

My third Lenten Post:

(Matthew 9:14-15 / Isaiah 58:7-8 (FASTING AND INTENTIONS OF THE HEART))

-Previously I preached about the power of intercessory prayer: Denying self by praying for others first. Today I give you fasting.

-One reason we fast is because we have a hunger for God, which is the deepest hunger. We're meant to get access to that hunger. Physical hunger can lead us toward God. Our Christian Spiritual Tradition recognizes the danger when we allow the physical hunger to dominate. We say yes to every desire and material thing. We never reach the deepest hunger and may give into the spiritual temptations and inordinate improper desires and hunger.

-Fasting is a way of disciplining the hunger for food and drink. It is a way of quieting those desires by not responding to them immediately, so that the deepest desires emerge. Unless you fast, you might never realize how hungry you are for God. And when we are able to say "NO" to excessive food, drink, and material things, we are strengthened to say no at the height of physical and spiritual temptation. Fasting helps us with moderation and abstinence, both in the material and spiritual realms.

-Like Isaiah if we grumble and become short with others while fasting, we are losing sight of the proper intentions to see our desire for God!

-I could do a whole homily on the health applications of fasting within the context of health and age.

-Fasting helps the body to purify, cleanse, and purge (weight reduction and lowering sugar levels)... But for now...

**Vivat Jesus,
Father Vic Gournas**