



FAST-FREE WEEK FIRST WEEK OF THE TRIODION

February 28



Did you know that this week, we do not fast on Wednesday and Friday?

When approaching Great Lent, we usually think of what we have to give up. We look forward to Pascha (Easter), when we get it all back. But we fast not to take a break from the same old bad habits in order to return them with greater zeal. We fast to make room for something new.

The word Lent means "Spring". As the old saying goes, "April showers bring May flowers." Great Lent and Holy Week are like the rainy days and stormy nights that precede the morning sunrise of our renewed life in Christ at Pascha and Bright Week.

As Lent is Spring, the three-week pre-Lenten period of Triodion is like Spring cleaning, where we declutter and use up what we no longer need. More importantly, we clean the "house" of our innermost selves and daily lives. True fasting is abstaining from everything that comes between us and God.

This week, following the Sunday of the Publican & Pharisee, is fast-free to help us imitate the humility of the Publican who did NOT fast but repented. And to avoid the hypocrisy of the Pharisee who DID fast but was proud.

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