

Assembly Lent

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I want to talk to you this morning about Lent, a time for giving something up, which seems a little contradictory when we are always telling you to never give up! This never give up attitude was typified on Saturday at the rugby as the players and supporters never gave up. As a staff we have recently been reflecting on what the RGS Ethos is all about and on Saturday there was a perfect example of what makes this school so great. All the attributes you would want to have in a school were on display on and off the field. There was passion, commitment, determination, skill, reflection, manners, support, kindness, teamwork, loyalty, inspiration and aspiration. It made me appreciate how lucky I am to work in this kind of environment which again brings me back to Lent, which I think does allow to reflect on how fortunate you are compared to others.

We have currently just started Lent which as mentioned, is a time for giving things up. What have you decided to give up? This year, for the first time ever I have decided to give up crisps. I am passionate about many things but crisps tend to be at the top of the list. I know what you're thinking how does he still look so athletic, I sometimes ponder the very same thing. I enjoy all crisps but if I were to pick a top 5 it would include, discoes, roast beef monster munch, squares (salt and vinegar), space invaders (old school) and scampi fries but I'm not sure if they count. So far so good, but we're not even a week in!

Lent is a hot topic in the staff room but as you'd expect many of your staff are so perfect that they do not need to give anything up! One thing which my good friend Mr Gallagher has spoken to you about previously is the idea of taking something up rather than giving something up. What else can we do? Is there a hobby that you have always been thinking of getting involved in? Is there a sport you've always been thinking of playing? Is there a music instrument you've always been thinking of trying? Is there a homework you've always been thinking of doing!

Surely, we should always be seeking to improve and enrich our lives. I mentioned to you a few years ago that my wife has always been keen on dancing and with things like "strictly come dancing" on the telly she was forever asking me to give it a go. I had always avoided such activities because I am all about the disco dancing. However, two years ago for lent I thought I should give it a try. The group we joined was in Bicester, I have to be honest, it was not exactly what I expected, I was searching the room for an Ola or a Flavia to soften the blow of giving up my evening. At the very least there will be a Tess Daly to teach the class. Sadly I was met by a Bethal and a Gladice! The average age was about 80 and that included

us in the survey, but that didn't stop us giving it a go and it was surprisingly enjoyable. Often I would return from work, exhausted with plenty of work to mark and the sheer thought of going dancing was not very inviting. However, every time I went, I always enjoyed it and came back refreshed and wanting more. Sadly, we now have two children, of course I don't mean that, I love them dearly but it has put an end to our dancing. This has been sad news for me but absolute devastation for Bethal and Gladice. I'd like to think I would still be dancing now if we had not started a family.

There are so many opportunities both inside and outside of school, whether it's the bake off, the rugby team, the school play, the orchestra, medsoc, mentoring, book club, the cross country team, there are so many opportunities and it is what makes school great. Perhaps you want to do something outside of school, maybe you want to do some charity work, join the scouts.

So, if you are sat here now thinking yes I have been meaning to get involved in something then now is the time. It is so easy to come up with an excuse as to why you should not get involved but I urge you not to hide behind such fears. Be proactive, you will no doubt get loads out of it.