

From the Pastor

I heard someone say yesterday that on the Sunday Today show inappropriate words were used. They were actually printed on the TV screen for all to see and read. I don't know about you, but I abhor bad language—by this I mean vulgar or blasphemous words. I absolutely hate it. I hate to hear it or see it or read it. If it is in a book I am reading, I put the book down. If someone is saying it around me, I leave.

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But when bad language happens on TV, how are we to deal with it? One way is to write, email or call the television network and tell them you don't appreciate it. You can find the address or number on the internet. Another is to note the sponsors of that particular program and let them know you will not buy their products. If enough people protested this type of behavior things would change because companies want to

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sell their products to stay in business.

Without sponsors there would be no programs. Another aspect of this is something I have been guilty of-expecting people of the world (pre-believers) to act like Christians. Until our hearts and minds were transformed by the Holy Spirit, we all acted the way the world acts. The best witness we can be is to have our behavior so different, so filled with love and forgiveness

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and good-will toward others, that everyone around us wants that same kind of life. Our lives should be so compelling that others see Jesus in our actions and reactions. How are you doing with that? Hard as it is to believe, Lent begins this month with Ash Wednesday on February 22. We will be having an Ash Wednesday service at 7:00, our regular service of receiving ashes as a sign of our confession and penitence.

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All are invited to attend this service and a nursery will be provided. Traditionally, Christians have been asked to “give up” or fast from something during the season of Lent. This is done to cause us to focus on God instead of our fleshy desires. People often fasted and as they felt hunger pain, they would be reminded to pray. In the weeks we have until this service, I am inviting you to consider what you would like to give up or fast from during the 40 days of

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Lent. Fasting does not have to be from food. In reference to the television program above, you might want to give up watching TV or a particular television program. A way to do that would be to fast from TV every morning or every Monday, for example. Another area of fasting could be from a particular habit you have-smoking or gambling or pornography or alcohol, or anything you do to excess.

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Try giving the habit up for 40 days.

Finally, fasting from food might be what you need. You could fast for a particular meal or a particular food. The purpose is not so you can say, “wow, look how good I am”, it is to say, “how close can I grow to

God”. We are having a Lenten study every Sunday evening during Lent at 4:00.

You could participate in the study as a part of your Lenten devotion.

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As you begin your Lenten journey, may you feel the presence of God every step you take. May you fall more in love with Him every day. May you be empowered to be His witnesses in all you say and do.

Serving Jesus together,

Pastor Nancy