

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

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

March 9, 2003 -- Purple

Mass of Sunday: No GI; Cr; Pref Quadragesima

Weekly Bulletin #767

LENT

Holiness - SANCTITY - is expected of every human creature of God. For sanctity was every human creature of God brought into the world. Therefore the path of holiness is for everyone to follow - not just for a certain chosen predilect few, nor just for those who live in religious houses or who follow a priestly vocation. If we wish to be holy we must, however, place ourselves entirely at the service of God, our Creator. If we wish to be entirely at the service of God, we must keep in mind the three following (and not at all difficult) rules of conduct:

1. The first rule is to do everything to please God. We must make this the general and particular intention of our every action. THIS RULE WORKS AS AN ATTRACTION - AS A RESPONSE TO THE WARMTH THAT EXISTS IN US, MORE THAN AS AN ACTUAL DETERMINED THOUGHT OR FEELING. Only if we love God properly can we comprehend this. Only if the fire of love (the warmth that exists within us) burns in us can we comprehend this. Only when we love God properly will our recollection function in us, and here we must clearly realize that we must be recollected in our hearts RATHER THAN IN OUR MINDS. The love of God does not exist nor dwell in the mind - THE LOVE OF GOD DWELLS IN THE HEART OF MAN. Take note: the mind is as inconstant as the weather. The heart is not distracted. This rule adapts itself to everything we do, and it lets us do things in the ORDINARY WAY. The one who loves does not have to be told what to do - he always knows what to do.
2. The second rule is to attend to all things in a spirit of SIMPLICITY - never in a complicated, logistical, intellectual, forced, or artificial way. The one who loves performs all his actions with a free mind, insisting on them only in so much as they please the One he loves. The more he loves, the more does he apply himself to the task at hand, and all tasks are labors of love for such a one. Such a man acts in a spirit of calmness, doing things in due order, one after another, without undue haste or impatience and not as a matter of duty or obligation to someone. The object of a true lover of God is to do his work well and completely - all the time - not merely to get rid of a job that has to be done and gotten over with, but as a response to the call of love.
3. The third rule is to live with God as our center, letting nothing oppress or distract us, for then we will feel the attraction of the warmth of the Presence of God, Who quickens our every move. Our actions will instinctively all be done for, and in the complete service of, God.

We must give ourselves entirely to Our Lord, as He gives Himself entirely to us. Let there be no reserve in our gift to God, no division in our hearts, no division in our love. Note well that this love in no way takes away from the normal and natural love we should have for our neighbor - for those around us, especially the members of our own families. Let there be no center other than His adorable and ever loving Will. Can anyone who has come to know Our Lord find anything that can stand in comparison with Him? He whose only possession is Jesus is very rich indeed.

We must never consider ourselves in the mirror of self-love, nor must we look for any comforting feeling from creature love. In the same way we must never look at the scales of our own merits and self-worth, for our destitution will tilt the scales very much against us. What a mistake we make when we look for the false light of human words, praise, and appreciation - for we will always be deceived. We must not keep an "account book" of what we give to our Father in Heaven, nor must we estimate what we are lacking. THE ONE WHO TRULY LOVES KEEPS NO RECORDS. His only concern is to give and give and give. He has neither time for nor interest in record keeping.

The best sacrifice to offer to God is our EGO (SELF) - our personalities, moods, likes, and dislikes. The best and only gift to offer to Jesus is our hearts emptied of all that caters to self. Our love of God is the best test of duty fulfilled, of our virtue, of our CHARITY. Our love of God is the only scale by which to regulate our judgments and our desires.