

# Christ the King Abbey

(Traditional Benedictines)

Cullman, Alabama

[www.ChristTheKingAbbey.org](http://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

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

September 20, 2009 – Green

Mass of Sunday Gl; Cr; Preface of Holy Trinity

Weekly Bulletin #1113

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

# THE POWER OF PRAYER

By

RICHARD GRÄF, CS.Sp. Part 11

1957

## FUNCTION OF PRAYER IN THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

### I. PRAYER A SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE

Why do we pray? As all else, prayer serves for the glorification of God. “To the King of ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honour and glory for ever and ever! Amen” (1 Tim. 1, 17). God gives to no other the honour that is due to Himself; “I will not give My glory to another” (Is. 48, 11). He has created all things for Himself; they have all to serve and worship Him (Deut. 32, 2). Even in the prayer of petition, though many are not conscious of this, God's honour and glory have priority. For did we not recognise Him as the omnipotent, the good and merciful God, ready to help us, we would not approach Him with our supplications and requests.

In prayer, then, through a lively faith we reach a knowledge of God. There is question, however, not so much of faith for faith's sake as for love's sake. Without faith there can be no supernatural love. Love is indeed the highest virtue, the bond of perfection (Col. 3, 14); but the most important initial virtue is faith; for faith is the root virtue, the basic virtue. “Without faith it is impossible to please God” (Hebr. 11, 9). Only from the root of faith can love flower. Without root there is no blossom, no fruit. We are here on earth in order to know God and thereby to come to a love of Him:

### **To know God is man's first duty. He who does not know Him does not love Him.**

If knowledge and love of God are the purpose of our life they are also the purpose of our prayer. The most important and urgent question for us, therefore, must be how can we attain to a living faith. Not by study and the acquiring of knowledge, though these are helps, valuable helps but no more. One may reach a profound knowledge of the truths of faith; such knowledge, however, is not faith. If you had never tasted an apple or smelt a rose you might learn much from books or lectures. But that would be mere theory, mere knowledge of the understanding, and nothing in comparison to what would be conveyed to you by actually savouring the apple or rose. One must not poetise about an apple; one must bite into it, says Goethe (Faust II, I). You may know all that the theological and ascetical books say about God, but it is only by a living faith that you come to a salutary knowledge of Him. By faith you “see” Him and reach an awareness of Him (John 7, 17). “Taste and see that the Lord is sweet” (Ps. 33, 9).

At the Presentation of the Divine Child in the Temple of Jerusalem many had sight of Him; two aged persons alone recognized Him, Simeon and Anna (Luke 2, 25.). The people who saw and heard Christ during His public life gained a considerable knowledge of the Master's personality; they knew His sermons, were conversant with His miracles; but Himself they knew not. Not even His apostles of themselves knew Him for what He was. Peter confessed Him, indeed, as Christ, the Son of the living God; but the Saviour assured him: “Flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee but My Father who is in heaven” (Matt. 16, 17). Just as through his faculty of understanding man is far superior to the brute animal, so through his faculty of supernatural faith the baptized person is far superior to the unaided natural man. As the intellect is part of man's outfit, so is faith part of the baptized person's. And as the intellect has to be developed by us, so too our faith. **To be Continued...**