

Change, change, change is in the air. I don't think we had ever heard the word "change" mentioned as much as in the last year. But no, I'm not talking about THAT change, not in a political context. The change I'm talking about is not an external one of conditions or behaviors, but rather an internal one that transforms us. The type we experience during Lent. Yes, it's incredible, but Lent is around the corner once again. It begins next week on Ash Wednesday, one of my favorite days of the year, and continues until Easter, Sunday, April 12th.

It is a perfect season for cleansing and renewal. A time for us to take stock of our lives and our relationships to figure out and adjust those glitches which may be distancing us from the Lord. In a perfect world, we wouldn't rely on Lent to make these adjustments; this would be a year-long effort. But let's face it; it's not a perfect world. Fortunately Lent affords us this specific time in which to look within, and hopefully experience a change of heart and a deeper conversion.

I came across a question once that asked, "Do you need a faith lift?" I loved that. I can tell you that I live in constant need of that kind of spiritual makeover. Because just when I think I'm good in that department, something happens that shows me I'm not. There is always room for growth in the faith department.

This Lenten season we should ask ourselves what we need to do to strengthen our faith and get closer to the Lord. Is it to spend more time in thanksgiving and gratitude? We are so blessed on so many levels that we should be in a continuous state of gratitude. Is it to practice forgiveness and humility? Yikes! This is my area. There may be people in our lives we need to forgive or from whom we need forgiveness, and pride should play no part in this. Is it to serve? This is a good time to put into practice the love your neighbor part of that greatest commandment. Is it to attend Mass weekly? The opportunity to receive the Eucharist should be right up there on our list, we should honor this invitation from Jesus. Or is it maybe to dedicate time to prayer? Without prayer our faith just wouldn't be. You could say it would be like not making time for someone close to us. He or she probably wouldn't remain close for every long.

This Lenten season, let's take a look at what's inside of us and ask the Lord to help us tweak those glitches that need adjustment so that we can be better towards ourselves and others, and in turn feel closer to Him. And let's definitely strive for this to become a a year-long practice in our lives. On that note, I leave you with some very good advice:

Fast from judging others; feast on the Christ dwelling in them.
Fast from emphasis on differences; feast on the unity of life.
Fast from apparent darkness; feast on the reality of light.

Fast from thoughts of illness; feast on the healing power of God.
Fast from words that pollute; feast on phrases that purify.
Fast from discontent; feast on gratitude.
Fast from anger; feast on patience.
Fast from pessimism; feast on optimism.
Fast from worry; feast on divine order.
Fast from complaining; feast on appreciation.
Fast from negatives; feast on affirmatives.
Fast from unrelenting pressures; feast on unceasing prayer.
Fast from hostility; feast on non-resistance.
Fast from bitterness; feast on forgiveness.
Fast from self-concern; feast on compassion for others.
Fast from personal anxiety; feast on eternal truth.
Fast from discouragements; feast on hope.
Fast from facts that depress; feast on verities that uplift.
Fast from lethargy; feast on enthusiasm.
Fast from thoughts that weaken; feast on promises that inspire.
Fast from shadows of sorrow; feast on the sunlight of serenity.
Fast from idle gossip; feast on purposeful silence.
Fast from problems that overwhelm; feast on prayer that undergirds.

*-Unknown Author*

Wishing all of you a blessed Lenten season.  May the peace of the Lord live in your hearts.  : )

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