



The World Community for Christian Meditation

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Tuesday Lent, Week 2



There's nothing special about Lent. Except the degree of concentration and the level of attention that we bring to the spiritual dimension of our lives. In Lent we slightly re-adjust our usual routines and personal habits. In this way, we disturb ourselves a little because – although we think we want something different to happen - part of us always resists change.

We get around this by introducing into daily life something new that we have to remember to do (such as composing a daily reflection or doing more spiritual reading) or subtracting something familiar (such as sugar or alcohol). We might also make our daily practice of meditation more consistent or simply improve our sitting posture so that we sit more still and upright. Best of all, and better than giving up sweets, we might decide to say the mantra with total attention.

Even a small alteration in our mental or physical habits sends a message to the whole system that runs our lives: don't get into a rut, look at things from a different perspective, let go and go deeper. To be effective, of course, a Lenten practice has to be maintained. Regularity in practice is the key to permanent transformation. A small self-restraint or self-simplification then becomes a template for the whole of our spiritual life. How we do the Lenten thing throws a light on the bigger picture that is our level of awareness. Whoever can be trusted with small things can be trusted with something greater, Jesus reminds us.

Regularity. Duration. If you are roasting a chicken you have to leave it in the oven at the right temperature for long enough to cook. If you keep taking it out every five minutes it will never finish. Or if you are trying to light a fire by rubbing two sticks together you have to keep the rubbing steady or they will never generate the heat that will eventually make a spark that makes the fire.

So, Lent reminds us of the most wonderful and obvious truth, that we live day by day and that every day counts.

Laurence Freeman OSB

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