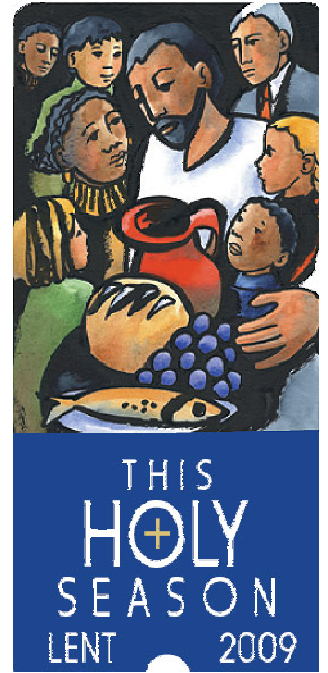


# GRACE & PEACE...AND CHANGE

Life is change. Lent is the season of change and therefore of life.

Lent is both a time and a practice which allows us: to carefully examine the map of personal change; to chart the course of the life which lies before us; to set our feet firmly upon the road we must then travel. The diverse practices of Lent are fundamentally about creating enough space in the midst of the clutter of daily activity so we can do this...and do it creatively.



## **So, how do we change?**

Tradition would suggest the ancient practice of the *fast*. In fact, fasting is the hallmark of the Lenten tradition...it creates a space within which we can gain clarity regarding what we are doing with our lives and clarity regarding what our hearts need and want...the space, also, wherein we win the freedom to be able to make other, truer choices regarding what we fill our lives with and what things within our hearts we wish to honor.

## **So, what is this fasting?**

...it is, traditionally, a fast from food so we can become more familiar with and better understand our hungers and thirsts for the sake of discovering and attending to the deeper Hunger.

...it is also a fast from things and activities which fill our lives and time, e.g. television, the computer, gaming, social events, etc., so we have a little time and space within which to see the truth of our lives, re-capture the dream(s) we've always had that have somehow become lost in the... .."have to do," "must do" and "driven to do" which fills so much of our lives.

## **What are the results of our thoughtful fasting, whatever form it takes?**

We are afforded the opportunity to return from our fast finding that our eating is richer, our working more meaningful and our playing more holy. We might find ourselves, in an Easter mood, saying that we have risen to a new life!

- fr. Ray

(OVER)

*a Lenten poem, a prayer*

I'm hungry  
I thirst  
I lack  
I'm in need

continually  
I seek a remedy  
something to fill  
to satisfy

I would know...  
as the ancient Hebrews knew  
in the desert  
...what manna food  
feeds my hungering spirit  
...which rock's water  
soothes my soul

I would know  
(as surely as a butterfly knows  
a flower's calyx  
holds sweetness & life)  
the feast of the fast

odd, isn't it  
marvelous in a spirit way  
that the embrace of a fast  
can be quite holy  
a teacher of great repute  
guiding us assuredly  
to that for which we long  
...the eternal Hunger within

- fr. Ray  
2/25/09