

# 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  
First Sunday  
of each month only.

St Pius V Chapel  
Birmingham, Alabama  
9:30 AM  
Second, Fourth, and Fifth  
Sundays of each month only.

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

September 5, 2010 – Green

Mass of Sunday GI; Cr; Preface Holy Trinity

Weekly Bulletin #1164

## THE POWER OF PRAYER

RICHARD GRÄF, CS.Sp.

Part 40

1957

Many words will be needed at the beginning of our prayer, for it is then we are chiefly active. When, however, through the exercise of faith love begins to quicken, we become progressively more silent, recollected and inward. God then begins to act. He speaks, and man is silent. "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth" (1 Kings 3, 9). The soul is now less concerned with itself than with "the things that are Jesus Christ's" (Phil. 2, 21). The Cure of Ars once asked a peasant who for hours long could kneel before the Tabernacle, never using a prayer book, what exactly he was doing. "I look at Him, he replied, and He looks at me." Or, as a Negro child once said to a missionary who asked him what he was doing so long before the Blessed Sacrament: "I let God bathe my soul in His light."

Language can assume countless refinements and nuances of meaning; it can sparkle with a myriad facets; it can throw back minute and subtle pulsations of soul and heart, and this perhaps not so much through the words themselves as through the accompanying echoes and undertones which a sensitive ear can detect in speech. It is the organist's artistry to touch the right stops at a given moment. Human language, too, like a mighty organ has scores of stops which can generally be touched inadvertently, as it were. We talk to a dignitary in a quite different way than to a little child, to our mother than to one who is our brother, or again to a friend than to one to whom we may not warm. We adjust ourselves quite unconsciously to circumstances. From the tone-colour and "register" in which we speak can be accurately gauged how we stand in relation to our conversation partner. From the atmosphere prevailing between two people conversing with each other we can know without more ado the degrees of intimacy with which they talk. Here, also, we can apply the phrase, "Thy speech doth discover thee" (Matt. 26, 73). It is only with strangers with whom we have had no previous contact that we speak in a factual, colourless manner.

What holds for speech with our fellow men holds, too, when we speak with God. In what manner do we address Him? Many people adopt the factual, sober way they employ when conversing with strangers. God is for them the great "Unknown God" (Acts 17, 23). Did not the Saviour himself complain to the apostles: "Have I been so long a time with you, and have you not known Me?" (John 14, 9). If our relations with God, with our Saviour, were on terms of intimacy the way we converse with them in prayer would show it. It is not possible to set down rules as regards what "register" should be adopted when praying.

From the atmosphere prevailing between speakers we can conclude to the manner, the "tone" of their talk. As soon as that atmosphere changes, immediately the tone changes also. A boy will make a request of his father in a very different tone when he brings home a good school report from the form he uses when he is the bearer of a bad one. In the latter case he will hardly venture to make the request himself; he will invite his sister or his mother to act as go-between. So in approaching God, if we are conscious of having offended him we adopt a different attitude to that we would adopt after gaining some signal victory over ourselves. In many cases we will not venture to approach Him direct but will look out for intercessors to plead our cause, asking our Lady or some saint to act for us.