



## **SPIRITUAL SPRING TRAINING FASTING, March 28, 2010**

Fasting:

- an ancient practice
- encourages us to grow in true freedom because we can let go of excess in order to pray
- may include abstaining from food just like Christians did centuries ago
- may include abstaining from media, entertainment, shopping, electronics, email, the internet or other aspects of daily modern life
- a time for renewal
- voluntary denial of something for a specific time, for a specific purpose, by an individual, a family or a community

Fasting is not about practicing extreme self-denial. Fasting as self-punishment does not create space for prayer nor does it give energy to our prayers or our ability to listen to God.

Ponder: I am able to replace one habit with a new habit. Perhaps, it begins by replacing one soft drink with one glass of water. Give gratitude for God's internal cleansing.

Consider praying as you fast:

Gracious God, Jesus knew the burden of temptation. May your Holy Spirit help and guide me, make me strong as I back away from excesses in order to listen to your still small voice. Thank You!

(or)

Loving Lord, inspire me with ways of distributing my excess to family, friends, community and the world. Help me ease suffering through giving. Thank You!

(or)

Lord, help me understand that I do not have to do things the same way, day after day. I am not a slave to my habits. I can change things. I can try new things and create new habits. I can experience companionship with You in new ways. Thank You!

(or)

With gratitude, I am free to lightheartedly stop a habit for a day and experience new things with You, my Gracious God, even as my heart is heavy laden with \_\_\_\_\_.

Thank You!

### **TODAY**

#### **PANEL ON FASTING AS A SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE**

Other religious traditions use fasting as a cornerstone of spiritual life. Come learn from people who have been practicing fasting for decades what fasting means to them and how they practice this discipline. Prepare for Holy Week in a new way. 10:45am-noon, Spiritual Life Center, no registration or fee.

### **THIS WEEK**

#### **HOLY WEEK PRAYER VIGIL**

Sign up to "pray without ceasing" for 1/2 hour or hour from Holy Thursday, April 1 at 8pm until Good Friday, April 2 at noon. Come to Prayer Chapel/Spiritual Life Center. Walk the labyrinth in Great Hall. Custodian will be present throughout the night.

Contact DeAnna to sign up (317-846-3404x367).

### **RESOURCES**

- 1) "The Spirituality of Fasting: Rediscovering a Christian Practice: by Charles Murphy. Available in Oasis
- 2) "Fasting: Spiritual Freedom Beyond Our Appetites" by Lynne M. Baab.
- 3) "Celebration of Discipline" (chapter on fasting) by Richard J. Foster. Available in Spiritual Life Center Library.
- 4) "Last Week" by Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossan. Available in Oasis