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Dear Parish Family,

I am sure many of you have 'given up' something for Lent. For us Catholics, this Lenten sacrifice is part and parcel of these forty days. So what are you giving up for Lent? Is it forty days without coffee, without chocolates, without dessert? I remembered the Ash Wednesday gospel telling us that whatever we do in these forty days is between us and God. No need to broadcast the things we are giving up, otherwise we have received the reward already.

Do you know that some people have given up on 'giving up' as a spiritual sacrifice for Lent? Instead of 'giving up' they are trying to do something positive and productive - perhaps spending more time in prayer with oneself or with their kids, or volunteering in a ministry, or simply just checking up on an elderly neighbor. The list of something positive to do in Lent is long.

Many people do this because the 'giving up' resolution focused too much on the negative and so they are trying a new approach to the disciplines of Lent. Maybe we ought to try this too. After all, many of these suggested positives that we could take on for Lent were possibly part of our New Year's resolutions, but long since forgotten and never achieved. If anything, it is a second opportunity at making changes in our life.

Let us remember that on Judgment Day, we are not going to be asked how much coffee, desserts, chocolates, etc. we have 'given up', but rather what we have done for our less fortunate brothers and sisters.

Sincerely,

Fr. Dwight