

TRADITIONAL CHAPELS IN ALABAMA

Our Lady of Lourdes
Roman Catholic Chapel
Montgomery, Alabama

St. Francis of Assisi
Roman Catholic Chapel
Cullman, Alabama

St. Pius V
Roman Catholic Chapel
Birmingham, Alabama

S C H E D U L E O F M A S S E S

10:30 A.M. - Rosary
10:45 A.M. - Mass
(ONLY on First Sunday
of each month)

6:00 A.M.
10:00 A.M.
Every Sunday
6:00 A.M.
7:00 P.M.
Holy Days

9:10 A.M. - Rosary
9:30 A.M. - Mass
(EXCEPT on first
Sunday of each month)

QUINOUAGESIMA SUNDAY

Weekly Bulletin # 497

February 22, 1998 - - - Purple

Mass of Sunday, Or. of Sun. No Gl. Cr. Pref. Trin.

SEPTUAGESIMA

Today is QUINOUAGESIMA SUNDAY, and as indicated last week, the Church uses the Breviary Office of Matins to give additional instruction. Today we look at the life and affairs of our Father Abraham.

When the waters of the deluge had subsided and mankind had once more peopled the earth, man fell back into his old habits of idolatry and sin. God, was forced, yet another time, to find ONE MAN that He felt He could count on, and that man was Abraham. God determined to find a new people, a people who would preserve His Sacred Truths. This new people was to originate from one man - Abraham. Abraham's faith and devotedness merited for him that he should be chosen to be the father of the children of God, the head of that spiritual family to which belong all the elect of both the old and the new Testament. He was to be the father and model of all future believers. It is necessary that we should know Abraham, our father and our model. This is his grand characteristic: fidelity to God, submissiveness to His commands, abandonment and sacrifice of everything (even of his only son Isaac) in order to obey God's holy will! When God called him he left all things - his country, his kindred, his father's house - and he went into an unknown land. God lead him, and that was his total desire as he felt the Power that planted his feet - one step after the other. He feared no difficulty, and he never once looked back to that which he had left behind. Everything that God wanted was to be built around Abraham, and it was around him that our first parents, Moses and David, and all the just, including poor Lazarus, received their rest and happiness and security.

If we are to be the children of Abraham we must, as the Church tells us during Septuagesima, we must look upon ourselves as exiles on this earth, and we must dwell by hope and desire for our true country, from which we are now banished. We must have an abiding conviction of our not having here a lasting city, and of the misery and DANGER we incur when we forget that death is one day - - LIKE A THIEF IN THE NIGHT - - going to separate us from everything we possess and consider important in this life! EVERYTHING will be left behind!

How far from being true children of Abraham are those Christians who spend today and the two following days in intemperance, sex, violence, dissipation because Lent is soon to be upon us! How wrong is this frame of mind!

Yet, let us who are mindful of our ancestors, not allow the abuses of this occasion shroud the ordinary and normal beauty of these remaining days before the start of Lent. The simple customs of our Catholic forefathers tell us of a farewell festival - farewell to the ordinary way of living that Lent is about to interrupt. In our own time, a joyous shrovetide is not to be condemned, rather it should be fostered, provided the Christian sentiment of the approaching holy season of Lent be strong enough to check every excess. A lovely meal on the evening before Ash Wednesday, with the entire family in attendance to enjoy it, is certainly in keeping with every thought that is good and wholesome. Let not the original intention of an innocent custom become perverted, and let us keep it well in mind, that whatever the celebration it must be considered a joyous farewell to our usual ease and comfort that will have to be put aside in the season about to begin.

Let us not be too quick to dispense ourselves from abstinence and fasting and additional prayer during Lent, and, for one reason or another, evade every penitential exercise proper for those days of the year's most solemn reminder of our true purpose on earth. If we forget, we most certainly will find ourselves on Easter Day as weighed down by the same guilt and debt of our sins as we were on Ash Wednesday.

The promptings of the world - the promptings of those who live and work around us will always be a source of distraction to us. Should we, as true children of our Father Abraham permit any such distractions to keep us from the performance of our duties, we will always be an uneasy lot! To leave the time of Lent in the same condition of soul that was ours when we entered the time of Lent's beginning, would be a shameful waste of precious time!

REMEMBER, MAN, THAT THOU ART DUST, AND UNTO DUST THOU SHALL RETURN