

## **Nativity Fast begins: “Let us prepare our souls to become the cave in which Christ will be mystically born”**



**On the first day of the Nativity Fast, Sunday, November 15, 2020, Patriarch Daniel explained that we should use his fasting season as a time for preparing our souls to become a luminous cave in which Christ the Lord will be mystically born.**

“To the merciful love of God Who sent His only Son in the world to save the world, let us respond with merciful love, by aiding the sick, the poor, the elderly, the lonely, the helpless,” said the Patriarch of Romania.

This aspect is illustrated by the Parable of the Good Samaritan, His Beatitude noted.

“This is how we will feel the joy of the presence of the merciful love of Christ in our lives and become the hands of His merciful love,” the Patriarch said.

This year, the Sunday of the Good Samaritan coincides with the first day of the

Nativity Fast.

## **Nativity Fast**

‘Fasting is a divine commandment (Gen 2:16-17). According to Basil the Great, fasting is as old as humanity itself,’ reads the official document on The Importance of Fasting and Its Observance Today issued following the Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Church.

Nativity Fast reminds of the long fasting periods of the Old Testament patriarchs and righteous people, who were waiting for the coming of the Messiah – the Redeemer.

Through its 40-day duration, this fasting season also recalls of Moses on Mount Sinai, who patiently waited in fasting to receive the words of God, the Decalogue, Fr Ene Braniște, a renowned Romanian liturgist, notes.

The duration of the Nativity Fast was established in 1166, at a Council in Constantinople, held under the chairmanship of Patriarch Luke Chrysoberges.

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