

The Fast, as Taught by Holy Lore

Words: Latin, 11th Century.

Music: Rouen church melody.

The fast, as taught by holy lore,
We keep in solemn course once more;
The fast to all men known, and bound
In forty days of yearly round.

The law and seers that were of old
In divers ways this Lent foretold
Which Christ, all seasons' King and Guide,
In after ages sanctified.

More sparing therefore let us make
The words we speak, the food we take,
Our sleep and mirth, and closer barred
Be every sense in holy guard.

In prayer together let us fall,
And cry for mercy, one and all,
And weep before the Judge's feet,
And His avenging wrath entreat.

Thy grace have we offended sore,
By sins, O God, which we deplore;
But pour upon us from on high,
O pardoning One, Thy clemency.

Remember Thou, 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 sin that we have wrought;
Increase the good that we have sought;
That we at length, our wanderings o'er,
May please Thee here and evermore.

We pray Thee, holy Trinity,
One God, unchanging Unity,
That we from this our abstinence
May reap the fruits of penitence.