

My Preparation for Easter

Lent is a time to prepare for Easter. It is a necessary prelude. The death and resurrection of Christ are true whether or not I prepare for Easter. However, without my heart and life being ready, I may not fully experience the depth and power of Jesus' death and resurrection. So with my Christian brothers and sisters, I commit to observing a Holy Lent by practicing a variety of spiritual habits. With the aid of the list below, I make the following commitments to discipline and growth for the next six weeks: **(1st check ones you are interested in or feel led to do. Then go back & circle ones you will commit to doing.)**

Inward and Personal Disciplines

- Spend time in solitude and silence each day, listening for the voice of God, and meditating on his Word (Bible).
- Each day, read, study, and pray over passages in the Bible. (As a start use the Bible verses from worship.)
- My health permitting, I will regularly fast from one or more meals each week and use the time instead to pray and/or read Scripture. *(Be sure to drink plenty of water while fasting. It is best to seek the advice of your doctor before fasting.)*
- Read a book for inner growth, such as Rick Warren's ***Purpose Driven Life***. (Title: _____)
- Begin to keep a journal of prayer concerns, questions, thoughts, readings, etc.
- Focus on thanksgiving and sharing my true thoughts and fears with God, rather than just asking for stuff.
- Give myself a gift of three hours to do something beneficial I always say I don't have time to do.
- Find a way to go to bed earlier or sleep in so I get enough rest.
- Make a list of people with whom I need to be reconciled (friend, neighbor, relative, co-worker, etc). Pray for them and let Jesus guide me in my thinking and feeling toward them.
- Take control of my life by _____.
- Regularly attend Sunday worship as an act of devotion to God who is worthy of our love and praise
- Go to all of the Holy Week services as an act of love and waiting with Jesus.
- Take one hour to inventory my priorities and plan how I will reorder them.
- Give up a personal grudge or a regret of a past event.
- Forgive someone who has hurt me.
- Ask for forgiveness from someone who I have hurt (including God).
- Dance my prayers to a favorite tape or CD.
- Make use of a Lenten devotional this year. Check out www.cokesbury.com. (Title: _____)
- Join or help start a small group bible study.
- Other promptings:

Outward and Social Disciplines

- ___ Take on some loving task:
- ___ Plan to visit a "shut-in" neighbor/church member weekly (*doesn't have to be same "shut-in" each week*).
- ___ Write a letter (or email) of affirmation once a week to a person who has touched my life.
- ___ Go on a Spiritual Retreat (**date:** _____)
- ___ Listen and respond to Christ's call to a ministry of service: (_____)
- ___ Tell someone about Jesus in the context of my faith story.
- ___ Begin to mentor someone in the faith. Start by taking him/her out for coffee or lunch.
- ___ Find loving ways to welcome newcomers in the church and new neighbors in my community.
- ___ Begin to recycle waste from my home and workplace.
- ___ Give blood and recall the cross.
- ___ Help out with our homeless ministry or some other community mission: (_____)
- ___ Say "NO" to something that is a waste of money and/or time.
- ___ Pray to God to help me resist prejudice of all kinds and to give me courage in opposing it.
- ___ Decide to become a member of the church at the next opportunity.
- ___ Rebuke any spirit of negativism around me and guard my own tongue against gossip.
- ___ Find a way to live out my baptismal vow to "resist evil, injustice, and oppression" in the power of God by . . .
-
- ___ Other outward and social promptings:

As a way of being accountable, I will either:

- ___ Share my intentions for Lent with my church small group or bible study or community group
- ___ Share my plan with at least one person (a Christian friend, teacher, pastor, community group leader)
- ___ Share my Lenten experience with at least one person (a Christian friend, teacher, pastor, community group leader)

(signed) _____

(date) _____

Keep this for reference during the coming weeks.