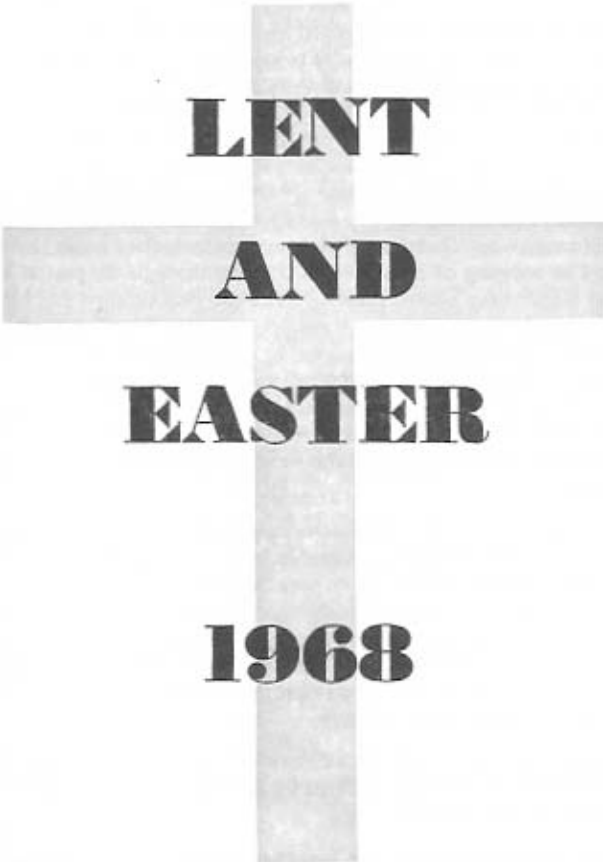


St. Cuthbert's = Halsall



**LENT  
AND  
EASTER  
1968**

Rector:

The Rev. HERBERT BULLOUGH, A.K.C.

THE RECTORY,

HALSALL.

10th February, 1968.

Dear Friends,

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 28th. To many very modern minds there seems to be something old-fashioned about observing Lent. It is written off as just another of those queer ideas which belonged to the days of our grandfathers. The fault here is to make the mistake of thinking that "old" and "ancient" mean always the same thing as "old-fashioned." Some ideas and practices by their very nature become old-fashioned — they had their day as features of a particular generation or age. A popular dance tune may become old-fashioned within a year. Ladies fashions have a short stay. Tram-cars are now old-fashioned — they lasted for many years, but their day is over. Slang words have their day. We should no more think of exclaiming "Gadzooks" than we should think of turning out in tights and gaiters. The ordering of daily life has changed through the years. The times of lunch and dinner have altered radically since the 18th century. But not all our ideas and customs have changed, and some are in a category which change cannot touch. Lent, for example, has been observed by Church-people for sixteen hundred years or more. While hundreds of generations have come and gone with their fashions and modes of life the observance of Lent is one of the things which has remained the same. Almost, one might as well complain that the rising and setting of the sun, and the movement of the tides were "old-fashioned." That is if we are Church-people.

On the other hand, certain ideas associated with Lent might be termed old-fashioned. The practice of singing miserable hymns to doleful tunes throughout the season, and of casting morbid gloom over the parish is certainly old-fashioned. But for all that it is a time for serious thought. A time to be spent in a practical and business-like stocktaking of where we are up to in life, with a view to future plans and readjustments. In this business the inspiration derived from our religion is sought in common worship of God together in our services. It is a season to take ourselves and our Church more seriously.

Once again Lent comes with its memory of the forty days which, nineteen centuries ago shaped the message of Christ for all time. Let us use it in our parish in a way worthy of that memory.

May God Bless You All and help you to enjoy this season of Lent.

Your sincere friend,

HERBET BULLOUGH.

## LENT

A period of preparation preceding a great festival is a practice as old as religion itself. It is found in the ancient pagan religions, and, of course, in the Jewish religion as practised in Old Testament days. Likewise it has from the beginning been a practice of the Christian Church. The traditional method of preparation always emphasised fasting and prayer. The authority for this is Christ Himself. Easter Day, as the greatest of Christian festivals, is preceded by the longest period of preparation — the forty days of Lent. The period of forty days recalls the forty days of fasting and solitude spent by Christ prior to beginning His ministry. (From Ash Wednesday to Easter Day is forty-six days, but as Sundays are not fast days, by subtracting the six Sundays in Lent we are left with forty fast days). This period of forty days for Lent was recognised by the time of the Nicene Council in 325 A.D., and has been observed by the Church ever since.

Now, although the Anglican Church lays down few definite rules for the keeping of Lent, it does stress the importance and value of Lenten observance. The three Sundays in the Prayer Book Calendar, Septuagesima, Sexagesima and Quinquagesima with their Collects, Epistles and Gospels, are a prelude to Lent. Ash Wednesday, the six Sundays in Lent, each weekday in Holy Week (which includes Good Friday) has its own Epistle and Gospel and Collect. The Prayer Book, therefore, makes considerable provisions for Lenten observance.

It is quite obvious, therefore, that the observance of Lent is a fundamental teaching of the Church which has persisted for over sixteen hundred years. Even though the Anglican Church lays down few particular rules, the great point is that Lent should make a difference to us. If we do not fast in the matter of food, e.g., refrain from meat and luxuries: if we do not give up smoking or sweets during Lent, we are still called to do **something** about it. Behind all fasting is the idea of self-discipline, and renunciation of distractions. The call of Lent is towards self-examination, and contemplation of God, and the Christian Gospel.

There are many people who would say they see no point in keeping Lent. They see no use in it, and look upon it as just another outworn tradition totally out of keeping with this modern age. To such people the Church says: "Try it and see. You will then be able to speak from experience." There is many a thing we see nothing in until we have experienced it. Any person who determines to observe Lent conscientiously, earnestly and intelligently will find they have not wasted their time. To concentrate for six weeks on taking stock of one's aims, and achievements in life, one's successes and failures; and at the same time to concentrate on seeing one's life in relation to the **fact** of Christ, His life, and death and resurrection, is to go through a process which brings one face to face with reality in life and religion.

## LENT AND LIFE

St. Benedict's Rule for the Christian Life was under three headings in the following order:

1. LABOUR.
2. PRAYER.
3. SELF-DENIAL.

The purpose of this Rule was to foster an effective and vigorous Christian community which would make its mark on the world at large.

### I. LABOUR

Every Christian should take on some job, and be responsible for a share of the community's work. Only thus could the demands of Service, Fairness, Self Respect, and the dignity of Labour be fulfilled.

### II. PRAYER

Every Christian should observe the regular hours of Public Worship and Holy Communion, and should devote regular times to private prayer. Only thus could that approach to God be made which is necessary for man's true spiritual development.

### III. SELF-DENIAL

Every Christian should deny himself pursuits, wealth and pleasures which interfered with his practice of I and II above. Furthermore, Self-Discipline in pursuit of an ideal means organising one's life with precision and efficiency, and this is worth doing for its own sake.

Let this Rule of Benedict be our Rule this Lent.

### BACKGROUND OF LENT

"Lent recalls forty days which nineteen centuries ago shaped the message of Christ for all time. At his Baptism He had become aware of His Mission and of His supernatural powers. In order to think out the answer without distraction He spent forty days in solitude."

This is the historical background of Lent — the source of its meaning, and the example and inspiration to all who would observe the season. We cannot, of course, begin where Christ began. We are fully aware neither of our powers nor of our mission in life. We need to re-examine our religious ideas, and to test them by reference to the Gospel. Our starting point in this spiritual stocktaking should be with our ideas of God. We must have a true idea of God before we can have a true idea of ourselves. Man's true nature is only seen in his relationship to God.

As we go about week in, week out, what does God mean to us? What concrete difference does the belief in God make in our daily living, our world, our leisure, our relations with other people? We may read about religion, discuss it — we may work for a church, and attend its services, and yet miss the mark all through life. God must be to us a living experience. This experience cannot leave a man unchanged; conversely, a man whose view of life, whose worship, whose daily acts, whose contacts with all other people do not reflect his inner transformation, cannot have found any real contact with God. But the man who has found it has ceased the futile attempt to divide his life into compartments. He has realised that religion concerns every side of his life. There are no neutral zones—no activities, no decisions, no views of which he tries to say, "These are outside religion, God doesn't come in here." Life for him has become a unity. The world with the people in it has become the Kingdom of God wherein he is called to serve God in the strength and conviction God has given him. For him there are no prior claims upon him — there are no other claims whatsoever.

All this is made clear by Christ who travelled the road before us, and Lent with its forty days brings a memory of a supreme decision. The subsequent life and teaching of Christ show how many of the multitudinous claims of earthly ties and loyalties are themselves part of God's supreme claim upon us. The claims of friendship and love, honesty, generosity, service, kindness and self-sacrifice — these are aspects of God's supreme claim. His great claim is a challenge to us to resist all lesser claims, and all unworthy ambitions in a disciplined and consistent life in His service.

### SUGGESTIONS FOR LENTEN OBSERVANCE

(1) More regular attendance at Sunday services — especially at the Eucharist and Holy Communion services.

Mid-week services are equally important for all who can possibly attend them. Our church was never intended to be used only for Sundays — i.e., one day a week. Let us see this Lent if our Wednesday evening devotional services can be really well attended. Lent is the time when we are challenged to take stock of ourselves. What proportion of our time do we give to Church worship? Is it a fair proportion? Really?

(2) By making an extra gift for the work of the Church overseas. Our two parish projects are the support of Dr. Barbara Hitch at the C.M.S. Hospital at Omdourman and the support of the Matron and staff of Batharos Hospital in the Diocese of Kimberley and Kurman through the U.S.P.G.

## SOME THOUGHTS FOR LENT

"Our deepest need is one which we can never supply . . . it is that we should be lifted off that centre of self about which from our birth we tend to revolve, and set moving in a new orbit with God as centre." (Temple).

Self-centred as we are we cannot reorganise ourselves about some other centre. The rich young ruler came to Christ asking: "What good thing shall I do to inherit eternal life?" The answer was: "Sell all that thou hast, and take up thy cross and follow me." He turned away sorrowfully, for he had great possessions. Here it was wealth, but it might have been almost anything else — pleasures, career, fame. Most of us are infected by this canker of self-centredness. Wait upon God. There are people, like Gabriel Oak in Hardy's "Far from the Madding Crowd," about whom Bathsheba could say that she "— had not yet learnt the simple lesson which Oak showed a mastery of by every turn and look he gave — that among the multitude of interests by which he was surrounded, those which affected his personal well-being were not the most absorbing and important in his own eyes. Oak meditatively looked upon the horizon of circumstances without any special regard to his own standpoint in the midst."

Such selflessness is all too rare!

Nowhere are the contrasts between the two orbits, the self-centred one, and the God-centred one so sharply drawn as in the story of the Passion of Christ. Christ stands out as absolutely God-centred, while in the other characters we find many gradations of self-centredness. The tragedy is due entirely to man's self-centredness.

The facts have peculiar features that we do well to note. Caiaphas, the Pharisees and Sadducees — his enemies — were not the notorious sinners upon whom society looks down, but people who were looked up to as highly respectable citizens, and members of the synagogue. Even people of ill-repute had no quarrel with him, and it was the sneer of his enemies that he was "a friend of publicans and sinners."

Indeed they were not the well known sins which shock respectable people which sent Christ to the cross, but the respectable sins which are in the hearts of all of us. "Not the flesh, but the world, got rid of its King." Worldliness is always the effective enemy of Christ. The desires of the flesh are known and recognisable, but our deepest sin is always something of which we are unconscious, or even of which we may be proud.

They crucified Christ, and saw no harm in it. Self-centred, self-opinionated, themselves and their interests determined their course. The very qualities they claimed as virtues were sinful, when they could thank God that they were not as other men are.

There is nothing so blinding as self-centredness, nor so fatal in its consequences.

## A DAILY PRAYER FOR LENT

"O God, revive Thy Church, beginning with me;  
for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen."

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### THE EUCHARIST

Sunday 10th March at 10-30 a.m. The Family Eucharist.

Preacher: The Bishop of Warrington.

Sunday 24th March at 10-30 a.m.

Preacher: The Rev. Frank Hambrey (U.S.P.G.)

Maunday Thursday 11th April at 7-30 p.m.

Preacher: The Rector

Easter Day 14th April at 10-30 a.m. The Family Eucharist.

Preacher: The Rector

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### HOLY COMMUNION

Ash Wednesday 28th February at 7 a.m. and 10-15 a.m.

Sundays at 8 a.m. 3rd, 24th, 31st March; 7th April.

Sunday at 9 a.m. 17th March.

Sunday at 6-30 p.m. 17th March.

Tuesdays at 10-15 a.m.

Wednesdays at 7 a.m.

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### SERVICES ON ASH WEDNESDAY

7-00 a.m. Holy Communion.

9-15 a.m. Schools Service.

9-45 a.m. Mattins followed by the Litany and Communion Service.

10-15 a.m. Holy Communion.

7-30 p.m. Devotional Service.

Preacher: The Rector

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### WEDNESDAYS AT 7-30 p.m.

On Wednesdays: 28th February, 27th March, and 3rd April,

#### A DEVOTIONAL SERVICE

Preacher: The Rector

On Wednesdays: 6th, 13th and 20th March,

The Bishop of Liverpool will give three Lectures in The Cathedral on

#### "THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH IN THE WORLD"

6th March "THE CHURCH CATHOLIC"

13th March "THE CHURCH PROTESTANT"

20th March "THE CHURCH PILGRIM"

Transport will be arranged for those wishing to attend. Please give your name to the Churchwardens. A bus will be hired if necessary. Do not miss this opportunity of hearing our Bishop.

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### SUNDAYS

Preachers at 10-30 a.m. and 6-30 p.m.

1st Sunday in Lent, 3rd March

10-30 p.m. The Rev. Canon D. W. Gundry, B.D. (Chancellor of Leicester).

6-30 p.m. The Rev. Canon D. W. Gundry, B.D. (Chancellor of Leicester).

2nd Sunday in Lent, 10th March

10-30 a.m. The Rt. Rev. L. A. Brown, M.A., (The Bishop of Warrington).

6-30 p.m. The Rev. Canon C. B. Naylor, M.A. (Chancellor of Liverpool).

3rd Sunday in Lent, 17th March

10-30 a.m. The Venerable Eric Evans (Archdeacon of Warrington).

6-30 p.m. The Rev. T. W. Denham (Area Secretary C.M.S.).

**4th Sunday in Lent, 24th March**

10-30 a.m. The Rev. Frank Hambrey, B.A. (U.S.P.G. Area Secretary).

6-30 p.m. The Rev. Gordon Bates (Diocesan Youth Chaplain).

**5th Sunday in Lent, 31st March**

10-30 a.m. The Rev. Canon G. R. Lindsay, M.A. (Diocesan Adviser in Christian Stewardship).

6-30 p.m. "THE CROSS OF CHRIST"

**6th Sunday in Lent, 7th April**

10-30 a.m. The Rev. Canon L. F. Hopkins, M.A., B.D. (Diocesan Director of Religious Education).

6-30 p.m. The Venerable H. S. Wilkinson, M.A. (Archdeacon of Liverpool).

**14th April**

10-30 a.m. The Rector.

6-30 p.m. The Rector.

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**MOTHERING SUNDAY 24th MARCH**

A special Family Service at 2-30 p.m. for Parents and Children. The preacher will be the Rev. Gordon Bates (Diocesan Youth Chaplain). Children will be taking part in this service. All children will receive a gift card to take to their mother in Church.

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**PALM SUNDAY 7th APRIL**

10-30 a.m. Mattins and Sermon, Preacher: The Rev. Canon L. F. Hopkins M.A., B.D.

The Blessing and Distribution of the Palm Crosses.

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**MAUNDAY THURSDAY 11th APRIL**

7-30 p.m. Sung Eucharist, Preacher: The Rector.

The Preparation for Good Friday.

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**GOOD FRIDAY 12th APRIL**

10-30 a.m. Mattins, Litany and Ante Communions, Preacher: The Rector.

2-3 p.m. A Devotional Hour.

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**HOLY SATURDAY**

7-0 p.m. Evensong with the Lighting of the Paschal Candle.

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**EASTER DAY 14th APRIL**

7-0 a.m. Holy Communion.

8-0 a.m. Holy Communion.

10-30 a.m. The Family Eucharist, Preacher: The Rector.

6-30 p.m. Evensong and Sermon, Preacher: The Rector.

# SPECIAL MUSIC FOR LENT AND EASTER

PASSION SUNDAY 31st MARCH AT 6-30 p.m.

“THE CROSS OF CHRIST”

HALSALL PARISH CHURCH CHOIR

with

CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

(Leader: June Morris)

Organ: Edward Carr

Conductor: Gordon J. P. Hughes

PALM SUNDAY 7th APRIL

RESPONSES: SMITH

ANTHEM: “O SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD” (Goss)

INSTALLATION OF THE HEAD CHOIRBOY AT EVENSONG

MAUNDAY THURSDAY 11th APRIL

7-30 p.m. CHORAL EUCHARIST

8-15 p.m. ORGAN RECITAL

Music by: BACH - MENDELSSOHN

FRANCK - HIMDEMITH

EASTER SUNDAY 14th APRIL

RESPONSES: SMITH

ANTHEM: “THE STRIFE IS O’ER” (Ley)