

Informational Fasting in Patristic Theology and Recent Scientific Research

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Abstract

The present study aims to highlight a distinct, newer aspect of fasting, namely the informational fasting, contained in its essence and depth in the patristic spirituality and the philocalic thinking of the Church. It was emphasized as a necessity of the spiritual life of contemporary Christians, assaulted by a huge amount of information and countless sources of its transmission, in particular, digital ones, some more challenging than others. The biggest challenges of the informational fasting today are: internet, social networks (WhatsApp, Facebook), mobile phones, TV, video and computer games, continuous entertainment, etc. Informational fasting means in fact giving up the multitude of various kinds of information and concentration the attention and will towards the Christian virtues and the higher values of a human being. Man cannot gather himself, he cannot reflect quietly on his purposes, he cannot concentrate on the important goals of life and he cannot live an authentic Christian life, without braking from all external challenges as the basic principle of fasting. Church Fathers have always talked about the fasting in its unitary meaning, which encompasses the soul, the senses and the reason of man, without being limited to the food fasting.