

# Spiritual Exercises While Fasting

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His Holiness Pope Shenouda III

Pope of Alexandria & Patriarch of the See of St. Mark

-An excerpt from His Holiness' book Words of Spiritual Benefit. Revised from the original for translation and grammar.

To have a powerful effect on your spiritual life during Lent, you need to follow certain exercises.

These exercises, when you apply them to life's situations, will help you benefit from your fast:

To exercise giving up a specific sin, from the sins that prevail upon you, and which is repeated in many of your confessions.

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To exercise learning some Psalms from the Agpeya. You may choose one or two Psalms from each of the seven prayers, especially the Psalms that leave an effect on you.

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To exercise learning the Bible readings of the different hours, divide them into parts, analyse them, knowing that for each prayer there are three or six parts.

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To exercise the mental prayer of what you have learned. You may pray during work, on the road, while with people or at any time.

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Use these prayers, Psalms and Bible readings as a sphere for contemplation, to enable yourself to pray them with depth and understanding.

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To exercise spiritual readings: either by reading from the Bible regularly, with understanding and meditation, or reading the lives of the Saints or some spiritual books, so that you gain a profitable yield of deep readings.

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During lent, you may exercise learning the hymns of lent and the Passion Week, and repeating them until you are full of their spirit. The same is true of Advent.

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You may exercise a certain higher level of fasting, under the supervision of your spiritual father.

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are many spiritual exercises in the field of dealing with people...  
such as gentleness, patience, enduring others' weaknesses, controlling  
anger, using words of praise and encouragement, serving and helping  
others, kindness and meekness.

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Other exercises in purity of the  
heart: Such as modesty, inner peace, love of God, being satisfied  
without grumbling, quietness with no disturbance, internal joy in the  
spirit, faith and hope.