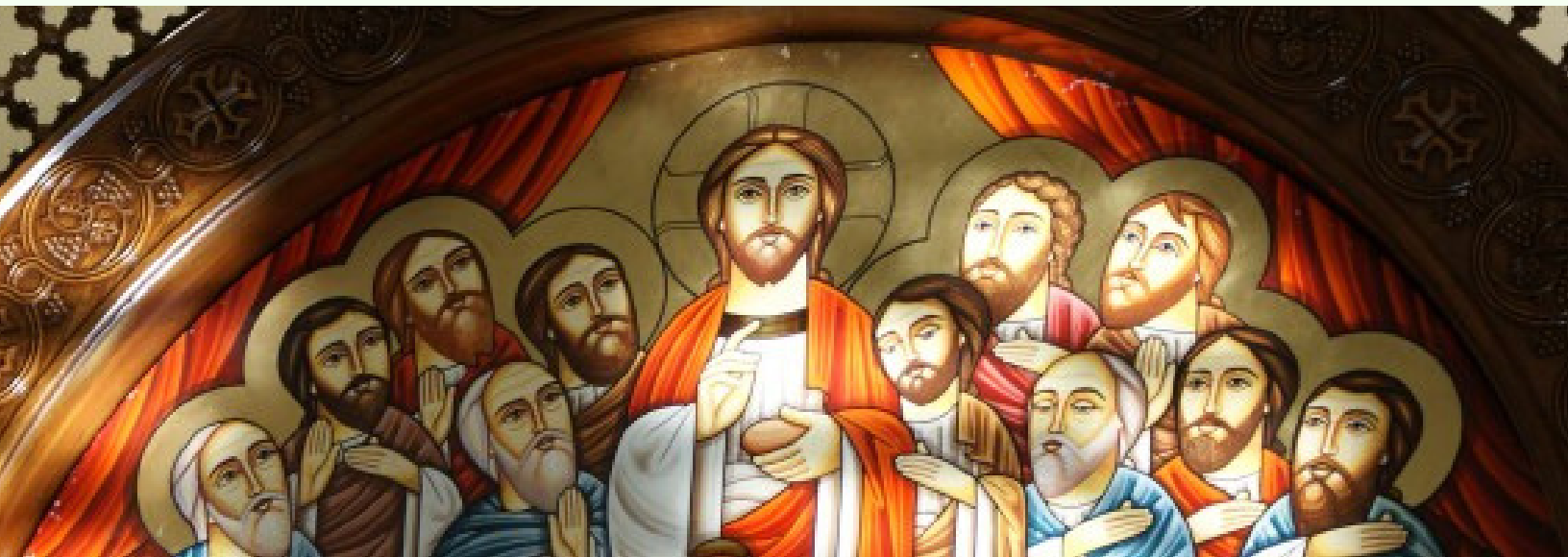


# Matters of the Heart

Orthodox reflections on faith and life



## 09 By Prayer and Fasting

Fasting and prayer are mighty spiritual weapons which the Lord imparted to us in order to defeat the devil and loosen the bonds of wickedness. Contrary to secular beliefs, fasting and prayer are in no way the enslavement of the self and the subjection to any suffering or pain. Rather fasting and prayer are the means to liberating oneself from the fetters of the passions.

In fasting one keeps the body free from gluttony, and struggles against every temptation to sin. For fasting is not only to abstain from food, but more so to abstain from sin. And Prayer, when combined with fasting, elevates the soul to the Kingdom of God. Fasting frees the flesh from all worldly desires in order for the soul to be lifted to the Lord in prayer. Fasting and prayer are the tools for building a tower of virtue and purity.

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'...this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.'

Matthew 17:21

Also read:

Isaiah 58:3-9

*Lord bless my spiritual practices, bless my fasting and prayer, and help me overcome the temptation of sin.*