

# Christ the King Abbey

(Traditional Benedictines)

(St Francis of Assisi Chapel)

[www.christthekingabbey.org](http://www.christthekingabbey.org)

Cullman, Alabama

Every Sunday: 6:00 AM and 10:00 AM

Daily: 6:00 AM

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

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

*Lætare (Rose) Sunday*

March 26, 2006 – Purple/Rose

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

Weekly Bulletin #928

## ~ LENT ~

### ROSE SUNDAY

#### OF LOVE AND MORTIFICATION

Saint Thomas has said: “The love of God is the end of all human activities and affections.” The very first Commandment that God gave to Moses was concerning love. God made it a law that our very first love had to be directed to Him, and He told us that we must love Him with all of our hearts, with our whole soul, with our whole mind, and with all of our being. God left no part in us to have love for anything or anyone other than Himself, except, of course, our neighbor. God created us for love. In the strictest reality, God demands our love, and in the words of the First Commandment, the attainment of eternal life depends on our love for Him. Since we were created for love, why should it be otherwise? From the very beginning has not His love for us always been boundless? So boundless, indeed, that He was willing to leave His home in paradise and come down to us on earth, taking even the lowly form of man. That the Creator Himself should take the humble form of His creatures is indeed a most wondrous thing! So great was His love for us that the taking on of the form of man was not enough to satisfy His love. He made of Himself a beggar and placed Himself at the feet of a sinful woman and “begged” her for a drink of water. This we know to have taken place at Jacob’s Well. Later, when all was nearly over, while He was hanging on the Cross, near death, He once again begged from His creatures when He said “I Thirst!”

Throughout all the ages, from the moment He first cried out “I thirst!”, until this present moment, He continuously cries out to all of us, His creatures: “I Thirst!” Is it not a true sadness that most of us hear Him not, ignoring His pleadings? His thirst is not for water. His thirst is for our love. It is an unquenchable thirst, and He, the Lord of heaven and earth, unceasingly begs for our love!

It is truly difficult for us to understand how there can be so many souls amongst us who sincerely desire to reach God, who would like to love Him as He calls out to us all, but who continue to wander about in waterless wastes, restless and famished and suffering from thirst. What is it about the desert that causes man to prefer to walk in the dry parched sand, when he could just as easily – indeed, much more easily – walk in the fresh green pastures along side the brook of cool running waters? Many speak of their ardent longing to consecrate themselves to God, but never really do. They hold back. Why? We ourselves, do we not tell Him of our ardent desire to belong entirely to Him, yet do not even we hold back? Why do the loving pleadings of our most gentle Savior frighten us? Why do we run from His advances of love? Why are we so reluctant to commit ourselves unreservedly to His love?

We fear the suggestion of austerity, as though the Divine Bridegroom were thirsting more for our blood than for our love. He is not thirsting for our blood. He is thirsting for the cool, clear, clean waters of our love. We must come to understand that it is not right or proper for us to stress extraordinary penances, austerities, or the like, as though the first and great Commandment of the law, and hence the first and foremost duty of the Christian, were the bloody mortification of his own body, rather than the love of God and of his neighbor. Rather, however, we do point out that our prudent mortification and penance and sacrifice must be the result of love, pure, simple, and undefiled. Living the Catholic Life that we speak so much about is not to be looked at as a life ordinarily lived by a sect of flagellants. The Gospel is not a message of sadness, but rather one of joy, beginning with the joyous announcement of the angels at Bethlehem and ending with the angels’ triumphant words at the empty tomb of Jesus: “He is risen. He is not here.” The penitential living of a Catholic should be the result of a joyous love, not the drudgery of a sad and uncertain “saint”.

God desires us to be holy. Everything that Christ did or said during His life upon earth was intended for our sanctification. It is therefore of the greatest importance that Christians should be well informed on this point. It is of the greatest importance that Christians form a correct concept regarding holiness, especially since the achievement of it is the very duty of every Christian. To go wrong in the practice of it, thereby achieving little or nothing from the practice of it, while all along being under the false impression of achieving much, would be such a tragedy.