

Second Week of Lent

I'm not very good at fasting. I don't like the intentional self-denial it involves, so I usually don't choose to do that. In last week's article I almost dismissed fasting as only an ancient or old-fashioned practice for the season of Lent (or other times). That's not entirely true. It's not the whole story.

A kind of fasting – choosing to do without a usual life-way, or even a necessity, for a time – can be a practical and concrete way of freeing up one's attention for other, perhaps more important, things.

The kind of fast is important, though. For example, I question the idea of going without substantial food itself– it's decidedly unhealthy, says my dietician wife. But going without some of my common habits may be worthwhile. Some of those habits revolve around things – popcorn at bedtime, coffee in the evenings, pleasurable books to read. Could I fast from these – of course. Yet what would that do?

Still, some of my other habits could use a fast, like my habit of judging rather than accepting, or putting myself first in all sorts of ways, or seeing problems before possibilities.

Maybe fasting from those habits might free up my attention for more positive personal and spiritual growth. Maybe I need to give one of those fasts a try, practice new and better ways of being and doing.

Prayer

May I ...

fast from worry;
feast on trust in God.
fast from complaining;
feast on appreciation
fast from negatives;
feast on affirmations. Amen.

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