snacking, television, Facebook, fast food eating, napping, staying up too late, secular music, secular reading, fast food meals, bread, meat, sodas, chocolate, favorite snack, coffee.
3. **Replace**: the original routine with these mindful practices: list five things you're grateful for each day, pray and read scripture instead of your usual activities, listen to Christian music while driving, take a walk while praying, forgive someone you've been upset with, or ask for forgiveness from someone who has hurt you. Spend 10 minutes each night thanking God for your day, pray in the morning as you get ready, and listen to Christian music before leaving the house. Try smiling more throughout your day. Read the Bible instead of news, games, or social media. Create a benevolent jar with your snack and fast food money so you can use it for supplies when needed, or put that money into Sunday's offering instead.

Ideas to Engage Youth & Teens:

- **Don't** eat the last bite of your food at each meal and then pray again at the end of your meal for those less fortunate.
- **Choose** 3 days/week to Pray the Lord's Prayer while doing sit-ups.
- **Make** a vow to stop complaining or being negative.
- **Do** 20 jumping jacks while praying for someone else.
- **Choose** 3 days not to eat any candy or gum.
- **Do not** use technology for one hour a day but pray during that time. (School time does not count)
- **Give** some clothes away & pray who to give to and then give thanks for being able to give.

The Fasting & Prayer Journal: **(a guide to help keep you on track)*

Phase 1: The Preparation (Pre-Fast)

"Humble yourselves under God's mighty hand..." (1 Peter 5:6)

Step 1: Define Your Objective

- **Primary Focus:** (Spiritual renewal, guidance, healing, or 2 Chronicles 7:14 revival?)
- **Specific Prayer Requests:** _____

Step 2: Define Your Commitment

- **Fast Type:** (Water only, Juice only, Daniel Fast, or Soul Fast?)
- **Duration:** From [Date/Time] to [Date/Time]
- **Restrictions:** (social media, TV, specific hobbies): _____

Step 3: Spiritual & Physical Inventory

- **Spiritual:** Make a list of sins for confession. Seek forgiveness from: _____
- **Physical:** Consulted physician? (Y/N). Reduce caffeine/sugar 2 days prior.

Phase 2: The Daily Prayer & Fasting Log: **(use this template for each day of your fast)*

Day [#] _ Date: _____

The Morning Watch (5 AM - 8 AM)

- **Physical:** Morning Juice (Fruit/Water mix).
- **Spiritual:** Praise and Worship.
- **Meditation:** Read 2 Chronicles 7:14. How is God asking me to "turn from wicked ways" today?
 - *My Journal Entry:* _____

The Mid-Day Stand (10:30 AM - Noon)

- **Physical:** Vegetable Juice (Lettuce, Celery, Carrot).
- **Spiritual:** Take a prayer walk.
- **Intercession:** Pray for my community, nation, and these specific people:
 - *Prayer List:*

The Evening Seek (6 PM - 8:30 PM)

- **Physical:** Warm vegetable broth.
 - **Spiritual:** Seek His face (unhurried time). Review the attributes of God (Love, Sovereignty).
 - **Victory Report:** What was the hardest part of today? Where did I see God's strength?
 - *Journal Entry:* _____
-

Phase 3: Navigating the Battle: **(a quick-reference guide for the "Second Day Slump.")*

Symptom	The Physical Remedy	The Spiritual Strategy
Hunger Pains	Increase liquid intake/Watermelon	Meditate on "Man does not live by bread alone."
Headaches	Rest; withdraw from caffeine/sugar	Stand against spiritual opposition (Gal. 5:16).
Crankiness	Limit activity; sleep	Ask for the Fruit of the Spirit (Patience/Peace).

Phase 4: Breaking the Fast **The Transition- "End gradually to sustain the blessing."*

The Re-Entry Schedule:

- **Day 1 Post-Fast:** Raw salad and fresh fruit (Watermelon/Cantaloupe).
- **Day 2 Post-Fast:** Add baked or boiled potato (no seasoning).
- **Day 3 Post-Fast:** Add steamed vegetables.
- **Day 4+:** Gradually reintroduce normal diet.

Final Reflection: What is the "New Vision" God has given me for my life/family/church after this time?

Quick Tips for Success:

- **The Power of Posture:** Whenever possible, read the Word and pray on your knees, sit still in an upright chair, lie prostrate on your bed if you can't do the floor, to signify humility.
- **Avoid Stimulants:** No gum or mints (they wake up the stomach's digestive juices).
- **The Power of Two:** If married, begin and end each day in prayer with your spouse. Or for those with children in the household, you can begin and end each day in prayer, too, with your children.

In conclusion, commit to making a daily practice during your fast. Remember, "I can do all things through him who strengthens me." (Phil. 4:13) Ask the Lord for wisdom and guidance as you embark on the life-changing experience.