



## Introduction: A Spiritual Remedy for a Noisy World

We live in an era of constant noise. Social media, news, endless conversations, and—above all—words that often leave our mouths unfiltered. We criticize, complain, gossip, and, without realizing it, we wound, divide, and weaken the most sacred fabric God has given us: **the family**.

But what if there were a forgotten penance, a “fast” that doesn’t involve abstaining from food but rather **taming the tongue**? A fast that, when practiced devoutly, can bring peace to homes, heal relationships, and draw us closer to God.

This is the **“Fast of Words,”** an ancient ascetic practice well-known to saints and mystics but largely forgotten today.

---

## 1. What Is the ‘Fast of Words’?

The “Fast of Words” is a form of mortification that consists of **refraining from unnecessary speech**, especially words that harm: criticism, complaints, gossip, slander, and hurtful remarks.

It is not a vow of absolute silence but rather **speaking with purpose**: to edify, comfort, teach, and love. As St. Paul says:

*“Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.” (Ephesians 4:29)*

This fast is not new. The desert monks, saints like St. Joseph of Cupertino (who spoke very little to avoid sins of the tongue), and even the Virgin Mary, who “kept all these things in her heart” (Lk 2:19), practiced this form of interior silence.



## 2. Why Is It So Necessary Today?

### a) Families Are Being Destroyed by the Tongue

- **Constant criticism** between spouses breeds resentment.
- **Gossip** that divides siblings and friends.
- **Complaints** that poison the home environment.

The Bible warns: *"The tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness"* (James 3:6). A single negative remark can burn years of love.

### b) We Live in a "Culture of Venting"

Social media has conditioned us to voice opinions on everything, unfiltered. But **how many of those words are truly necessary?** How many serve to build up rather than tear down?

### c) Lack of Prayer and Listening

External noise prevents us from hearing **God's voice**. Silence is not emptiness—it is the space where God speaks.

---

## 3. How to Practice the 'Fast of Words'

It's not about stopping speech but **purifying our communication**. Here are some key steps:

### a) Start with Small Sacrifices

- **Avoid criticizing** for a day.
- **Do not respond in anger**, even if you're right.
- **Remain silent** when tempted to complain.

### b) Turn Words into Prayer

Instead of gossiping about someone, **pray for them**. As St. Teresa of Ávila said: *"If you speak, speak of God; if you are silent, be silent for God."*



### c) Practice Interior Silence

- **Before speaking, ask yourself:** Does this edify? Is it necessary? Is it charitable?
  - **Learn to listen** more than you speak.
- 

## 4. The Fruits of This Fast in the Family

Those who have practiced this fast testify:

- ☐ **Fewer arguments**, more peace at home.
  - ☐ **Better communication**, because words are spoken with love.
  - ☐ **Stronger unity**, because unnecessary wounds are avoided.
- 

## Conclusion: A Challenge to Strengthen Your Home

The "Fast of Words" is not easy. It requires **humility, self-control, and much grace from God**. But it is a powerful penance, especially in a time when **the devil seeks to divide families through the tongue**.

**I challenge you to try it:** A day, an hour, even a few minutes. You'll see how the Holy Spirit works when we give Him space through our silence.

As St. John of the Cross said:

| *"The language God hears best is the silence of love."*

Are you ready to try this fast and transform your family?

☐ **What do you think? Will you take the challenge?**