

TRINITY NEWS

WEEK 07. February 16, 2020. Epiphany 6

Preparing for Lent (1)

The following days are observed by acts of discipline and self-denial.

Ash Wednesday and the other weekdays of Lent and of Holy Week except the Annunciation (March 25th). (Book of Common Prayer p. 17)

What is it we are supposed to do during Lent? Well basically, what we're supposed to do is step back from the frenetic busy-ness that clutters our lives for bit of spiritual and psychological detoxification, take a good look at ourselves, and with God's help, figure out whether or not we're on the right track, whether or not we're growing into the type of person God intends us to be. It's a time to repent of our sins, yes, but it's more than that: it's a time to delve under those sins and deal with the attitudes and mind-set that hatches them. In short, Lent, a time during which we reflect on our relationship with God and try to clear out the clutter and noise that make it hard for us to hear what God is saying. And "acts of discipline and self-denial" such as fasting, are meant to help us do that.

So, how do we go about 'fasting'?

In a surprising number of ways as it turns out. We can undertake a traditional fast, which means that during the weekdays of Lent we limit ourselves to only one full meal a day, and substitute a snack for the other two: we also avoid eating meat on Fridays. (Oh, and remember, that Sundays do not count as Lent, so we can break our fast on Sundays) Note: the fast should make you at least a bit hungry – that's part of the point – to experience what for a lot of people go through every day, and not because they want to.

Or, we can give something up: generally that means picking a particular food or an activity that we enjoy and giving it up for the duration of the Season. If what we give up is something we pay for on a regular basis, we can donate that money to a worthy cause. Again, it needs to be something that will inconvenience us in some way, so that we experience the lack of it.

Or, we can choose a particular behavior or virtue we want to cultivate, we want to make a habit of – anything from setting time aside to pray, to visiting an elderly relative on a regular basis - and practice it. Or make a point of joining us in the chapel on a regular basis for our daily morning prayer at 7:15 or the Thursday Eucharist at 9:00. More next week.