

Christ the King Abbey

(Traditional Benedictines)

(Formerly St Francis of Assisi Chapel)

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

SUNDAY AFTER THE ASCENSION

(formerly, Sunday within the Octave)

May 4, 2008 – White

Mass of Sunday; GI; Cr; Pref. Ascension; comm. St. Monica

Weekly Bulletin #1040

The life of a Child of God is a normal life. The life of a Child of Christ is the way of living that normal people live. The life that is lived by a Child of God should not be looked upon as a life of punishment, a life strangled by restraint, discomfort, humiliation, and all such like. However, suffering is usually associated with the living of such a life. When one comes to live the life of a Child of God, that one must have an understanding of and a willingness to suffer as Christ Himself suffered. The life that Jesus lived was a life of love, and so He suffered. Suffering is the usual way of love, so then a life of love is essentially a life of suffering. We speak here of love, giving it its profound meaning. We do not here speak of the emotional or flippant love found in emotional and shallow people. If it is our intention and wish to reach the height of perfection possible for us, we must first come to a clear understanding of this greatest and noblest of all imaginable enterprises. As we improve our understanding of what we are about, we will learn about all that constitutes the true and perfect spiritual life. After all, since the life of a Child of God is a normal life, it is the proper and correct living of the spiritual life that we must come to know. We must quickly come to the realization that the spiritual life is not limited only to those souls who live in monasteries and convents. The spiritual life is for absolutely everybody! We are, everyone of us, called to a life of perfection, and we have all been created for salvation; salvation meaning an eternal existence in the presence of the Triune God. Salvation, as we present it in this instruction, is not to be confused with a life of justification. Even though a justified life can be a good life, even a holy way of living, it does not, however, include salvation. A justified life is a righteous life which makes no effort to practice the heroism that lifts the soul to the levels of sanctity. Sanctification and justification are entirely different in meaning and observation and purpose. The man who is sincerely committed to the attainment of sanctification never lets any human affair interfere with his work of sanctification. This does not mean that such committed souls live outside of God's command to earn their bread by the sweat of their brow in hard work. This does not mean that daily duty must be downgraded, as being improper for the soul striving to reach perfection. Daily duty is living. Was not Christ Himself bound to a life of daily duty? With proper understanding, the performance of daily duty is not necessarily mundane, it is heroic, and can be, and often is, the ladder which reaches to the heights of perfection.

It sometimes happens that individuals appear who have a distorted mindset concerning the work of salvation. These individuals, perhaps because of scrupulosity, improper training and formation of life, or because of bitter zeal, or because of lack of learning and education, or perhaps, even, because of their own need for reparation for their own former life of sin, have developed a very wrong and unnatural approach to the spiritual life. They have a notion of spirituality which is forbidding, harsh, and full of punishment. They have developed a false life that excludes anyone and everyone who fails to live life as prescribed by them. For these people, the spiritual life is a life of imprisonment and misery. Freedom, joy, happiness, serenity, and peace of mind are all totally foreign to them. They are such sad saints. Superiors in religious institutes, parents of children, instructors of religion, are most often feared, rather than loved. And individuals under such guidance soon develop an exterior behavior which demonstrates holiness while their very souls are shriveled with sadness and fear and emptiness. The interior life of such people is not life at all. Religious behavior for these unfortunate souls is purely pasted on. Worse still, these individuals become masters of deceit, and the life they live is nothing more than a lie, to themselves, as well as to every onlooker that crosses their path. Deceit becomes a way of life for these very sad people. They define religious living, but they do not know religious living, and their entire existence becomes fruitless and useless and dead. Where this kind of life is lived, the ones subjected to it will, at the first opportunity, run from it, never to come back. Escape is all they think of.

When such an escape (the "beautiful freedoms of life") finally arrives, the poor "liberated" victims quickly begin a feverish work to erase every trace of the former life of unhappiness and restraint. How often does it happen that they replace that which was unreasonably severe and restraining with newly found "freedoms" of sex, drugs, debauchery of every sort, departure from every religious practice and affiliation, and, with willing colleagues, they enjoy the winds of their newly found "freedoms" and rush right into the waiting jaws of hell. Unfortunately, this torment is not restricted to uniformed and unsuspecting youths. This ferocious torment is found (especially today) to be an affliction also of