

# Christ the King Abbey

(Traditional Benedictines)

[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

Third Sunday after Epiphany

January 24, 2010 – Green

Mass of Sunday Gl; Cr; comm St Timothy Preface Holy Trinity

Weekly Bulletin #1132  
*O Lord, uphold us and our  
absent brethren.*

## THE POWER OF PRAYER

By

RICHARD GRÄF, CS.Sp. Part 22

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With great generosity, then, we should abandon ourselves, absolutely to the divine will. Dying thus to self we are rewarded a hundredfold. And it is in prayer that we are paid so richly. Submission to God's will makes the light of faith grow increasingly brighter within; and when we come to pray we experience the reality of divine love. When Christ, the Day Star, rises in our hearts (2 Pet. 1, 19), in these hearts of ours that hunger for light and joy, He will illumine them in such measure as to inflame them with love and draw them mightily to Himself. Even faintly to touch God with one's heart, says St Augustine, is great blessedness. God is the life (1 John 5, 20); He is come that we may possess it superabundantly. That life is meant to flow out unceasingly upon the world, and yet here we are pining away in the desert! "My soul is as earth without water" (Ps. 142, 6). Prayer it is that will enrich us with fuller understanding of the mystery of God (Col. 2, 2). "They shall be inebriated with the plenty of Thy house" (Ps. 35, 9).

If in the natural order genuine love is pure unalloyed happiness, it should in the supernatural order also be capable of filling our hearts with happiness. In the struggle to reach the nobler life no theory avails: life has to be pitted against life if the higher, grander ideal of living is to rise superior over the lower. How, for example, could we overcome the strong allurements of passion if we had not a stronger, more comprehensive attachment with which to dispel them? Experience of life offers countless proofs that mind and will are in the long run quite powerless against the force of love. Why then do we not take literally Christ's great commandment: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart"? We are content with the least, the lowest grade of love, that of the will. And yet our wills cannot hold us for the space of three Our Fathers in the presence of the Person we address in prayer. Our Blessed Lord asks for our whole heart, the whole man. As it is, we have diluted the strong wine of our love for God to such a degree that there remains scarcely any more love, only a little goodwill. That makes the Christian life no easier: or if it does, it is only for the moment. In the long run things are harder.

He who refuses to take love seriously cannot take Christian faith seriously either. Without love everything is reduced to a level of compulsion, of hard and uphill constraint. In love there is a lofty buoyant strain, an element of exuberant joy. "Blood of Christ inebriate me, intoxicate me"! Wherein lies the thrust, the penetrative force of Christianity? Faith that works by love is the dynamic force which triumphs over the world (1 John 5, 4). Only we must always return in prayer to drink from the spring whose water is life (Apoc. 21, 6). "God is incomprehensible, incalculable in His glory and majesty. He who has experienced God is bathed in the sunlight of life and can never leave his side". He is rooted and founded in faith and in love (Eph. 3, 17). His house is built upon rock (Matt. 7, 24); nothing can confound Him. But how will the man who lives in the dark, upon whom the sun of life has not yet arisen, be able to enlighten others? How will streams of living water flow out from him upon the world if his broken cistern does not contain enough water even to slake his own thirst? How make his Christian faith capable of attracting others if he himself has scarcely tasted of the "heavenly powers"? Our Blessed Lord presents himself before us, inviting; we have only to come to him. He who within himself experiences naught of Christ has failed the test.

