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Lentement: More ... or ... Less?

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Lentement

Pull over from the passing lane
Ease the pressure on the pedal
*Lentamente, lentamente*
Lent’s forty days slow us down
To let the Word of God resound
*Len-te-ment*

Desert silence,
Ears alert, calming hurry-scurry,
Listening stillness —
A sense of real presence.
Answering attention —
Pray-ers, seers once again.

Desert testing,
The adversary lurks in lifeless land
Suggesting we must carry with us
Self-importance, power and popularity.
We fight the backward glance, the tugging whisper
Insisting it’s all folly
To leave behind such luggage
On our pilgrim path.

Desert companion,
Through forty days and forty nights
Sustaining us with manna,
Accompanying our struggling steps
Toward journey’s end
Outside the city walls.
In loneliness —
Deserted —
Raised up above the jostling noise
And strident shouts of city commerce.
Apart — left hanging —
Yet dying for us all.

Forty days and forty nights
*Lentamente, lentement*
Training us to take our stance
With the ever-faithful women
Near the cross on which he hung.
And on the fortieth day to rise with him —
Renewed.
More ... or ... Less?

Let us pray that we have

More quiet, less noise
More others, less self
More fasting, less feasting
More reading, less ignorance
More listening, less talking
More family, less television
More warmth, less coldness
More patience, less anger
More reverence, less putdowns
More generosity, less selfishness
More awareness, less blindness
More empathy, less envy
More acceptance, less jealousy
More exercise, less sitting
More trust, less fear
More courage, less hesitation
More them, O Lord, less me
More you, O Lord, less me

AMEN