

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

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

Weekly Bulletin #760

January 19, 2003 -- Green

Mass of Sunday: Gl; Cr; Pref Trinity;

Comm. St. Marius, St. Martha, St. Audifax, St. Abachum, Mm

Be ye perfect ...

If we really want to save our immortal souls we must "become perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect." This is not an easy thing for us to grasp, yet immediately we try to explain - in our own words, thoughts, and opinions - what it means to be perfect as our Heavenly Father is perfect. We say that we must participate in this or that, but in actual fact we are not even sure of what participation really means. Yet, it is necessary to repeat: if we really want to save our immortal souls we must "become as your Heavenly Father is perfect," and these are the words of our Blessed Lord Himself!

Let us try to bring some clarification to this most difficult requirement placed upon the backs of us poor human creatures, who only think and act as human creatures. Right off - if we want to save our immortal souls we must become like God! We must think as God thinks, live as God lives, and desire the things that God desires. How can this be? Who will tell us what God is? Can God be described? Who is there to teach us what we must do to be like God? Our very limited human intelligence can tell us little more than that God, infinite and almighty, is beyond our comprehension. God is incomprehensible - He cannot be fully known. Actually it is enough for us to know THAT God is. To want to know what He is will only hinder our growth and will lead us into studying matters that will lead us quite astray.

God Himself has told us something of His Divine Nature and Life: the Father and the Word live in the Unity of the Holy Spirit. By grace we have been caught up into this Life, we have become sharers in His Divine Nature. We are required to co-operate with the Holy Spirit to develop the seed of this Life that has been sown in us, and bring it to perfection. But it is not enough for us to be told this. We are limited creatures of flesh and blood and have only limited intelligence. We cannot live on abstract thinking. There are some who think that they can go forward on abstract thinking, but they get lost in the tall weeds of the intricacies of it all. Man can learn only by what he sees and what he hears. Man needs a living teacher who can speak to us. Man needs a model he can imitate. Quickly we ask: "Who on earth is there to teach us and to show us - surely in the present age there is not such a one?" As quickly, we answer: "There is such a One, One Who has been given us as a Teacher and a Model - the Person of Jesus Christ." Therefore, let us look at this Teacher and Model.

God Himself became a Man. He lived an ordinary human life. He was like to us in all things, sin alone excepted. In an unimportant village in Palestine, He grew from infancy to manhood, to outward appearance no different from those who lived about Him. His life at Nazareth was spent in the fulfillment of ORDINARY TASKS. He suffered fatigue, hunger, and thirst. He was hurt by ingratitude. He felt sympathy for the grief of a stricken father or mother. He was often disappointed by the stupidity and denseness of the disciples He tried so hard to teach, and He rejoiced in their successes. He wept at the death of a friend. He had a special love for little children. He was like us in all things, even being subject to temptations by the devil.

By imitating Christ we fulfill His command to be perfect as our Heavenly Father is perfect. We are called, then, to live as Christ lived. This does not mean - as some think - that our lives must be a kind of photographic reproduction of the life of Christ in all its details. Kings have become saints. Hidden contemplative nuns have become saints. Farmers have become saints. Fathers and mothers have become saints. Workmen have become saints. Slaves and servants have become saints. How different were the lives of such people from one another. No two of the countless saints were alike in the way life presented itself to them or in the way they adapted to it. Let us try to understand that to imitate Christ it is