

Fasting and Work

Most people either have a job or are looking for a job. And yes, just like studying, all jobs are perfectly compatible with fasting. If the job is not very physically demanding, one can and should observe a stricter fast. If the job involves a lot of heavy lifting, or working outside in cold weather, or some other physically demanding task, one should probably increase calorie intake and relax some of the “no-oil” days. There is no “one-size-fits-all” advice, and one should strive to fast as strictly as one can. But if the job performance is suffering, then one should consider making some allowances and relax the fasting rule just enough to do the job well. In any case, I personally believe that everyone who has any important obligations in the morning—students, parents, workers—should not skip breakfast. Priests, of course, do not have breakfast before serving the Liturgy, and maybe that is why some of our sermons are not as good as they could be. Lay people should also observe the Liturgical fast whether they are preparing for Communion or not. But this is a special case, and a special time. In most other cases, in my opinion, a good, whole grain breakfast is the most important meal of the day and can solve many problems with “not feeling well” while observing a fast.