

# *Embracing the Cross & the Resurrection*

## *Lent & Easter 2011*

### **St. Anne's Ormskirk & St. Elizabeth's, Scarisbrick**

Served by the Benedictine Community of Douai Abbey  
Registered Charity no. 1063237

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#### **St Anne's website:**

[www.st-annes-ormskirk.org.uk](http://www.st-annes-ormskirk.org.uk)

#### **Archdiocesan website:**

[www.liverpoolcatholic.org.uk](http://www.liverpoolcatholic.org.uk)



Dear Parishioners,

#### *Embracing the Cross and Resurrection*

During the season of Lent we are preparing to enter into the mystery of our Salvation—the Easter Mysteries. This means that we should already be looking towards the Cross and the Resurrection while we continue our Lenten practices.

The Gospel for the First Sunday of Lent was ‘The Temptation in the Desert’. This plainly mirrors not only the 40 day journey of Lent but also the struggle which came to its climax on the Cross “The devil left Him ‘until an opportune time’” This ‘opportune time’ was that of the final and crucial struggle between life and death, good and evil, on Calvary. Our Lenten exercises should lead us to the unity with Jesus as He suffers on the Cross which we must embrace with Him.

If the First Sunday directs us to the Cross, the second directs us to the Resurrection. The Gospel story is that of the Transfiguration, when Jesus takes Peter, James and John up Mount Tabor and there gives them a glimpse of His future glory. The vision of Jesus in glory is given to them to give them courage to face the suffering to come, and we too need that assurance of future joy. We, still over a month away from Easter, can take heart in the promise of the joyful celebration of Jesus’ Resurrection, proclaiming His triumph over sin and death.

The story of the Transfiguration looks to the Resurrection in a second and different way. Although the disciples were thrilled by the experience—‘Lord, it is good to be here’, says Peter—they are also frightened. This happens too on Easter Sunday morning, when they find the empty tomb and cannot explain it. They flee in terror. Stories of Jesus’ appearance only increase their fear until at last the message sinks in ‘Yes, He has really risen’. We too need to embrace the empty tomb and the questions it raised. We can take Easter and Jesus’ triumph too easily for granted, since we know the end of the story in a way hidden from the disciples. If we are truly to enter into the Easter mysteries, we need to share not only the Cross and the Easter joy but also the challenge of the empty tomb: this takes us into a fuller understanding of the plan and love of God and to a salvation which is not on human terms but according to the will of God, beyond our understanding and a mystery into which we are invited to enter.

Fr Boniface