

1. MAY THE HOLY SPIRIT BE UPON YOU - - NOW AND FOREVER. AMEN. This is the prayer of our Religious Members for you.
2. WEDNESDAY, FRIDAY AND SATURDAY of this week are Ember Days, and are days of FAST and Abstinence. Meat may be eaten once on Wednesday and Saturday. Ember Days are the days at the beginning of the Four Seasons - Days of fast and abstinence - their purpose being to thank God for the gifts of nature, and to beg for a bountiful and safe from harm harvest.
3. Please pray for the Sick and Shut-Ins of our Chapels, especially remembering Al Sachs.
4. In a very special way, please pray for the welfare of Christ the King Abbey - WEDNESDAY OF THIS WEEK.
5. Confessions are heard before Masses on Sunday. Do not neglect this great source of Grace and protection.
6. Next Sunday is TRINITY SUNDAY - the end of the Easter Season. Prepare yourselves for the ATHANASIAN CREED which is said on that day.
7. MASSES FOR THE WEEK:

SUNDAY:	Welfare of Religious Communities - Pentecost Sunday
MONDAY:	Dec. Mary Urban
TUESDAY:	Special Int. Virginia Balnis
WEDNESDAY:	Welfare Frater Francis, O.S.B. and Frater Paul, O.S.B.
THURSDAY:	Special Int. Ann McNevin Johnson
FRIDAY:	Dec. Rita Donahue
SATURDAY:	Sec. John Steele

Who is called to salvation? - - EVERYBODY! Who is called to practice whatever it takes to achieve salvation? - - EVERYBODY! Who is called to live an ascetical life of some form proper to one's state of life? - - EVERYBODY!--- however few there are that are interested in living such a life, or who place importance on such a life. The Catholic Encyclopedia tells us that the word "asceticism" comes from the Greek language, and it means practice, bodily exercise, and more especially, athletic training. The early Christians adopted the word to signify the "practice" of spiritual things, or spiritual exercises performed for the purpose of acquiring habits of virtue. Asceticism is not to be confused with austerity. Austerity is something entirely different. It would be an error - though it is very often done, especially today - to measure one's virtue by the extent and character of one's bodily penances and mortifications. Neither is asceticism to be identified with mysticism, even though they are often found together.

In today's church - indeed, in today's traditionalist catholic church, role models are almost totally extinct, and a well intentioned Catholic oftentimes seeks out the picture books to learn about the spiritual life. It is an even greater difficulty for the well intentioned Catholic that so many of our young Traditional Catholic priests and leaders, because of their youth, are forced to teach picture book tradition and spirituality. Consequently, the present day's atmosphere of spirituality, so greatly influenced by an inordinate attachment to externals (expert use of externals gives the impression of progress and growth to a people literally starving for religious stability) and erroneous legalisms, has taken on a very manufactured countenance, even a rather distorted countenance. It is not without just cause that traditionalists are looked down upon as right-wing radicals! Computer powered scholarship, lacking in prudence and wisdom, aggravates the problem.

Worldliness and the spiritual life simply cannot live together, and worldly people condemn the spiritual life saying that it is only for those unusual people who have fled from reality to live the ascetical life of monks and nuns. The soul of man has a mysterious destiny in God, and the soul will never find rest, except in God. Monastic solitude, poverty, obedience, silence and prayer dispose the soul for its mysterious destiny in God. Even though properly associated with monks and nuns, solitude, poverty, obedience, silence and prayer should be partners in the heart of man. Every soul created by God need to live the ascetical life, each to the degree permitted by one's state in life. It is incorrect to think that true asceticism must take on the form of the regimented way of life led by monks in monasteries. We must learn how to supernaturalize, not regiment, and is not regimentation the result of a false application of the spirit of austerity?

Asceticism, itself, does not produce divine union as its direct result. It only disposes the soul for union. The various practices of asceticism, either for monastics or lay-people, are more or less valuable in proportion as they help to accomplish the inner and spiritual work that needs to be done to make souls, poor, and humble, and detached, and empty in the mystery of the presence of God. When ascetic practices are misused, they become exercises in austerity, and austere people have a strong tendency to look down upon those less austere than themselves (witness the pharisee who went up to the temple to pray). When ascetic practices are misused, they serve only to fill the individual more with himself and to harden his heart evermore in resistance to grace. That is why all true, sincere and Christ-like asceticism centers in the two great virtues of humility and obedience which cannot be practiced as they ought to be practiced, if they do not empty a man of himself!