

# What is a Feast?

# What is a Fast?

In the Church, a feast is a special celebration. Like a regular feast, there is a special meal and people enjoy special events. The special meal is for a Church feast is communion. The special events are songs and ceremonies just for the occasion.

Every Sunday is a feast day. One that we celebrate every September is the **Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross**. It falls on the Sunday closest to September 14 and may occur between September 11 and 17.

Special hymns are sung, and the ceremony of *Antasdan* is held. The cross is decorated with basil leaves, a symbol of royalty. We are happy to remember the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross as a time when Christians got the cross of Jesus back from the Persians who had stolen it from Jerusalem.

Fast in the Church does not mean quick! It means a day (or days) of self-denial and discipline. It prepares us for the feast. When we fast, we do not eat at all or we eat very little. We deny ourselves God's gift of food. We discipline ourselves, becoming stronger mentally and spiritually. It's like going into training for a sports

event. To prepare for the event, we don't just exercise or practice; we make ourselves mentally stronger, too.

To prepare ourselves for communion we do many things including fasting. Children your age should be able to go without breakfast for the morning before you receive communion. But if there are special reasons for you not to fast it is permissible to eat and still receive communion. But that does not excuse you from disciplining yourself mentally and spiritually in other ways.



## What is a Feast? What is a Fast?

What is a feast? It is a time of joy and celebration, a time when we gather together to share food and fellowship. It is a time when we give thanks for the blessings of life and the love of God. It is a time when we remember the sacrifices of those who have gone before us and the promises of a better future. It is a time when we are reminded of our place in the world and our responsibility to others. It is a time when we are renewed and strengthened for the journey ahead.

What is a fast? It is a time of prayer and reflection, a time when we set aside our worldly concerns and focus our hearts on God. It is a time when we seek to understand His will for our lives and to grow in our faith. It is a time when we are reminded of our dependence on Him and our need for His grace. It is a time when we are purified and renewed, and we emerge with a deeper love for God and a greater love for our neighbors.



Feasting and fasting are two sides of the same coin. They are both essential to the Christian life. Feasting reminds us of God's goodness and our need to enjoy His gifts. Fasting reminds us of our sinfulness and our need for His mercy. Together, they help us to grow in our love for God and our love for others.