

shall have to reckon constantly with distractions. In theory He is that object; but in practice it is the petty commonplace things of life, our work, our fellow men that interest us much more than God does, God our highest and most lovable Good! Were it otherwise we would not be drawn away and diverted from Him. We are invariably drawn by what most interests us.

What is to be done then? Use our will-power? No; willing or knowing merely does not bring success. **We must strive to experience God in mental prayer by the light of a living faith. From this living faith stems a living, supernatural love.** Had we this love we could be distracted no longer; God would in truth be our 'distraction' during work. If He were really the chief object of our interest nothing else could attract or allure us. "But the things that were gain to me, the same I have counted loss for Christ . . .

I count them but as dung that I may gain Christ and may be found in Him" (Phil. 3, 7).

By night we have to get our bearings by the stars; their splendour never ceases to allure. But when the sun rises and its first rays gild the horizon the stars begin to pale. They remain in the heavens during the daytime but they are no longer visible; the strong sunlight has caused them to 'disappear'; they have lost their power to attract. "No man drinking old wine hath presently a mind to new" (Luke 5, 39).

Vocal prayer is difficult. With our mere wills we are powerless in the long run to make headway against distractions. Only he who experiences God in mental prayer, the mystic whose heart is inflamed with love for Him, can pray without distraction. It is only from inner depths that vocal prayer can be invigorated. He who has not yet attained to this inner depth of prayer must not be surprised or disappointed if distractions trespass on him. Such indeliberate distractions have nothing to do with sin. Only he must be very patient with himself; he must try to be recollected, place himself in the presence of the object of his love and gather up once more the threads of prayer. Here too the words: "In your patience you shall possess your souls" (Luke 21, 19) have their relevance.

If there be question of private, personal prayer the best way of combating distractions is to make them the subject of prayer. I take the thing that so tends to absorb me as to lead me from God and I make it the topic of my conversation with Him, so that what was a distraction for me now becomes the link binding me to God. Thus used, distractions will not divert me from the subject-matter of my prayer.

1. There will be Catechism class after 10:00 AM Mass this morning.
2. Monday August 24, 2009 is the Feast of St Bartholomew, the Apostle. St. Bartholomew was a doctor in the Jewish law, and was a dear friend of St. Philip. It was said of him that he was a man "in whom there was no guile." He was a man whose mind was always open to the truth. Let us pray to him and ask him to help us as we struggle to live with the truth in the midst of a time when confusion of thought is so prevalent.
3. Friday August 28, 2009, is the Feast of St. Augustine. Bad company was responsible for the early life of this man. Since his time, many have used him as an excuse for the wicked lives they live, arguing that when they get ready, they will turn "good", and all will be well with them. As in the case of St. Paul, when the grace of God came to his attention, his turning away from evil was automatic, and his work to stay in the grace of God was ever before his eyes and effort. He worked to be a saint, and a saint he became...
4. Saturday August 29, 2009 is the observance of the Beheading of St. John the Baptist. It was to satisfy the rancor of a wicked and evil woman that brought about the ignominious death of this most wonderful Saint, Pray to him.
5. Please pray for all the Sick and Shut-ins of our Chapels. Especially do I ask for your prayers for Rosemary Larkin of Saltillo, Mississippi, earlier, whenever possible she made the difficult trip to Cullman for Mass and the Sacraments.
6. **Please be conscientious about reading with much care, each week, the wonderful discourses on prayer by Father Gräf. Save them for future reference.**
7. **MASSES FOR THE WEEK: (Father Abbot Leonard's schedule only)**
SUNDAY: For the People of our Chapels
MONDAY: Special Int. Daniel and Victoria Henderson
TUESDAY: Special Int. of the Donor
WEDNESDAY: Dec. Stephen Holup
THURSDAY: For Dr. Leo Bolles and Family
FRIDAY: For Mary Morgan
SATURDAY: Special Int. Sister Mary Claretia

A Thought To Remember...

Even though a healthy fear of hell may serve to detach a soul from sin, the HOPE of attaining to the Supreme Goodness of God can induce a soul to put the precious force of grace to work more effectively in acts of virtue. Hence, the need of bringing souls to HOPE by means of LOVE, for LOVE precedes HOPE. One hopes only for that good which one loves. HOPE IS A LOVE WHICH WAITS AND ASPIRES.