

# Christ the King Abbey (Traditional Benedictines)

Our Lady of Lourdes Chapel  
Montgomery Alabama  
10:45 A.M.  
Only on First Sunday  
of each month

Cullman Alabama  
Every Sunday  
6:00 A.M. and 10:00 A.M.  
6:00 A.M. Daily  
Holy Days  
6:00 A.M.; 8:00 A.M.; 7:00 P.M.

St. Pius V Chapel  
9:30 A.M.  
Every Sunday except  
First Sunday of each month

(St Francis of Assisi Chapel)

THE SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

July 30, 2000 - - - Green

Mass of Sunday - Gl; Cr; Pref Trin.

Weekly Bulletin # 627

## CATHOLIC EXPERIENCE - - BENEDICTINE PRAYER

In the sense formulated by Pope St. Gregory the Great (a Benedictine Monk) God must be invited to take full possession of the soul. It is not in the manner of God to impose Himself upon us. Self-will, with its hundred subterfuges and falsified motives, must be rejected - it has to be crushed. Prayer is to be resorted to NOT as a means of promoting either self-esteem or a sense of security. Prayer is not to be used as a means of contributing to self. Prayer is simply a means - - - and the most direct means - - - of giving glory to God. Prayer must focus our attention on God - and away from self. When God's glory is accounted by the soul as being of greater importance than its own advancement in prayer as being more important indeed than anything else in the world - - then it may be supposed that the Holy Spirit will take over the soul's entire direction and order its outward religious life accordingly. Then it may be supposed also, that in actual practice prayer will tend towards an ever-increasing simplicity and humility. NOT IN THE MULTITUDE OF WORDS BUT IN THE PURITY OF HEART are St. Benedict's words of warning. Not only will outward and verbal discourse in unusual and lengthy private devotions cease to attract the soul, but the more inward wandering activity produced by the faculties of the soul will give place to an exercise of greater tranquillity, simplicity and unity. The soul will begin to operate under the influence of the love that it has for God. The prayer of faith will replace the prayer of feelings, imaginations, affections, of DOING. Doing holy things will be replaced by BEING. St. Benedict knew how to pray. This is surely the kind of prayer which St. Benedict, centuries before systems had been invented to deal with the entire program of prayer, meant when he wrote of "purity of heart" and "purity of intention." When ST. Benedict was about on this earth, prayer was still an unchartered land in his day, its soil yielding an unlabored plant. St. Benedict drew up the blueprint for prayer, and his teaching has influenced all the religious systems since his time. Lack of sufficient acquaintance at the present time has brought about the formation of imprudent systems of prayer to the detriment of those under the direction of private opinion. St. Benedict was a man of contemplation. Anything that caused distraction was snuffed out of existence. His initiation and training and formation began as far back as the period spent in solitude at Subiaco. Each of his miracles is preceded by time spent in prayer - - - not in prayers!

The flexibility of Benedictine spirituality is nowhere shown better than in St. Benedict's instruction on the length of time to pray. The whole matter depends upon the "inspiration of divine grace." One brother is not to feel inferior if grace does not prompt him to spend much time in protracted devotions, nor is the brother who believes that he is being called to spend longer time in prayer to feel superior. One brother is not to feel inferior if his work prevents him from spending longer time at prayer. The work that has to be done due to the duties of one's state of life, must be performed. Charity to others demands no less. Besides, the duties of one's state of life, and the neatness that goes with them is "heaven's first law." To put aside work - necessary work - in order to spend more time in prayer is simply giving in to laziness. When one reaches the understanding of true prayer, such a one reaches the understanding that work done for the love of God, is prayer. again, lack of proper acquaintance with Catholic living is placing heavy burdens upon us. Whenever there is question as to how to live our Catholic Lives, let us turn, walk into the direction of the House of Nazareth, knock on the door, and when answered, let us have the courage to walk in, and then let us observe - just exactly - how life is conducted in that household!