

By Precepts Taught of Ages Past
Words: 11th Century Latin.
Music: Christliche Gesangbchlein, 1568.

By precepts taught of ages past,
Now let us keep again the fast,
Which, year by year, in order meet
Of forty days is made complete.

The law and seers that were of old
In divers ways this Lent foretold,
Which Christ Himself, the Lord and Guide
Of every season, sanctified.

More sparing therefore let us make
The words we speak, the food we take,
Deny ourselves in mirth and sleep,
In stricter watch our senses keep.

In prayer together let us fall,
And cry for mercy, one and all;
And weep before the Judge, and say,
O turn from us Thy wrath away.

Thy grace have we offended sore
By sins, O God, which we deplore;
Pour down upon us from above
The riches of Thy pardoning love.

Remember, Lord, though frail we be,
That yet Thine handiwork are we:
Nor let the honor of Thy Name
Be by another put to shame.

Forgive the ill that we have wrought,
Increase the good that we have sought;
That we at length, our wanderings o'er,
May please Thee now and evermore.

Blest Three in One, and One in Three,
Almighty God, we pray to Thee,
That Thou wouldst now vouchsafe to bless
Our fast with fruits of righteousness.