

TRINITY NEWS

WEEK 08. February 23, 2020. Last Sunday after Epiphany

Preparing for Lent (2)

When we fast though remember, the point *isn't* to make ourselves miserable. Nor is it some sort of a competition to see who can suffer the most! If we fast just to prove we can do it, or to lose weight, or just to impress our friends or to impress God, we really have not fasted at all, we've missed the whole point. If anything, it counts against us. No, we fast to remind ourselves that it's Lent.

And we *need* to be reminded, because "the world" out there doesn't like this sort of thing at all: it feels threatened by it. After all, who knows, as we examine our lives in the light of Christ's commandments, we might actually decide to make some changes. We might decide that we don't really need half the things we buy, and that our money might be better spent on helping others. Or we might decide that we don't need to use so much paper, so much gasoline, so much of everything, and start avoiding the needless consumption of resources. In short, we might decide that there is much more to life than being a mindless consumer, and that sharing and giving are not such bad ideas after all: and that makes the 'world' out there very nervous: after all, it's bad for business.

So, those of you who are preparing to undertake this Lenten journey, be warned: it is not going to be easy. 40 days is a long, long time to concentrate on anything, and the world out there will be doing everything it can to distract you from your goal: I can pretty much guarantee that almost as soon as you leave here you will be plunged into activities that either completely ignore or flatly contradict the spirit of this Holy Season. That sort of pressure will be hard to resist, and that's why fasting or self-denial are helpful: they keep your mind on what you're doing: they help you resist.

And finally, I urge you who are undertaking the fast not to be discouraged, but to persevere, stick with it. If you fall, pick yourself up and carry on. But remember that starting this Wednesday, millions of faithful Christians all around the world are joining you on the same journey – they, too, will be praying, and their prayers will provide you with powerful spiritual support. Together, all of us, we can help each other become better disciples by using this holy time to opening ourselves to Christ and allowing Him to change us: and, who knows, perhaps through us, to change the world. And, if any of you would like to talk more about how to keep Lent, or want to get deeper into things along the way, do feel free to contact me or Fr. Bert: after all, that's what we're here for.