

# 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

TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

August 3, 2008 – Green

Mass of Sunday; Gl; Cr; Pref. Trinity

Weekly Bulletin #1053

*O Lord, uphold us and  
our absent brethren.*

## ***SPIRITUAL COMMUNION***

*(Part one)*

The greatest tragedy in this age of confusion and apostasy has been the attempted destruction of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and belief in the Real Presence of Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. In great measure this has been accomplished. For the majority of the world, the true Mass has been completely, or almost completely, wiped out, and vast numbers of those who call themselves Catholics, even priests and bishops, do not actually believe in the Real Presence at all. In these days very few people can attend the true, traditional Mass, offered by an unquestionably valid priest who was ordained in the traditional rites by a bishop himself consecrated in the unquestionably valid traditional rites. A man, no matter how devout and learned he may be, unless he has been ordained validly, cannot consecrate the Holy Eucharist even if he uses the correct matter, form (words), and intention. He has not the power, in which case the faithful only receive bread, not Our Lord. This is a tragedy beyond understanding.

We live in an age where traditional Catholic churches are few and far between. Thus, very few people can receive Holy Communion often, much less every day. This is a trial for the devout faithful who earnestly desire to assist at the Holy Sacrifice every day, or at least on Sundays, as one should in normal times, because often this is an impossibility due to lack of a true priest or too great a distance. What are the faithful to do? Should they attend any nearby Church, even though not fully traditional? No, for the same reason that a Catholic cannot attend a Protestant service. In this case, out of reluctant necessity, the faithful should stay at home and say their prayers at home, but *not* in the spirit of the so called “home-aloners,” who do not go to church because they do not believe that anyone is a Catholic (except themselves, of course) or that there are no valid priests any more. For this reason we highly recommend what we call the “Home Altar,” a small area or room in your home which you set aside as a chapel or prayer area where you can go to have some recollection and an atmosphere of holiness. There you can pray the Mass by reading your Missal, reciting the Rosary and other prayers, doing spiritual reading and meditation, or just sitting or kneeling and adoring God in silence. If you cannot make it to Mass, for one legitimate reason or another, this is the next best thing, and God will accept and bless your efforts. However, you must not confine your praying to your Home Altar, you should try to pray everywhere, for “that man prays very little who prays only when on his knees,” writes Blessed Claude de la Columbiere. Neither must you reserve your praying just for on Sundays, for if one only prays on Sundays, he will probably not really pray even then. Getting back to the question of Communion, what is to be done? This brings us to the very important topic of *spiritual Communion*, which is a practice that is often neglected, forgotten, underestimated, and misunderstood, being made more complicated than it really is. When a spiritual Communion is properly made, tremendous graces and blessings are obtained for the soul.

Most unfortunately, the holy doctrine and practice of spiritual Communion, being little known, is even less practiced. This wonderful practice is very much esteemed by the saints and extolled and recommended by the Church as an incomparable source of grace and holiness. The Catechism of the Council of Trent says: “The shepherds of souls should teach their flock that there is not only one manner of receiving the admirable fruits of the Sacrament of the Eucharist, but that there are two: sacramental Communion and spiritual Communion.” What then, is spiritual Communion? The great St. Thomas gives us a brief but perfect answer: “Spiritual Communion consists in an ardent desire of receiving Jesus Christ in the Holy Sacrament and in embracing Him with the same love as if one had actually received Him.” By spiritual Communion we invite Jesus Christ, present in the Blessed Sacrament, into our hearts by faith, desire, and love. Then, as if we had actually sacramentally received Him, we make our thanksgiving. We should converse with our Divine Guest with holy affections – adore, thank, praise, bless Him, beg His favors for ourselves and others, or simply remain in His presence in silent adoration and love. This is truly a Communion, as the Council of Trent expressly states, by which we actually participate in a considerable proportion of the graces and benefits of the Eucharist when it is not possible to receive sacramental Communion. It is an act of spiritual union with the Eucharistic Christ. Of course, by spiritual Communion we do not receive His human nature – His Body, Blood, and Soul – but it does unite us with His Divine Person and Nature, in a mysterious and special manner. It is sometimes called “interior Communion,” Communion of the heart, invisible or mystical Communion. It is also called a “virtual Communion,” because it *does* have the power of making us spiritually participate in the fruits of the Eucharist without any externally visible sign or action.

*(To be continued)*