

Christ the King Abbey

(Traditional Benedictines)

(St Francis of Assisi Chapel)

Cullman, Alabama

Every Sunday:

6:00 AM and 10:00 AM

6:00 AM Daily

Holy Days of Obligation:

6:00 AM - 8:00 AM - 7:00 PM

Our Lady of Lourdes Chapel

Montgomery, Alabama

10:45 AM

Only on first Sunday
of each month

St Pius V Chapel

Birmingham, Alabama

9:30 AM

Every Sunday except
first Sunday of each month

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Weekly Bulletin #889

June 26, 2005 – Green

Mass of Sunday; Gl; Cr; Pref. Trinity; Comm. Ss. John and Paul

OF MONASTICS

(Part 2)

The monk is a man who seeks Truth. By the very fact that he took steps toward the monastic enclosure – by the very fact that he actually knocked on the door of the monastery, he indicated that Truth was what he was after. In the mind of modern man, accustomed as he is to untruth and hypocrisy, Truth has lost its full impact. Modern man is not fully alive to the value and necessity of Truth. Truth is what is real. Truth is reality. It is actual. It is what exists. It is objective. Modern man has great difficulty with what is real, so we find him chasing after all the unreal things of life. He runs away from the realities of life and runs after the unrealities, the fantasies, of life. Truth is real because Truth is what is.

The young man who knocks at the door of the monastery seeks reality – he seeks that which really is! So we can say that the young man who seeks entrance into the monastery is acting under the inspiration of Grace. Grace has inspired him to seek after the reality of Him Who is infinitely real, He seeks the Truth in Him Who is Truth. He seeks God. He does not desire Truth simply to satisfy some intellectual curiosity. He seeks Truth because he realizes that if any “mysterious union” is ever to take place between him and his God, Whose Voice he has heard, and if there is ever to be anything constant in his life, he must travel the road that leads to Truth. Upon entering the door of the monastery, the young man will soon discover that everything that is inconstant in him will have to be rooted out – completely and entirely rooted out. Guided by the action of the Holy Spirit which operates in him, the young monk begins the steep climb to reality. Under the guidance of his monastic superiors, his life becomes a strong “YES” to every prompting of Grace and to every directive and every act of obedience that brings him closer to the infinite reality and goodness of God, and the image of God becomes ever more visible in such a monk. Such a way does not tear down initiative, nor does it rip personality apart. Contrary to the thoughts of the unbeliever, such a way of formation builds initiative and develops constancy and strength of character. Only the weakling reflects back on the way of his former life.

God made man in His Own image and likeness. God then looked upon man and saw that he was good. Man pleased Him very much, because man was indeed good. But man wanted more than just to be good. He wanted to be God. His ambitions caused him to fall, and the very first thing that man did after his fall was to cover up his image. He put on clothes so that “his nakedness” would be covered up. No one had to tell him that his image was now naked – tarnished. His own instincts told him so. Therefore his very first work was to make covering for himself, in the hope that his tarnished and naked state would be hidden. But his cover up was the very first thing that God noticed! Ever since that sad day, man has worked without ceasing to cover up his reality with layer upon layer of unrealities. Like the man who whistles when he walks in the dark in order to maintain courage, so does man whistle, while working at his great cover up, to maintain courage. But no matter how much he whistles, nor how much he covers up, the darkness in him simply will not go away. In the darkness man stumbles into all the wrong places, and he has made of himself the “unimage” and the “unlikeness” of God. The trick that so many play, the game of being “masters of deceit”, simply does not work. By the grace of God, the young man who comes knocking at the door of the monastery seeks to leave such an empty life.

The work of recovery of our lost likeness and image (of God) can only be effected by stripping away all that is alien and foreign to our true selves. We have to shed all the cover-up garments, all the double garments of hypocrisy and illusion and immorality and deceitfulness, and all such like, which over the years man has used to conceal the truth of his misery from himself, from his brethren, and his from God. We have to turn away from ourselves toward God. This turning we call “THE CONVERSIO”. The young monk is required by his vows to pronounce his commitment to this “Conversio”.

If the young man who knocks at the door of the monastery is genuine in his thinking and intention, and is indeed determined to build a solid and enduring temple to the glory of God – if he is ever to become a living stone in that temple, he must first of all work at making himself real. His superiors will teach him. By his submission and obedience he will learn. He comes to the monastery to learn, not to teach! He must discover the truth about himself. →