

Tonight's main topic was fasting and abstinence.

Richard started the meeting off giving us a detailed summary of a panel session he attended on 02/02 on this very topic. There were various major religious leaders on this panel, and they talked about the differences between religions on fasting. To follow up on Richard's summary, handed out 2 articles on fasting. "Why don't Catholics Eat Meat on Friday?" and Fasting and Abstinence: Eastern Orthodox vs. Roman Catholic".

Our discussion on this topic lead us to realize the purpose of Fasting is not to just give up food but to remember Jesus' sacrifice on the cross and for self-discipline and spritual preparation for sacraments. Even Jesus fasted for "40 days" in the desert. Fr. Joe talked about the number 40 being used in the Bible to represent an extended period of time. Besides fasting, during Lent we should also do something positive for others to fulfill our responsibilities as to perform the Works of Mercy. We also noted that between Islam, Easter Orthodox and Roman Catholic fast, that Catholic fasting is a lot more flexible and not as strick as the other major religions.

On the topic of fasting, Richard mentioned the topic of Blue Zones Blue Zones are five specific regions worldwide—Okinawa (Japan), Sardinia (Italy), Nicoya (Costa Rica), Icaria (Greece), and Loma Linda (California)—where people live significantly longer, healthier lives, often exceeding 100 years. Mostly based on their diet.

Since AI is becoming a topic both in the secular and non-secular worl, I handed out a sheet of Catholic AI apps. We talked about the role of AI, its dangers and what does the Church thinks about AI. I will get some information on this topic for our next meeting.

We also came back to one of the ongoing topics, The Rosary. I handed out a grid that lists the mysteries of the rosaries and a column to write “How do I relate to the mystery”. We will each fill out this grid and discuss it at our next meeting.

There is a young woman who will be receiving Baptism and Confirmation at our Easter Mass. I will check with her to see if she would like to come to a meeting and talk about her Faith Journey to the Catholic Church.

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday, Feb. 17 at 5:30, which is the day before Lent begins. This day is called Shrove Tuesday, Mardi Gras, Fat Tuesday, or Pancake Day.

Remember the word "Lent" comes from an Old English word meaning "spring season.". So, all this snow should be gone soon!

Blessings
Norbert