

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

ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Weekly Bulletin # 735

August 4, 2002 -- Green

Mass of Sunday: Gl; Cr; Pref Trinity; Comm. St. Dominic

Two men went up to the Temple to pray

One was a Pharisee - - -

*"O God, I give Thee Thanks
that I am not as the rest of men!"*

The other was a Publican - - -

*"Oh God, be merciful to
me, a sinner!"*

Part II

. These two men, both ALIKE, look into their own hearts and lives. Both ALIKE permit the judgment thus formed to determine the matter of their prayer. Both ALIKE addressed themselves to the work of self-scrutiny, and the prayers that resulted from their careful scrutiny were the fruits of their research.

At this point the two gentlemen part company, and they move in opposite directions. The proud man found only good in himself. The other man found only evil in himself. In both, and in both ALIKE - as God looks and sees men to be guilty or not guilty - there was only evil. Sin was prominent in both - ALIKE. However, the publican discovered and confessed the truth regarding himself, while the Pharisee either bluntly and blatantly failed to see his sins, or falsely refused to acknowledge them.

The crass error of the Pharisee was not in the form or the matter of his prayer. In the beginning his prayer was substantially a prayer of thanksgiving, and such prayer is never out of place where God is concerned. Who is it who has not ground to give perpetual praise and thanksgiving to God for all goodness. Actually, neither does the prayer of the Pharisee necessarily transgress the strict line of truth when he said: "O God, I give Thee thanks that I am not as the rest of men." In truth, he was different. In truth, he did not act as the other men around and about him. In truth, the interior disposition of the Pharisee was in no way similar to the interior disposition of the publican. At this point let us note well that the importance of our expressions or our conversations with God does not lie in the quality of the spoken words of the prayer that issues forth from our lips. The importance of our prayer lies entirely in the QUALITY OF THE INTERIOR DISPOSITIONS WHICH PREDOMINATE IN OUR HEARTS, AND THE HUMBLE STATE OF MIND THAT SPRINGS FORTH FROM THE TRUE AND PURE LOVE IN OUR HEARTS! So much do we love - so much do we speak the truth, and this is prayer!

If the Pharisee had spent his time in the temple numbering and recounting the endless mercies God had shown him;

If the Pharisee had meditated on his blessings;

If the Pharisee had given consideration even to the natural gifts God had given him;

In the recollection of his justice which he extended to his neighbor;

In the recounting of his generosity to the Temple treasury;

In the recalling to mind his successes in warding off temptation;

In his awareness of a life free of adultery;

he might, with truth, have burst into the exclamation: "I am not as other men". On the other hand, had the Pharisee been a true penitent, who, when employed in examining his wretched, sinful conscience and condition, with pain of soul, noting his numerous failings, truly described himself as the chief of sinners; - had the Pharisee been a truly thankful man, a man lost in the multitude of God's mercies; - had the Pharisee in simplicity and humility understood that truly none in the world had been so highly favored as he had been, - then he would not have incurred the disfavor of his just