

# Christ the King Abbey

(Traditional Benedictines)  
(Formerly St Francis of Assisi Chapel)  
[www.ChristTheKingAbbey.org](http://www.ChristTheKingAbbey.org)  
Cullman, Alabama  
Every Sunday: 6:00 AM and 10:00 AM  
Daily: 6:00 AM  
Holy Days of Obligation:  
6:00 AM - 8:00 AM - 7:00 PM

Our Lady of Lourdes Chapel  
Montgomery, Alabama  
10:45 AM  
Only on first Sunday  
of each month

St Pius V Chapel  
Birmingham, Alabama  
9:30 AM  
Every Sunday except  
first Sunday of each month

SEPTUAGESIMA SUNDAY

January 20, 2008 – Purple

Mass of Sunday; no GI; Cr; Pref. Holy Trinity; comm. Ss. Fabian and Sebastian

Weekly Bulletin #1025

## Septuagesima Season

### TRUE SANCTITY

When we read the Lives of the Saints, we are very often impressed by that which is quite dramatic to be found in their lives. But this is not at all important in their lives. What is important in their lives is that what they did was done for Christ. It is this that we see in them which serves as a good symbol of the saint's – any saint's – approach to sanctity. Whatever is done in the way of charity to neighbors, whatever is endured in the way of mortification, whatever is taken in one's stride in the way of either work or pleasure, is directed towards our Lord and is united with His actions while living on earth. True holiness does not depend upon the extraordinary, but upon the ordinary done well. It is an attitude of mind and not a list of holy achievements. Remember, we must be **men of prayer**, not prayerful men. Prayer is not a skill to be learned, it is a way of life.

When we read the lives of the saints we are probably more impressed by their mortifications than by their motives, by their miracles than by their meekness, by their power than by their life of prayer, by their performance than by their perseverance, by the sensation caused than by the submission given. If this is so, we have got it all wrong. The qualities to look for in a saint's life are the not so obvious ones, or at any rate, the not very popular ones, of humility and obedience and charity. Exciting penances are fine (so long as God wants them), but they are hardly ever the final sign that a person has in some way become a saint. Holiness as a state of mind is what we must be concerned about. Where the state of mind is right, everything else follows that is good; where the state of mind is wrong, nothing brings relief or does any good. The saints can take hardships and penance and the disappointments of failure in their stride because there is only one thing that matters to them: GOD'S WILL.

The really important part about saints and sanctity is not a lot of fierce mortifications or a lot of wonderful visions or a lot of awe-inspiring miracles. **The really important part is giving oneself to God** – surrendering and consistently remaining surrendered. Fierce penances are taken up by the saints to show God that soft living is not what they want. What they really want is to share in the sufferings of Christ. They also want to help the world by making up for the sins of mankind. Love and atonement are at the back of all the fasting and scourging. It is not that by fasting and scourging themselves the saints think they can crash their way into sanctity; it is rather that they feel uncomfortable trying to follow our Lord by any but the hard way.

When St. Catherine of Siena was offered by our Lord the choice between a crown of gold and a crown of thorns, she chose at once the crown of thorns. She would not have committed the least sin if she had chosen the crown of gold – our Lord had said she could take whichever she liked – but she knew that the thorns brought her nearer to Christ. She did not say, "Gold is worldly, and I renounce it as a bad and sinful indulgence." What she did say was: "Gold is lovely, but I would feel silly wearing a golden crown when my Lord wore one of thorns."

The good things of God's creation are put aside by the saints **not** because they are seen as evil, but because the absolute goodness of God is wanted more! It is like the child putting aside a toy when the mother comes in after being away for awhile. The saints do not let the means distract them from the end.

Many think that the *Sensus Catholicus* (the Catholic sub-culture) resides in the externals of Catholic life. **It does not!** True *Sensus Catholicus* is to be found almost entirely in what is spoken of here. ☐