

Easter Message from Fr. John

My dear Beloved Sunday school students,

Greetings in the precious name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who fasted and prayed in order to make a success of His ministry here on earth, and that work finished on the cross through which we are reconciled to the most High God.

Prayer is our life-line to God. Prayer has a transforming power. Prayer brings us into the presence of God. We change when we are in His presence. Through prayer we grow closer to God and become more aware of His divine presence. **Fasting, prayers, and good deeds** are the tripod over which stand our good Lenten.

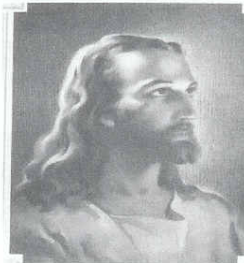
Through the grace of God, may the days of Lent be a time of spiritual growth and renewal for you and your families as we prepare for Easter.

ST. EPHRAIM CATHEDRAL BURBANK CALIFORNIA SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

HIS WORD

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THE MEANING OF LENT

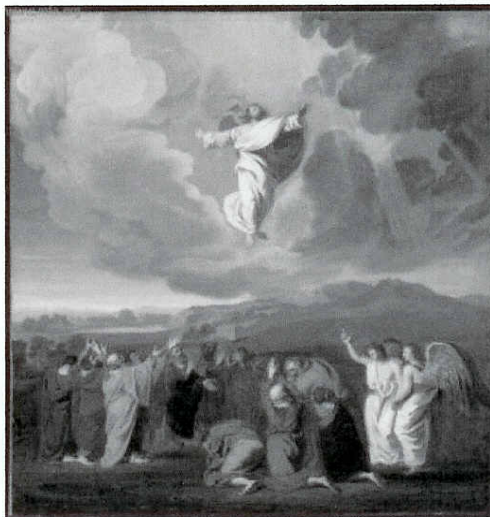
Everyone knows that lent, or fasting is a time of year were you give up something for a certain amount of time, but it's not just that. Lent is giving up something for a certain amount of time for your Lord Jesus so that you may repent your sins. It also helps you to create more faith in Jesus so you may go into heaven. These are the times of the year we fast:

- Nineveh is 3 days
- Great Lent (for Easter) is 50 days (actually 47 because of the 40 days fast and Passion Week)
- Fast of the Apostles is 3 days
- Fast of the Virgin Mary is 5 days
- Nativity Lent (for Christmas) is 10 days

I am writing this article during the Great Lent and I have been reading a book called *The Spirituality of Fasting* by H. H. Pope Shenouda III. It is really good because it tells you all about fasting and the importance of it with lots of verses that relate to what the author is talking about. In this book it says that not only Jesus fasted, it says that the Prophets

and the Apostles fasted such as "I humbled my soul to fasting." Said by David in Psalms 35:13, also it says that Daniel fasted (Daniel 9:3) and so did Ezekiel (Ezekiel 4:9). It also says in this book that when the Apostles fasted the Holy Spirit called them (Acts 13: 2-3). This book also says that when fasting is over, do not rush to eat and drink, it says that when you are at the table instead of eating right away, ask if you could say a prayer or resist for a few minutes and wait. It also says not to pounce on food because what you have done is a spiritual reward to yourself.

Did you know that a spiritual person rejoices during the actual fast than the days of feast? Yes, this is because fasting brings Joy to people. Just remember that God is with you during every time in your life and that this year fasting ends on the 23rd of April, the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.



His Word is a newsletter published by the St. Ephraim Sunday School students. We hope to inspire and strengthen the faith within us by expressing our love and understanding of our Lord Jesus Christ and our Holy Bible. May God bless you all and we thank you for your encouragement.

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Gabriel Allaf	Head Committee Member
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Sunday School Sleepovers

■ by Nella Kassab

Hi my name is Nella, and I want to tell you about the sleepovers we had with Patricia and all of the students in the Sunday school.

On Saturday around 6:00 to 7:00 PM at night all of the students who were going to the sleepover came to church. We had a Bible study, and then we ate. Then we had another Bible study about Saint Ephraim, and then we went to sleep inside the church which made me feel closer to the Lord.

On Sunday morning we all prayed and had breakfast. Then we all had another Bible study about Saint Ephraim, and before the church ended we all went inside and we sang hymns about Saint Ephraim. And I learned a lot of new things about the Saint. And that was my story. Bye for now. Thanks to all parents who provided us with the fasting foods. Tell you more next time.

■ by Stella Shamas

On Saturday March 5, 2006 Sunday school students had a sleepover at the Church in remembrance of St. Ephraim. First we read from the Holy Bible and had a Bible study with Abuna John. After that we prayed and ate dinner together. Then we all had free time. Patti gave us cards with verses from the Bible and we had to explain what we think the meaning was. We all got ready for bed and put our sleeping bags and blankets down to sleep. The next morning we had breakfast and got ready for church. We practiced our song with Patti. Then we went into church and Breana, Brenda and Maria said a few words and we sang our song. Then our parents took our stuff and now waiting for the next sleepover with Sunday school.

Good Friday

■ by Brenda Abdounour

Hi my name is Brenda Abdounour and I have been in Sunday School for about 7 years and I'm going to tell you about Good Friday. On Good Friday our Lord Jesus Christ died on the cross for our sins. During the Good Friday mass we have two processions. The first procession is when Jesus carries the cross to Mount Golgotha. The second procession is the burial of Jesus Christ. It is very sad but they call it Good Friday because three days later He rose. So He had to be crucified but most of all He listened to His Father.

The Meaning of Easter

■ by Chris Elias

In my opinion Easter is considered the most important Christian holiday. Jesus had to die and shed His blood so we could be brought back into relationship with God. Easter isn't at all about Easter bunnies and Easter eggs as such, though these things are nice to have at Easter time. I've heard that the Easter egg represents new life. Just like a chicken hatches from an egg. It is okay to enjoy chocolate bunnies and Easter eggs at Easter time, but let us not forget the real meaning of Easter, Jesus Christ!!!