

Fifth Week of Lent

With Lent drawing to a close as we look ahead to Holy Week only a week away, maybe it's a good time for a "better-late-than-never" look at our spiritual journey through this season. Even if you haven't really done anything specific to exercise your spirituality through the last few weeks, it's still OK to start now.

So ... have you decided to "fast" from some normal way of being that has got in your way sometimes, or got you into trouble sometimes? It takes a while to break long-standing patterns of thought or behaviour – those ways that have settled deep into your being and seem so natural now. "It's just the way I am," you say, giving yourself an excuse to do nothing. Yet we can change such ways. It takes a lot of intentional, consistent attention to make this kind of change to well-worn emotional habits.

Or have you decided to take up a specific spiritual practice, to make that a new habit, at least for the time being. It's the reverse of fasting – it's adding something in, that you may not have even realized you were missing. Perhaps it's doing some intentional Bible reading, or perhaps a mid-day prayer time, or a half-hour "Sabbath" from all the normal cares and tasks of the day. These may not seem like much, but over time new habits like these make a real difference in your spiritual well-being and your sense of relationship to your faith.

A Prayer:

May I...

fast from self concern, and feast on compassion,
fast from discontent, and feast on gratitude,
fast from bitterness, and feast on forgiveness.

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