

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
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SCHEDULE OF MASSES

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)
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THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER Weekly Bulletin # 506

April 26, 1998 - - - White
Mass: Sunday; G1; Or of Sun; Cr; Pref of Easter.

Alleluia! He Is Risen! Alleluia!

Without prayer, the spiritual life cannot exist! Prayer is the great unconditional means of grace; if we would be saved, we must pray.

Without divine grace there is no salvation; without prayer, in the case of those who have reached the age of reason, no grace can be looked for. Prayer is as necessary as grace itself. God has, indeed, ordained the Sacraments as means of grace, but in many connections prayer is even more important than the sacraments. The Sacraments confer certain definite graces; prayer can, in some circumstances, obtain all graces. The Sacraments are not everywhere and always of precept, but prayer is always of precept. Therefore it has been truly said: "He who knows how to pray aright, knows also how to live aright." By means of prayer man provides himself with all that is necessary to a good life. If this be so - and it is - then the following serious and weighty assertions are true: No one can hope for any grace except thru prayer. All confidence that is not based on prayer is a vain confidence. God owes us nothing unless we pray -- because He has promised everything to prayer. GENERALLY - God gives no grace that is not prayer for -- when He does, it is the grace of prayer itself.

Now these, of course, are universal truths. But there are certain definite things in the Christian life for which prayer is absolutely necessary. First of all are the Commandments of God. We must keep the Commandments if we are to be saved; but of ourselves we have neither the power nor the grace to keep them. We may go so far as to say even that we never have the grace to fulfill them without fear of falling. Only by the power of prayer, through which we receive the necessary grace, can we hope to keep the Commandments of God in the appropriate and intended way.

Then there is the question of temptations. Who is it that does not have to grapple with temptations - temptations of every conceivable sort - temptations at any conceivable moment or place or circumstance? In our own natural strength we cannot overcome temptations! However, temptations are not so great that we cannot pray. We are weak only because we do not pray. The saints were victorious, because they prayed. Without prayer they would not have become saints. Without prayer they would have been defeated like those of us who do not pray. This is true especially with regard to sensual temptations, which more than all others make us blind to the horrible consequences of sin. Sensual temptations cause us to forget all good principles and they efface from our hearts and minds all fear of punishment. Without prayer there is nothing for us but spiritual ruin.

We cannot be saved without the grace of perseverance - either in our vocations we have chosen or in a life without sin. Without the intention to persevere in the God Life it is obvious that we cannot be saved. Perseverance in the life of grace is a special gift of God. It is a special gift of grace, when God calls us to die, that we should be found in His sanctifying grace, that so death may be to us the call to a blessed immortality. That is perseverance, which, according to Saint Augustine, is so great, so extraordinary a gift of grace that we cannot merit it, but only obtain it through humble prayer. BUT NOT EVEN TO PRAY FOR FINAL PERSEVERANCE SHOWS HOW UNWORTHY WE ARE OF IT!!

Even for temporal things we must pray - and it is not wrong to pray for temporal good as some individuals indicate. Misguided souls can become so saturated with a misconceived notion of the WILL OF GOD, that they come to think that prayer is an attempt to force the Hand of God. So they sit and wait for the Will of God, but when they finally come face to face with the real Will of God, they complain and question God's wisdom and mercy and love! Our Lord Himself prayed, but His prayer placed Him in the proper position to accept God's Will when it finally arrived.

We have the choice to make! The choice lies between PRAYER and SPIRITUAL RUIN!