

## Ramblings from the Rectory

If you're like me, I cringe when asked, "What are you giving up for Lent". I'm not alone either. I know a few monks that hate it too. I remember one answering, "Nude, underwater hang-gliding". Another, monk was so fed up with this he simply answered, "Sex!", scandalising the poor woman who had asked him.

The reason was not that they and I hate people taking Lent seriously. It is precisely because we take Lent incredibly seriously that the thought of giving up chocolate just doesn't seem to cut it. So give up chocolate, by all means, but don't **just** give up chocolate. If you give something up there has to be a reason, and that reason needs to be linked to a closer walk with God. So it could be that every time you don't buy a bar of chocolate you save the money to give to a good cause.

If you give up a particular t.v. programme, then don't **just** give up the programme. Use the time to pray, or read the Bible, or visit a neighbour who is lonely.

Whether or not you give anything up for Lent, take something up for Lent. Perhaps have a Lenten resolution to read your Bible or pray more each day. Perhaps, make a resolution to do or say something good each day. If you want help and a challenge you can get daily Christian challenges and reflections every day throughout Lent from [40acts.org.uk/](http://40acts.org.uk/). If you haven't tried 40 Acts before, give it a try.

You can join a Lent Group, we have lots throughout the benefice. Some meet in the evening and some during the day. Sign up, and get involved. Last year many of us tried using the "Mapping Advent" resources produced by our diocese. These were a great success so this Lent our Lent Groups will use the "Mapping Lent" resources. Each pack costs just £2, so don't forget to sign up. Lent Groups will be starting in the week beginning Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> February.

Before that you are invited to start your Lent with Holy Communion at Scole or Harleston, each service will include the opportunity to dedicate yourself afresh to serving Christ by receiving the sign of the cross in ash on your forehead.

However, you choose to spend Lent, please use it well, please use it to grow in love and in the God who loves you.

God bless,

Nigel.