

12.3.84
9.3.87O Sacred Head
(Love Divine 1st)

Hello again: and this morning I'd like to start off Morning Prayers with a formal prayer - from the book of the Church's public worship: Let us pray together - Father, all-powerful and ever-living God, we do well always and everywhere to give you thanks through Jesus Christ our Lord. Each year you give us this joyful season when we prepare to celebrate the paschal mystery with mind and heart renewed. You give us a spirit of loving reverence for you, our Father, and of willing service to our neighbour. As we recall the great events that gave us new life in Christ, you bring the image of your son to perfection within us.

The word "Lent" is an ancient word for spring, and the season of Lent a time for new life to appear in our lives, for old dead-wood and frozen attitudes to disappear. It's a time for clearing the ground, sweeping away the rubbish; a time for sowing, so that one day, on the Day of the Lord, there may be a harvest. Lent is just six weeks, not too long to prepare for the Easter event, the Paschal mystery that changed history and human life. Jesus went through this time of reflection that the 40 days of Lent present to us. He'd come into our world to share his life with us, and we say we are "in Him" - we could, then, in this Lenten time, examine the priorities in our lives with His mission in mind. His mission to bring each person to human dignity and lead everyone to the Father in brotherhood together. Lent is a time of instruction, and in the early Christian centuries the time of preparation for baptism on Easter Eve. Faith comes by hearing - and that includes all kinds of hearing & listening: and faith needs to grow, to ask questions & reflect on answers, to be attentive and listening, to oneself, to others, to one's conscience, to the world around.... and of course to the Word of God. In Lent we're asked not just to listen to God's word but to make it a judgement on our lives - for it's also a time of penance and personal

Breaky of bread
2²

evaluation, remembering Jesus' words "unless you do penance you shall all likewise perish" - "Take up your cross and follow me". From the Word of God, in St Paul writing one of his letters to the Christians at Corinth: "Be an ambassador for Christ, God as it were appealing through us. Do implore you, in Christ's name: be reconciled to God! For our sakes, God made Him who did not know sin to be sin so that in Him we might become the very likeness of God. As your fellow-workers we beg you not to receive the grace of God in vain. For he says: "In an acceptable time I have heard you: on a day of salvation I have helped you." Now is the acceptable time! Now is the day of salvation!

MUSIC "Yahweh, Who can Enter"

PRAYERS (Brev. Lent Hymn 19 p571)

Earlier just now I read for you a short piece from a letter of St Paul to the Christian community at Corinth. Here now is another piece from a letter to the Christian at Corinth, this one from a letter of one of the first Popes, Pope St Clement I:

QB. (Brev. Ant. Vesp p 71.)