

THE NATIVITY FAST - AN OUTLINE

November 15 - December 24

	DAYS	THE HOLY CANONS SPECIFY THE FOLLOWING:	
		Abstinence of:	No Abstinence of:
Nov 15 - Dec 12	Sunday	Meat & Meat products	Fish, Shellfish, Olive Oil, Vegetables & vegetable products, Fruit, Wine
	Monday		
	Tuesday	Dairy products	
	Thursday		
	Saturday		
	Wednesday	Orthodox Christians maintain the same fast & abstinence on these days as they do on all Wednesdays, Fridays, and other days of Fast.	
Dec 13-24**	During these days, the Fast becomes <u>stricter</u> :		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Olive oil and wine are permitted <u>only</u> on Saturdays and Sundays. • Fish is <u>not permitted</u> on any day during this period. • Dec 24 is a strict fast day. 		
Dec 25-Jan 4 Jan 5	No fasting. January 5 is a strict fast day (day before Theophany).		

**** Even when the following commemorations fall on a Wednesday or Friday, wine and oil are permitted:**

Nov 16 - Holy Apostle Matthew the Evangelist	Dec 6 - St. Nicholas the Wonderworker, Bishop of Myra in Lycia
Nov 21 - Entry of the Theotokos - fish is permitted on this day.	Dec 9 - Conception by St. Anna of the Holy Theotokos
Nov 25 - St. Catherine the Great Martyr	Dec 12 - St. Spyridon the Wonderworker
Nov 30 - Holy Apostle Andrew the First-Called	Dec 13 - St. Eustratius and Companions, and St. Lucia
Dec 4 - St. Barbara the Great Martyr and St. John of Damascus	Dec 15 - St. Eleutherius the Bishop-Martyr
Dec 5 - St. Sabbas the Sanctified	Dec 17 - Holy Prophet Daniel & the Three Youths, & St. Dyonysius of Zante
	Dec 20 - St. Ignatius the God-bearer

FASTING PRIOR TO RECEIVING HOLY COMMUNION (Throughout the year)

Sunday Morning Divine Liturgy	Complete fast from all food and drink from bedtime or midnight on Saturday evening. Saturday evening should be a quiet time of prayer and preparation for communion.
Evening Liturgies	Complete fast from all food and drink after lunch. Any (very light) breakfast or lunch meal taken should include only fasting foods.

Note: It is assumed that those who desire to receive Holy Communion regularly and frequently will also keep the Wednesday and Friday discipline.

A Note from Bishop Thomas:

Please remember that the Fast of the Holy Nativity or the Advent Fast will commence on November 15, and continue until the Feast (December 25). This fasting period is ordained by the Holy Church in order to prepare for the Holy Nativity of Our Lord. The particulars of the fast are as follows: During the first 28 days of the Fast, from November 15 to December 13 all meat products and dairy products are forbidden. On Wednesdays and Fridays, of course, olive oil, wine, all alcoholic beverages and fish are also forbidden as on most Wednesdays and Fridays during the year. This means that one can eat fish, shell fish, vegetables and fruit during this time. On Wednesdays and Fridays, only shellfish, vegetables and fruit. During the last twelve days, December 13-24, fish, olive oil, wine, and all alcoholic beverages are not used at all, except oil and wine can be used on Saturdays and Sundays. Therefore, in the last twelve days, we may eat shellfish, vegetables and fruit. Please remember to increase your prayer life, read more scripture and spiritual books, especially the lives of the saints. A little less television, no anger, no gossip, no laziness, and let's try to avoid the pre-Christmas parties. If we prepare in this way, God will bless us and we will find the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord to be far more spiritually rewarding than ever before. May God help us to struggle courageously. Thank you.

Yours in Christ,
+Bishop THOMAS