

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 SEVEN SORROWS OF OUR LADY

Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

September 15, 2002 -- White

Mass of Seven Sorrows: Gl; Cr; Pref Our Lady; comm Sunday and St. Nicomedes

Weekly Bulletin # 741

"I HATE ARROGANCE AND PRIDE!"

(Proverbs)

We must engrave these words of God upon our hearts! How many - MANY - supernatural gifts have we deprived ourselves of - simply because of our self-love; because of our self-serving motives; because of our self-serving dedications; because of our self-serving logic? How many supernatural graces have we missed because of our silly pretensions, our haughtiness, our "better than thou" attitudes toward our neighbor, our manipulative and self-righteous maneuverings with those around us, and all the rest? Can all the human praise and flattery from the beginning of the world to the end of time compare in value to JUST ONE CARESS FROM THE CREATOR AND REDEEMER OF THE WORLD? What is it going to take to convince us that we can never expect one single embrace from God if the stench of the pride of our souls forces Him to turn away from us? If He Himself has said that He hates arrogance and pride, do we suggest that a compromise solution be discussed when He meets up with our arrogance and pride? Who is going to have to back down - God or me? Is this situation an exaggerated observation of reality?

The basis of the virtue of humility is two fold:

! TRUTH ! and ! JUSTICE !

TRUTH causes us to know ourselves exactly as we really are!

JUSTICE inclines us to act correctly upon the exact knowledge of our condition!

Anyone all puffed up in his (her) personal satisfaction with himself (herself) will NEVER see himself as he really is. It is inevitable that pride snuffs out truth, and promotes fantasy. It is inevitable that a proud person lives a fantasy, and the vainglory of that person places him a cut above his neighbor. (Was not this the main thrust of our discussion about the Pharisee and the publican?) The proud person's feeling of superiority pervades the atmosphere the instant he makes his pompous appearance! Pride cannot be concealed, and the odor of it cannot remain hidden. How dreadful it is to have to live in close quarters with such individuals. If in the present condition WE find pride a difficulty, how then do we expect God to feel? Is it an exaggeration to propose that a proud person might well place himself just a "tiny" cut above God, and that he places God in the same category as his neighbor? When this turns out to be the "reality" in one's fantasy, it then becomes that individual's misfortune that God simply steps aside and allows his fantasy to prevail - to the complete detriment of his proud soul!

The first thing the author of evil does upon entering a proud person's fantasy is to offer him a luscious looking apple, telling him that the eating of it will bring him to the level of the gods. This is, and always has been, a thrilling ambition of mankind. From the beginning man has wanted to be "something" more than he already was, and in the eating of the apple he looked with eager anticipation to the advancement of his "somethingness". Instead - the moment the taste of the apple reached his mouth he discovered his wretched nakedness! The proud man, therefore, mindful of his nakedness, spends his energies camouflaging, hiding, and concealing his wretched nakedness! The proud man goes about promoting his self-conceived "somethingness" in order to conceal his nothingness!

Were we but just a tiny bit truthful we would find little difficulty in being humble, for, as St. Bernard says in his definition of humility, it is a "virtue whereby a man, through a true knowledge of himself, becomes DESPICABLE in his own eyes!" How many of us, with meaningful force of conviction consider ourselves truly DESPICABLE? This question is absolutely sobering - but it has to be answered! (Continued on back.)