

# 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.

TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

October 10, 2010 – Green

Mass of Sunday Gl Cr Preface Holy Trinity

Weekly Bulletin #1169

## THE POWER OF PRAYER

RICHARD GRÄF, CS.Sp.

Part 43

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### INTRODUCTION TO MENTAL PRAYER

Mental prayer is an independent power in its own right. To spend fifteen or thirty minutes in the presence of the living God, to engage in familiar intercourse with a Divine Being, to bathe in the full splendor of the Sun of Glory in order to be enlightened and warmed by its rays—have such things no sense or meaning? Surely, as the result of daily familiar contact with a Divine Friend we must become other, better beings. “Tell me with whom you converse, and I will tell you what you are.” *Ordo orandi, ordo vivendi*. He who prays well will as a result attain by degrees to a life of virtue.

Change, improvement, if it is to last, has to come from within. Attempts from without are much more difficult; they take more time also and achieve much less. Hence our Blessed Lord inveighed against the Pharisees for scouring the outward part of cup and dish; they thought by attention to outward cleansing they had done everything demanded. “First, make clean the inside of the cup and of the dish, that the outside may become clean” (Matt. 23, 25). He who daily converses with God and submits to his divine influence cannot but become a better man by a gradual process from within.

Experience shows clearly enough that resolutions do not invariably give us the success we look for, and definitely not a crowd of them. We should rather be content with *one* resolution, driving it home again and again. In many meditation books, however, the subject matter keeps continually changing; so the resolution, which is the natural outcome of the meditation, changes too. If in these circumstances we insisted on making the same uniform resolution we would be doing violence to the subject matter. Were we on the other hand to tag on mechanically our resolution to the end of the meditation, then meditation and resolution would have little or nothing to do with each other.

Mental prayer, then, while constituting an independent power in its own right has not only a meaning but a very definite aim. Final sense and purpose of human life, and consequently of prayer, is to know God by a lively faith so as to abide with Him in love, in a love that is genuine.

To know God is man's first duty;

He who knows Him not cannot love Him.

Hence mental prayer serves in the first instance the purposes of faith, and ultimately those of love. In prayer we have to learn to know God better in order to love Him more intimately in prayer and in our lives. If the purpose of our prayers is to know God, it is all the more so the purpose of mental prayer. “I will not let thee go except thou bless me” (Gen. 32, 26).