

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

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

June 20, 2010 – Green

Mass of Sunday G1; Cr; Preface Holy Trinity

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THE POWER OF PRAYER

RICHARD GRÄF, C.S.Sp.

Part 32

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The person addressed is, then, fixed for us where there is question of specific formulae and set words in prayer. It is otherwise in informal private prayer. Whom are we to address in this case? Briefly, we should address the person to whom we feel specially drawn. In the supernatural life we can allow ourselves to be led by the heart's attraction. If we have a great devotion to the Blessed Eucharist. . . we may direct our prayers as a general rule to our Eucharistic Lord. If drawn towards the mystery of the Blessed Trinity, like Elisabeth of the Holy Trinity, we could direct our prayers to the Three Divine Persons. When our piety has a pronounced Marian stamp we might best choose our Lady as the person with whom to enter into contact. In this matter complete freedom should prevail. We have no right to lay down fixed paths for the action of the Holy Spirit. "The Spirit breatheth where He will" (John 3, 8); "Where the Lord's Spirit is, there is freedom" (2 Cor. 3, 17).

To whom should one direct one's prayers in case one feels no particular urge one way or the other, as is usual with beginners? Though familiar speech with any person in heaven is always a prayer, still, from a theological and psychological point of view, it is not altogether a matter of indifference whom we address. For a start it seems best to choose our divine Lord as the intimate Friend to commune with. "I assure you, my daughters," writes St Teresa, "I regard as dangerous that way in the spiritual life which dispenses with all reference to the sacred humanity of our Redeemer. It is not a good sign, I think, if the soul does not occupy itself frequently with that subject" (*Interior Castle*).

Some theological reasons for this may be adduced. The heavenly Father, the Blessed Trinity dwell in light inaccessible (1 Tim. 5, 16). We reach them at the cost of much effort. For beginners God is a God afar off (Jer. 23, 23), whereas the Saviour is the "Son of Man" (Matt. 16, 13) and for that reason is much nearer to us. He became Man; He was made in the likeness of men and in habit found as a man (Phil. 2, 7). We are familiar with His life, more so perhaps than with the life of any other historical person. Countless paths lead us to Him. "Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly vocation, consider the Apostle and High-priest of our confession, Jesus" (Hebr. 3, 1). Christ came on earth in order precisely to lead us to the Father; He is the way to the Father, our only Mediator, "No man cometh to the Father but by Me" (John 14, 6). Dwelling in our midst, Christ sole preoccupation is to lead us to the Father, to fulfill His mediating role as perfectly as we will allow Him.

Christ is the sole principle of the supernatural life in all baptized persons, and is as effectively active in each one as though this individual were the only baptized person in the world. A comparison from the vegetative world will illustrate this: In every apple tree, for example, the same principle is effective, but it operates in the individual tree as though it were the only apple tree in the world. Seeing I am so peculiarly the subject of our Lord's interest it behooves me to place Him in the very centre of my life and my prayer. By faith (baptism) Christ dwells in our hearts" (Eph. 3, 17). "Abide in Me, and I in you" (John 15, 4). You, the Son of God, are the origin of my life; You bear me up in your hands; You love me with an everlasting love (Jer. 31, 3) and have loved me before my heart could love You. In his book of the *Exercises* St Ignatius remarks that we should converse with the Saviour as a friend does with his particular friend.