The Holy Season Begins With Stopping

As a native Louisianan, I grew up in the midst of king cake, gaudy beads, and all things purple and green. I don't understand it all and when I ask, everyone has a different take on the nuances of this season. One thing that I love, after all the weird, freaky rites of late winter, is the beginning of the Holy Season. Some may look at it suspiciously. Lent to them is the by-product of laundry dryers and nothing more.

But we all need to burn some grave clothes every now and then. The holy season just happens to provide a schedule for it.

Here are a few things we can all stop doing this year even if we ancient liturgists.

- **We can all stop placing expectations on everybody or anybody.** We pray and expect great things from God- as we should. But when we heap expectations on others we all risk disappointment. When we stop expecting things from people we tend to be happier with them. And every gift and promise of growth we experience from them becomes a wonderful surprise full of grace.
- **We can all stop just getting through the day** and start being an active participant in the day. May me stop enduring and ask God for holy resilience and the gift of moment-by-moment abundant living.
- We can **stop blaming**. Blaming was one of the first things we started doing when the mess began. The problem is that blaming never works on any level. Indeed, blame fuels the cultural narrative of racism, pride and pious pigeonholing, attitudes. We must change the conversation.
- **We can stop worrying about the government**, pay our taxes

and focus on the things we can actually change in our community.

- For that matter, we could **stop worrying. Period.** (This will be impossible but it is something of which to strive.) The only one allowed to worry is God and He's not. For me, every time I start to worry I'll bring it to God and worry to him. Actually, that is what we call prayer.

The Holy Season leads us toward the cross and challenges us to stop being so tethered to the world. Everybody can do lent. You don't need a robe, an incense burner, or a bingo tournament. Stop doing internal things like these and it will change you.

Enjoy stopping and let's have some fish.