

Christ the King Abbey

(Traditional Benedictines)

Cullman, Alabama

www.ChristTheKingAbbey.org

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

Saint Pius V Chapel

Birmingham, Alabama

9:30 AM

Every Sunday except
first Sunday of each month

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

June 21, 2009 – Green

Mass of Sunday GI; Cr; comm St. Aloysius Gonzaga C

Preface of Holy Trinity

By RICHARD GRÄF, CS.Sp.

THE POWER OF PRAYER

Weekly Bulletin #1100

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

Part IV

THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER IS THAT THE FAITH WILL NEVER BECOME A LIVING PERSONAL POSSESSION FROM THE MERE FACT OF HAVING SACRAMENTS AND A BODY OF TEACHING.

One chances to be born into the Catholic Church; one has never adopted an affirmative attitude to it interiorly; one sees in it an institution that claims and demands and orders only, never offers or bestows. One will have the least possible dealings with such an institution! Does the explanation for all this lie partly, perhaps, in the fact that such people have never learnt to pray properly and so have lost touch with God and religious practices?

IT IS AT OUR MOTHER'S KNEE THAT WE LEARN THE FAITH AND LEARN TO PRAY. WE MAY FORGET ALL ELSE IN LIFE, BUT NEVER WHAT WE HAVE LEARNT FROM HER. That knowledge accompanies us throughout our entire lives. Religion is thus acquired through every pore, so to speak, of our being; it becomes our very substance, flesh of our flesh, bone of our bone, whereas many things we learn later are grasped merely with the memory and understanding. **The substance of religion, the capital on which we have to live, must be imparted in the home; else in all probability it will never be fully acquired in school or church or even in religious life.** A professor of theology once confessed that his life of study had added nothing as regards essentials to what he had learnt at his mother's knee. And Bishop Sailer observes that a man learns more during the first three years of his life than he does in any three years of university studies.

The home, the family, is the best school of prayer; and the best teacher is the mother. None other knows her child as she; none other has so much leisure to devote to it, or love to bestow on it. If she is acquainted even slightly with the art of prayer she should have no difficulty in introducing her child to it. If Tertullian's word has general relevance: *anima humana naturaliter christiana*, the soul of man is Christian by nature and from the very beginning, it is especially true of an innocent child's soul. The soul of a baptized child is utterly filled with God. True, the soul of an adult is a temple of God (1 Cor. 3,16), a dwelling-place of the Blessed Trinity (*cf.* John 14, 23); but all too often with grown people a massive wall of separation made up of egotism and selfishness has been erected between the soul and its God, rendering it practically impossible to have any perception of Him. In the child, it is true, a self-centered attitude is also to be found; it is but a natural trait as yet, not a sinful one; and so children live habitually in the closest union with God. Indeed the world of the supernatural is frequently for them a far more real world than we imagine; they certainly show a remarkably sensitive appreciation of it. For them God and our Blessed Saviour, Our Lady and the Angel Guardian, are palpable realities, while we have in great part lost our fine touch for these things. **The external world of appearances is OUR real world; the invisible, the supernatural, is scarcely familiar to us any more.** It should be a light task for a mother to make the supernatural world more and more of a reality for her child. Obviously this is not achieved by the mere recital of one or two prayers suitable to little ones, nor by being satisfied if some forms of prayer are learnt by heart or recited by mere rote with little or no grasp of what they mean. The child should be trained as early as possible to say its prayers in a personal way and be held to a self-reliant method of praying. From its childish world of ideas and its present sum of knowledge it must be shown how to speak in its own way with our Blessed Lord and his holy Mother, and with its angel guardian. "Out of the mouth of infants and sucklings thou hast perfected praise" (Ps. 8, 3; Matt. 21,16). Just as parents are intensely gratified with their children's first attempts to speak or walk, so too, without a doubt, the Almighty rejoices at the first attempts these little ones make to pray to Him. What fragrant perfume arises to His throne from the incense of the prayers of such. It may be that God has more relish for the innocent prattle of a loving child than for the prayer that mounts to Him from a learned brain, set out in finely moulded phrases, in periods matched for brilliance by the depth of thought they enshrine! If God is gladdened by the life and movement of irrational nature he will surely take pleasure in the efforts which little human beings make to pray to Him and in the first stirring of souls which, barely awakening to life, direct themselves up to Him.