

Christ the King Abbey

(Traditional Benedictines)

(St Francis of Assisi Chapel)

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.

Our Lady of Lourdes Chapel

Montgomery, Alabama

10:45 A.M.

Only on first Sunday
of each month

St Pius V Chapel

Birmingham, Alabama

9:30 A.M.

Every Sunday except
first Sunday of each month

THE SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

July 7, 2002 -- Green

Mass of Sunday: Gl; Cr; Pref Trinity

Weekly Bulletin # 731

HOW DO WE CONFORM TO THE WILL OF GOD?

There is not a single thing in our lives or circumstances which is left to chance, not a single event that God does not supervise. We really never exactly know where God is leading us, and we must eventually give up all attempts to know. Very often our own ideas are quite wrong; we are thinking of great works for God, but God is thinking of great love from us. We do not realize the truth of the words of St. John of the Cross:

“An instant of pure love is more precious in the sight of God, and of the soul, and more profitable to the Church than all other good works put together, though it may seem as if nothing were done.”

The most valuable part of our life is often that which we esteem least, and the good works in which we think to have done great things for God and His Church, may have little real value in His eyes. God does not judge things or the value of things as we judge them. Human achievement is not what God is looking for.

There is a mysterious lesson to be learned from the Gospel story of our Lord's life on earth. He became man to save the human race, to instruct man, to preach His Gospel, to found a Church, to establish a Doctrine and an Organization that He said He would remain with until the end of time. His own life was planned in all its details by the Divine Wisdom for the very purpose of achieving all these things. Yet, how that Divine Plan contradicts and frustrates all our notions! We find that, born in obscurity, Christ, as we might foolishly think - “wastes” - thirty long years of His life in Egypt and Nazareth, first as the son of a simple workman, and then as a simple workman Himself when He grew old enough. He, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, had to work for His living, and even had to go so far as to ask for payment for the crafts of His labors. After reaching thirty years of age, He spends a mere three years (He knows the duration of His life in advance), in the work of preaching His Gospel and instructing a small handful of simple and sometimes stubborn folk to form the nucleus of His Church. Then He allows the whole work to end in the apparent failure and shame of the Crucifixion, dying in degradation on the Cross. To all onlookers, Jesus Christ was a failure in everything. In the end even His chosen friends deserted Him, while one betrayed Him and one denied Him before the world. All seemed lost!

In fact the most surprising thing about His life is not what He did, but all that He left undone. And His whole anxiety seems to have been to complete His public ministry quickly in order to press on to His death. His whole reliance for the result of His life's work seems to have been placed on the power and fruit of His death, rather than on the power and fruit of His life. If anything stands out from the Gospel story, it is our Lord's zeal, rather, to die for His Father's glory than to live for it!

Let us not forget that He is our MODEL. Very few of us, however, are called upon to imitate His public life, even though so many think that they are called upon to do just that and nothing more - that spirituality is involvement in the externals of a public life. But **all are** called to reproduce His hidden life, according to our condition. All too, have to learn the lesson of His preference for death rather than for life, and all must be prepared to follow His example. It is not so much the extent to which we live for God that is important, but rather the extent and generosity with which we die for Him. There are some souls who are called to die the violent death of martyrdom for God. But there are a greater number who are called to die for God the slow death of humility and abandonment to His Will. The trial of the first is short and sharp; that of the latter may last long years, for they shed their blood drop by drop.

Our Lord warns us that it is by abiding in Him that we shall bear much fruit, and He adds that the Good Husbandman will purge us so that we may bring forth **more** fruit. We must be prepared for this purgation by God; a lively faith