

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

SCHEDULE OF MASSES

10:30 A.M. - Rosary

10:45 A.M. - Mass

(ONLY on First Sunday
of each month)

6:00 A.M. and 10:00 A.M.

Every Sunday

6:00 A.M. - 8:00 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)

THE FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

September 5, 1999 - - - Green

Mass of Sunday: G1, Cr. Pref Trin.

Weekly Bulletin # 578

BISHOP DAVID FOLEY VISITS OUR MONASTERY

A Statement

On Monday, August 30, 1999, Bishop David Foley, Bishop of the Diocese of Birmingham, in Alabama, visited our Monastery of Christ the King. Indeed, the visit was congenial and friendly, but it had a purpose. It's purpose was RECONCILIATION. The Bishop urged the monks to become reconciled with the Diocese and with the church in Rome. However, the Abbot of Christ the King Monastery, speaking for himself and for the entire monastic membership, assured the Bishop that such a reconciliation was, due to the present Faith posture of the Roman Church, quite impossible.

The Monastery of Christ the King is separated from the official jurisdiction of the local Diocese (and the Roman Church officialdom) not because of any nostalgic feelings toward a language, or a musical form, or to a certain ceremonial. It is not separated because of prejudice or disapproval of the liturgical observations now in use in the new and modern Catholic ceremonial. The separation of the monks is not a matter of nostalgia. It is a matter of BELIEF. It is a matter of FAITH. The monks cannot accept the changes in the doctrinal beliefs (NOT IN THE RITUALS) now prevalent in the mainstream church. The monks find the new doctrine in opposition to the doctrinal beliefs which have the authority of two millennia. Consequently, the monks feel that any reconciliation would necessarily call for a compromise between two opposing and contradictory beliefs. Firm in the Faith of the ages, the monks ----simply cannot---- turn away from that Faith which has been written in the Book of Truth and in the Blood of countless men and women - martyrs of past days. Neither can the monks disregard the numberless contributions of God's Holy People. Every donation given for a specific purpose: the preservation of the stabilized Faith of our Fathers. Every brick in our Abbey Church has somebody's name on it. Every brick in our Abbey Church cries out to God in prayer.

The Bishop's visit was expected. Because on December 15, 1998, in France, the Abbey of Sainte Madeleine at Le Barroux, signed an agreement with the French Bishops pledging its monks to concelebrate the Mass of the New Catholic Church together with the Mass of the Catholic Church prior to Vatican Council II. This has been classified as a startling turn of events in the Traditional movement in France. This agreement makes official the bringing together of two opposing and contradictory Faith beliefs and it acknowledges that the same source is to teach each of the two separate and distinct Faith beliefs with equal fidelity. This is quite a strange and unreasonable arrangement - to say the least. This agreement was correctly considered to be the forerunner of further agreements with other organizations that have been reputed to give sincere support to the Tridentine position. Thus on July 3, 1999 "approved" Traditional Orders were extended the "right" to offer the new Mass. Therefore the status of the "approved" traditional orders is no longer that of being exclusively pre-Conciliar in their liturgical life (Protocol Number 1411). Now the "approved" traditional orders, like the Abbey of Le Barroux must be faithful to two separate and distinct Faith beliefs with equal fidelity. And the strange and unreasonable arrangement gathers momentum.

Thus it was known that the Protocol Number 1411 would be the cause of a fresh wave of pressure. But it must be remembered that it is not in a spirit of rebellion or disobedience that the monks offer resistance to the urgings of Bishop Foley. However the resistance of the monks has made it necessary for Bishop Foley to publish a letter of suspension in this week's ONE VOICE - the Catholic News Weekly of the Diocese of Birmingham. Therefore, with the courage typical of this man, he visited the monastery and informed them of what he was about to do, and gave them the letter of suspension (dated September 1, 1999). The monks very much appreciate this courtesy. The monks genuinely regret this course of action, but they have long realized that it was inevitable. But everyone must take note: SUSPENSION IS NOT EXCOMMUNICATION - as some confuse it to be. Suspension DOES NOT take away priestly powers - it merely refuses the use of them. The suspension in question here is outlined in the Bishop's letter - found in this week's ONE VOICE.

The determination of the monks of Christ the King Abbey to stand by the Faith that was handed down to them by their Fathers (and former teachers - some of whom are still with us) must not be construed as an act of stubborn independence and rebellion against established authority. Rather, it must be judged to mean that the monks believe their Faith with a determination and devotion strong enough to accept persecution and martyrdom - should the necessity present itself. They are quite willing to add their blood to the blood of those who have gone before them.

Let it be known to everyone who reads this statement. This is not a statement of declaration of "war" between the Diocese of Birmingham and Christ the King Abbey. Anyone who advertises this statement with a wrong interpretation is no friend of the Diocese, nor is he a friend of the Abbey. Moreover, any misrepresentation of this statement whatsoever cannot be done in the best interests of religion. We disagree. But I pray that we remain friends - for the sake of Jesus Christ.

The existence of Christ the King Monastery is not to maintain the use of a certain language. The aim of this institute is not to preserve a particular musical form. The function of this monastery is not to insure the continuation of a particular ceremony - as a particular ceremony (important as all of this may be). The top-most purpose of this Monastery is prayer - for the Greater Honor and Glory of God! Therefore, all that this Monastery asks of anybody is to be allowed to live with undisturbed peace the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Faith which now has the authority of two millennia. Is this request asking for too much? Is this request a display of rebellion and revolt?

The Monks of Christ the King Abbey go back to the precedent established by St. Benedict, himself. St. Benedict never preached a sermon that we know of (he was not even a priest); he never wrote a book (except the Holy Rule for Monks); he never promoted a crusade; he never traveled on any pilgrimage. He remained in his monastery - in quiet, in contemplation, in solitude and in the love of his God. But the unassuming example of this one humble solitary man, and the unassuming and humble example of the solitary men who clustered around him, was able, finally to conquer the unbelief of the hordes of barbarians that populated the western continent at that time. In God's good time, it is the humble desire of the Monks of the Monastery of Christ the King, if it be the Will of God, to do the very same thing. They ask for no more than to be allowed to be Catholic - Catholic as taught them by their Forefathers of two millennia, and Benedictine as taught them by their Forefathers of nearly two millennia. In so wishing and in so desiring - they resist, and they resist being forced into the disturbance of argument or debate or idle gossip or vain speculation - all of which shatter their peace and prayer life. In so wishing, the Monks ask to be allowed to spend their valuable time in prayer and contemplation and hard work, and in honest and humble supplication to the God Who created all things Who - - - ALONE - - - has the ability to construct - - or reconstruct - - HIS CHURCH!!! If - and as soon as - the Holy Will of God is made clear to the Monks of the Monastery of Christ the King, they will be seen giving their undivided allegiance to that Most Holy Will, and to all those who work in accordance with that Most Holy Will. When it is time for the Divine Will of God to manifest Itself - EVERYONE WILL KNOW IT!

If this simple monastic prayer life, and these humble requests stand out as an attack on anyone, or if they are considered a threat to anybody, or if they sound full of pride and disobedience, that is truly unfortunate!! And if every "religious" persuasion under heaven (Traditional Roman Catholicism excluded) is given every mark of understanding and acceptance and fellowship in all of the

catholic sanctuaries of the known catholic world (including the place where the Chair of Peter is located), is it asking for too much that the monks of the Monastery of Christ the King be allowed to privately and in good conscience live out the prayer life and maintain the Sacred beliefs given them by their Forefathers? Is it wrong for those men to live in quiet and peace in their own Monastery? The monks of Christ the King Abbey do not seek, neither do they ask to be admitted to any sanctuary - - no matter where. All they ask is that they be left alone to live in peace and monastic seclusion in the privacy of their own Sanctuary!!!

PostScript

It seems that the recent developments described above have been, in part, triggered by the passing on of a certain inflamitory tape. This unfortunate item ended up in Bishop Foley's office, and according to the information received by the officials of this Monastery was brought to the attention of the Roman church officials. Its contents were carefully studied, and since the impression was erroneously taken, the atmosphere of the tape was somehow viewed as the atmosphere of our Monastery. Unfortunately, it was judged that the Monastery of Christ the King was distributing tapes of this nature! No member of our Community knows of the production of this tape - who, when, where or how. We have never seen the tape, and certainly have never viewed it for content. Only in the past few days have the officials of the Monastery learned who its distributors - perveyors of discord - are! The Monastery of Christ the King should not be held responsible should unfortunate items be PRIVATELY distributed amongst those who attend Mass in our Abbey Church. Only with express permission of the Abbot can anything be distributed here at the Abbey. For assurance consult last week's Bulletin # 577. The ONLY knowledge our monks have of this tape is the knowledge of its harmful results and the trouble it has caused our house. Our reputation has been injured and punished for something we have never known anything about. By this statement, we humbly ask that clarification be made where clarification needs to be made and by those whose duty it should be to make that clarification.

Post Postscript

It is PRAYER, PENANCE, FASTING, SILENCE, REPARATION AND SOLITUDE that the Monks of Christ the King Monastery offer to God - EACH DAY - for the benefit of us all. Our final hope and wish is that GOOD WILL is in the hearts of those our Monks and Nuns reach out to. May it be known to all that the Monastics of our Communities are:

One's interior
prayer life
is completely
determined
by one's
beliefs.

Serious Men - -
With Serious Intention - -
Giving Serious Worship - -
To a Serious God!!

One's interior
prayer life
is completely
determined
by one's
beliefs.

+ *Donald Guardia, O.S.B.*
Abbot

1. Tomorrow is LABOR DAY - enjoy it, but be careful. In our Abbey Church, we will celebrate Holy Mass in Honor of St. Joseph the Worker. Times for Masses tomorrow are: 6:00 and 8:00 A.M. The Mass in Honor of St. JOseph will be: 8:00.
2. Wednesday, September 8, 1999 is the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This should be a day of very special prayer.
3. Please pray for the sick and Shut-Ins of our Chapels, especially remembering Al Sachs, Frank Nash, and Baby Michael Hand. Continue to remember the poor afflicted people of Turkey.
4. DO NOT FORGET the necessity of the Sacrament of Penance. If you have not approached the Confessional for the reception of the Sacrament of Penance for a length of time, you should not approach the Communion Rail for the reception of the Holy Eucharist.
5. Once again, with the EMBER DAYS OF SEPTEMBER, the Monks and Nuns will begin their regular observance of the Rule of Fasting on Wednesdays and Fridays. On Wednesdays the Monks and Nuns will also observe STRICT SILENCE. Except for an emergency, kindly do not contact our Monasteries on Wednesdays. The Silence we speak of is not a silence of just not talking. We speak of the Silence of the INTERIOR HEART AND MIND. Silence is a very special kind of penance, but one that establishes communication with God. Unless there is silence of the heart and mind, there can be no union with God. This was once common practice in convents and monasteries - but now -? -? -? -? The Monks and Nuns of our Monasteries offer up this prayer of Fasting and Silence to God for the benefit of us all. Our prayer petitions God to come to the assistance of EVERYONE WHOSE WILL IS GOOD. Our prayer also petitions God to find a quick solution to the problem we point out in this Bulletin and in the Diocesan ONE VOICE!!
6. MASSES FOR THE WEEK: (Abbot Leonard's Schedule Only)

SUNDAY:	For the People of the Chapels
MONDAY:	Special Int. Marguerite McGill
TUESDAY:	Special Int. Carol Girardi
WEDNESDAY:	For the Poor Souls
THURSDAY:	Dec. Msgr. Harrison Martin
FRIDAY:	Welfare Martha Cordero
SATURDAY:	Special Int. Lucille Harpster



*"We sit by and watch the barbarian,
we tolerate him; in the long stretches
of peace we are not afraid. We are
tickled by his irreverence; his cosmic
inversion of our old certitudes and our
fixed creeds refreshes us; we laugh!
But as we laugh we are watched by
large and awful faces from beyond;
and on those faces there is no smile!!"*

Hilaire Belloc



!ANOTHER STATEMENT!

*We are what they once were!
We believe what they once believed!
We worship as they once worshiped!
If they were right then,
we are right now!
If we are wrong now,
they were wrong then!!!*