

HOLY WEEK FASTING

Holy week is the week preceding Easter Sunday. It is during this time, on Good Friday, that Jesus was crucified. This makes it an especially important time to remember God and his sacrifice. Jesus was sacrificed in order to give us eternal life. We should emulate Christ by sacrificing something meaningful in order to give to needy persons. For instance, we can eat less and give food to the hungry.

In the Armenian tradition, people give up meat, fish, fowl, and animal products during Holy Week. Today, in America, Armenians often give up meat on Wednesday and Friday. But why not try to adhere to a strict Holy Week diet this year?

Ask your students if they know what foods should be avoided during Holy Week. Ask for examples of foods that should be avoided, and those that can be eaten. Then ask your students in which category these and other foods belong. (Y=Yes N=No) Eggs(N), Salad(Y), Butter(N), Tunafish(N), Olive Oil(Y), Rice(Y), Chick Peas(Y), Chocolate(N), Gummy Bears(Y), Zucchini(Y). Then discuss possible Holy Week meals.

Ask your students if it is possible to get complete protein without eating animals or animal products. Discuss this for a few minutes. Then tell them that certain foods, or food combinations when eaten on the same day, supply complete protein such as grains combined with legumes. These include rice and beans, and peanut butter on bread. Tofu, which is made from soybeans, is also a good protein source.

Have the students suggest meals they can make or help their parents make, for Holy Week. Some are, Tabouleh, Homus, Plaki, Spinach Salad, Fatch, Bean Salad, Spaghetti with tomato sauce, Tofu stir-fry, and Salad with peas, corn and lima beans.

Suggest that the students help make a vegetarian meal and invite to dinner friends, family members, new members of the community or church, or anyone else. Ask the students to bring in a Holy Week recipe they used, in order to make a recipe booklet for future years.

Here are sample Holy Week recipes you can distribute (from The Forty Days of Lent, Alice Antreassian):

MIDDLE EASTERN SALAD—(TABOOLEH)

- 1½ cups cracked wheat, fine
 - 1 cup cold water
 - 2 cups finely chopped parsley
 - 1 cup finely chopped scallions
 - ½ cup minced fresh or ¼ cup crushed dried mint leaves
 - 4 medium tomatoes, chopped in small cubes
 - ¾ cup lemon juice
 - 1 cup olive oil
 - 1 teaspoon salt
 - freshly ground black pepper to taste
 - 1 teaspoon paprika
- Garnish:
- romaine lettuce leaves
 - parsley sprigs

1. Place cracked wheat in bowl, stir in water and refrigerate 1 hour. Remove and add remaining ingredients, reserving ¼ cup olive oil. Mix until well blended. Refrigerate at least 1 hour.

2. Just before serving, stir salad and taste adjust seasoning. Spoon into a deep bowl, garnished with lettuce. Drizzle reserved olive oil on top. Or serve in individual dishes, lined with a lettuce leaf, and garnished with a parsley sprig.

Yield: 8 or more servings.

Note: ARMENIAN THIN BREAD or POCKET BREAD triangles are traditional accompaniments to this salad.

CHICK PEA APPETIZER (HOMOS)

- 1 cup dried chick peas
- 3¼ cups water
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2-6 cloves garlic, mashed
- ¾ cup lemon juice
- ½ cup taheen
- 3 tablespoons olive oil

Garnish:

- ME red pepper (or paprika)
- olive oil
- parsley leaves

1. Cover chick peas with water and boil 2 minutes. Drain, add more water, and set aside to soak overnight. Drain next day.

2. Add chick peas and the measured water to a 2-quart saucepan and bring to the boil. Lower heat, cover, and boil gently until chick peas are soft, or about 1¾ hours. Add salt the last 5 minutes. When chick peas are done, remove from heat and put aside, covered, to cool.

3. Setting aside 6 to 12 chick peas as a garnish, pour contents of saucepan into a blender. Blend about 5 minutes, stopping a few times to stir, until mixture has turned to a thick paste. Gradually add remaining ingredients and blend until smooth and creamy. Taste to adjust seasoning. If desired, refrigerate until ready to serve.

4. Spoon homos into a shallow dish. Lightly sprinkle with pepper, drizzle a little oil over it, and garnish with parsley and reserved chick peas. Serve as a dip with ARMENIAN THIN BREAD or wedges of POCKET BREAD.

Yield: One quart, or 10 servings.

NOTE: Two cups canned chick peas, with its liquid, may be substituted. Reduce amount of salt. Eliminate steps 1 and 2.

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