

Meditation of Peter

He was bleeding,
my friend Jesus,
skewered to that cross,
like a piece of meat,
great drops of blood trickling slowly to the ground,
from his head,
from his hands,
from his feet.

I watched, stricken with horror,
numbed with grief, '
as the life seeped away.

And I asked myself tearfully,
angrily,
why?

Why had God let it happen?

Why didn't he step in and do something?

What was he thinking of?

It seemed criminal,
a stupid, senseless waste to let such a wonderful man die —
let alone to die like that!

And for a moment my faith was shattered,
in myself,
in God,
in everything.

But then I remembered his words,
just the night before when we had broken bread together:
'This is my blood, shed for you and for many, for the forgiveness of sins
And even as I remembered, so that other time came back,
there by the Sea of Galilee after he had fed the multitude, .
the crowd pressing round him asking for more:
'Whoever comes to me will never be hungry,
whoever believes in me will never be thirsty;
my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink.'
They had been a mystery to me until then, those words,
hard to stomach, if you'll pardon the pun.
But suddenly, there beneath that cross, I began to understand,
just a little,
only the merest fraction,
yet enough to help me realise it wasn't all in vain;
that somehow Jesus was hanging there for me
for you,
for everyone.
I still ask why, mind you, and I think I always will, I
for I'll never get that picture out of my mind;
that picture of Jesus broken on the cross.
Why that way, God, and not another?
Why not something less brutal,
less awful,
less messy?

Yet the strange thing is he never asked why,
not once in all the days I knew him.

Oh, he'd have liked there to be another way, of course;
he didn't want to die any more than the next man.

But he offered his life,

freely,

willingly,

lovingly,

in the conviction that, through his dying, we might truly live.