

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

SEXAGESIMA SUNDAY

February 15, 2004 – Purple

Mass of Sunday; no Gl; Cr; Pref. Trinity

Weekly Bulletin #817

Septuagesima Season Sexagesima Sunday

Development of Virtue

(Part 3)

The desire for virtue starts off in the mind, but the performance of it takes place in the heart. As long as virtue remains merely the activity of the mind, it remains no more than in intellectual/academic exercise, and, consequently, as an act of spiritual value, it has value, but only in the eyes of the beholder. To god it is artificial. It remains no more than an agreement, as any agreement is between two parties. For virtue to become as God wants it to be it has to be a genuine feeling of the heart, and it demonstrates itself in the constancy of a humble unnoticed silence. The mind is always subject to change depending on the latest input. Not so with the heart. When once something reaches the inmost recesses of the heart change is hardly likely. The goodness of God, the purity of God, the honesty of God, the holiness, of God, the meekness of God, the mercy of God, the LOVE of God are each one magnetic, and that which is good and pure and honest and holy and meek and merciful in us feels the pull of God, and we have no rest until the one is joined with the Other. There simply cannot be anything bogus or phony about the interaction between the creature and his Creator. There can be no "slight of hand" going on between the love with radiates from the heart of man for his God. God wishes to see in us the desire to dedicate every conscious moment to Him. Some will say that this is impossible. Quite to the contrary, it is possible; because the desire resides in the heart – a genuine feeling of the heart, and that which is magnetic in God magnetizes the heart – not in the mind, and this leaves the mind free to go on about the various and sundry affairs and businesses that the mind is usually concerned with. Thus it is that the well ordered affairs of man's daily life are not in conflict with his duties and obligations to his spiritual growth.

There happens to be a litmus test for all of this in this, and it is wise for us to keep a careful eye on the color of the litmus paper. Are we willing to accept humiliations and contradictions? What is our inner reaction to disagreement, to refutation, to disapproval, to discrediting remarks, to criticism, to rejection, to differing opinion, to the preferences of those around us, and to all such like? While on this point, let us not fail to understand that there is an enormous difference between being humble and accepting humiliation. The acceptance of humiliation can oftentimes be the result of an innate or contrived rubbery or anemic or even (and worse of all) politically agreeable presentation of one's self. Such individuals are naught but masters of deceit, and this is the conduct usually found in the market place. Such maneuverings are always inappropriate. We must be worthy of thrust, not only with those around us, but especially as far as God is concerned. Trust has always been sacred! Trust will always be sacred!

Next in the line of things to do is to admit and accept, with all honesty, our own limitations, our own lack of proper knowledge and understanding, our own lowliness and nothingness. When our limitations and shortcomings become noticeable to others we should not become distraught, distressed, or embarrassed. Surely our shortcomings are a natural concern to us, but a concern that should exist only between us and God. It must be kept in mind, however, that we must work to overcome our limitations, but with wise and prudent effort. In today's world many are schooled in the fine art of presenting oneself with all the full force of a strong and offensive salesmanship. Such training goes well in the marketplace where one has to first sell self in order to sell the product, but it ill behooves one to apply the same techniques to those of one's own household and inner circle of friends. *(To be continued)*