

Christ the King Abbey

(Traditional Benedictines)

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 of Lent

March 7, 2010 – Purple

Mass of Sunday no Gl; Cr; Preface of Lent

Weekly Bulletin #1138

THE POWER OF PRAYER Part 26

RICHARD GRÄF, CS.Sp.

For the laity.

A few samples of children's efforts at prayer may be given. Little three-year old Wolfgang visits our Lord in the church regularly with his mother when out shopping. Ready to leave he kneels quickly on a bench and takes leave of the Saviour . . . "Of the Holy Ghost. Amen. Dear God, bless papa and mamma also. I will be back shortly. Mamma too will be back shortly and darling aunt too. Of the Holy Ghost. Amen." One of his night prayers: it was during the war, his father was a soldier on the eastern front. Uncle B. is a neighbour. "Of the Holy Ghost. Amen. Dear God, bless papa and uncle B. also; send papa good comrade. Make papa bring with him bike and motor bike for Wolfgang, and a whole lot of little buckets and shovels." Another night prayer: the father had returned on leave and wished before returning to the army to make a fairly long journey to visit relatives. The mother thought it would be too costly; she got worked up and wished to make it clear by voice and gesture that the journey was not feasible. The father, a quiet man, let the storm pass over without a word. Wolfgang witnessed the scene; that night he knelt in his cot and prayed: "Of the Holy Ghost. Amen. Dear God, help daddy; mamma chekey (cheeky) with him. Of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

A young lady teacher abroad gave German lessons to the little daughter of a noble family. The child was extremely intelligent but had not yet begun school though she had been admitted to Holy Communion at a comparatively early age. The mother accompanied her regularly to the altar. This day the little one showed no signs of finishing her thanksgiving; and though the mother told her it was time for them to be going, she pleaded for a few extra moments. The mother waited and then gave her another sign it was time to get home, but the child excused herself again. "What had you to say to Our Lord to-day that you kept me so long?" asked the mother when they were in the open. "Mamma" the child replied, "you know the lovely German story of Red Ridinghood the teacher told me yesterday, I had of course to tell it quickly to Jesus to-day."

As the children grow older their speech and conversation with the Saviour assume naturally a different form. Little Pete, seven years of age, reports to *his* spiritual Father on how he prays:

"I say to Jesus: I will be good at my books each day; I have to be, seeing that I receive You each day into my heart. But I am not yet able for all my lessons; I still make mistakes in spelling. I will be careful, so that You can see the progress I am making. I love You, dear Jesus, with my whole heart... At home I am not too bold, though daddy is often angry with me because at meals I get up without leave and because I quarrel with Otilie. I should be punished for this, but so far have not been and I hope I won't be . . ." Or:

"Dear Jesus, I love You evermore. I love Your Mother too. But I don't know if You love me. I still have so many faults. I don't always obey when told not to quarrel with Otilie but to leave her alone. We have once actually come to blows; I won't behave like that again, I promise, dear Saviour. I am as lazy as a marmot, and often sulk when it comes to learning my verbs. I contradict nurse, and am self-willed when told to eat my soup or fish. But I will do my best to improve, holy Jesus, so that You may be glad when You see how I go to Holy Communion each morning." At Mass he prays: "Holy Jesus, grant that I grow up big and sensible; keep and bless daddy and mammy, Hans and Otilie and all the others."

At night he says the Rosary for his father's conversion, adding after each mystery: "Dear Jesus, convert daddy." At the end of the Rosary he prays: "My Jesus, let me die rather than commit a mortal sin." When he has to leave the church at the end of a visit, he says: "Holy Jesus, I would like to stay longer with You, but I have to learn my lessons. I won't forget You and will work for You. The priest says that we pray when we work, provided we work for You." A short time before his death his father asked him what he was talking to God about: "About you," he whispered.