



TRINITY COLLEGE

eNews

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Nurturing Healthy Habits in Lent

Part of coming back to school is establishing good routines and healthy habits. Trinity College schools are keen for students to establish patterns of learning behaviour to the extent that they become habits. For instance, Middle School students at Gawler River have been developing their Habits of the Mind this week. Year 11 students at Trinity College begin their time at Senior School with a focus on learning the Seven Habits of Effective Teens. Initially developed by Stephen Covey in his book *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, these habits have been developed into a program for teenagers by Franklin Covey.

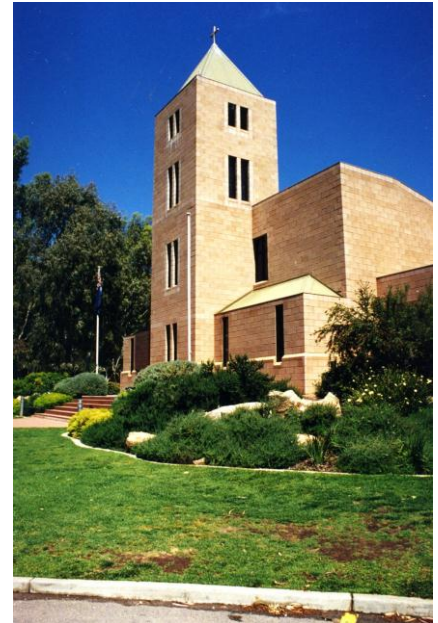
The habits are:

1. being proactive
2. beginning with the end in mind
3. putting first things first
4. thinking win-win
5. seeking first to understand, then to be understood
6. synergy
7. sharpening the saw.

In the season of Lent, Christians try and foster spiritual disciplines, using it as a time to develop healthy habits in the preparation for Easter.

It is a time to focus on being proactive. Lent is time when Christians traditionally give up something or take up something. It may be setting a time aside each day for prayer or bible reading. It may be deciding to give up chocolate, coffee, meat or alcohol to recognise the tradition of fasting as a way of focussing on God. It is about taking initiative in developing positive habits.

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday (Wednesday 22 February this year) a time when the focus is on following Jesus. Students at Trinity have the opportunity to be marked with the sign of the cross. From the beginning the end is in mind. Lent looks forward to the celebration of Easter after 40 days of fasting. When my nine year old son gave up meat for Lent last year he was very focussed on the egg and bacon breakfast after the Easter dawn service and was able to reject offers of meat in any form.



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Putting first things first is central to Lenten discipline. Ash Wednesday is a time to reflect on what is important in life and make sure that it gets attention. I personally struggle to fit exercise in my life so my intention this Lent is to develop the habit of going for a walk early in the morning before other commitments crowd out the opportunity to walk and talk with God.

Lent is not only a time of personal growth and development, there is also a social aspect as well. The money saved by giving up something such as chocolate, coffee or alcohol can be given to help others such as by building a well in Vanuatu, or providing supplies for a hospital in Gaza Strip. It is a win-win activity in which there are both personal physical and spiritual health benefits to us as individuals and also people in need benefit from financial assistance.

The focus on prayer and reflection during Lent assists us in thinking about the needs of others and seeking first to understand, then to be understood. It is time when we may work together as we join in solidarity with others who are fasting, either as Lenten discipline or because they have no resource to do otherwise. One year our family had porridge for breakfast throughout Lent to think of children in a Rwandan orphanage whose only daily meal was a kind of porridge.

Lent is also a time to try and achieve healthy balance in our lives. The strand of the Christian tradition my mother follows argues that Sundays are always a feast day of the celebration of the resurrection of Jesus so they are isolated from Lenten fasts.

Whether Sundays are included in your Lenten discipline or not is secondary to you and your family taking the opportunity to make a particular Lenten commitment this year to foster the habits that contribute to healthy relationships with God, our neighbour and our-selves.

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