

Christ the King Abbey

(Traditional Benedictines)

(Formerly St Francis of Assisi Chapel)

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

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Weekly Bulletin #945

July 23, 2006 – Green

Mass of Sunday; Gl; Cr; Pref. Holy Trinity; comm. St Apollinaris

“YOU KNOW NOT OF WHAT SPIRIT YOU ARE”

“Our faith in Jesus’ love for us and our own love for Him raise the soul to a more perfect love, or as Saint Thomas puts it: ‘Hope is made more perfect through the intervention of love.’ ‘Love hopes for all things’. And of hope, as of love, there can never be too much! It is meant for all, for the innocent and for the sinner, but more especially for the latter; for while the compassion of Jesus encompasses every soul, it does so in particular in the case of those who are most in need of His mercy.

“Jesus came down from heaven especially for sinners: ‘I am not come to call the just, but sinners.’ To them is directed the touching solicitude of the Good Shepherd: ‘I am the Good Shepherd...’ ‘What man of you that hath a hundred sheep; and if he shall lose one of them, doth he not leave the ninety-nine in the desert, and go after that which was lost until he find it?’ For them are intended the father’s delicate attentions toward the prodigal son: ‘Bring forth quickly the first robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it, and let us eat and make merry: because this my son was dead, and is come to life again: was lost, and is found.’ No, Christ did not come down from heaven to destroy a soul who was in danger, but to raise her up again; not to humiliate and crush one who had fallen, but to reestablish her in His grace and His love: ‘that there might be fulfilled what was said by the mouth of the prophet Isaias: “Behold My Servant whom I have chosen, My Beloved in whom My Soul hath been well pleased... The bruised reed He shall not break; and smoking flax He shall not extinguish ... and in His Name the Gentiles shall hope.”’

“Nor will God send down the avenging fire desired by the Apostles to consume the erring: ‘You know not of what spirit you are. The Son of Man came not to destroy souls but to save.’ Rather will He cause the flame of His merciful love to blaze forth: ‘I am come to cast fire on the earth: and what will I, but that it be kindled?’ With pleasure He shares His bread with sinners, and sits down to table with them: ‘As He was sitting at meat in the house (of Matthew), behold many publicans and sinners came, and sat down with Jesus and His disciples.’ Energetically does He defend them from the maligners: ‘They that are in health need not a physician, but they that are ill. Go then and learn what this meaneth, “I will have mercy and not sacrifice.”’

“When to man’s puny heart it seems already much to pardon a brother seven times: ‘Lord, how often shall my brother offend against me, and I forgive him? Till seven times?’ The Heart of Jesus replies: ‘I say not to thee, till seven times; but till seventy times seven times.’ Jesus forgives again and again. Never a reproof, never a reproach for guilt! ‘Woman, where are they that accused thee? Hath no man condemned thee? ... Neither will I condemn thee. Go, and now sin no more.’ Never does Jesus withhold His divine favors from a repentant sinner. Even though Peter denied Him, he nevertheless receives the keys of the kingdom of heaven; Paul, the persecutor, becomes the apostle of nations; the great sinner in the Gospel is rescued from the street and becomes a saint; thus it is true that ‘there shall be joy in heaven upon one sinner that doth penance, more than upon ninety-nine just who need not penance.’”

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“Such divine words may appear novel and may even cause astonishment if only considered superficially. It is not meant here that in the eyes of Jesus a sinful soul as such could ever seem beautiful; but a soul always appears beautiful when seen through the eyes of the infinite Love which has created her, redeemed her, and desires to see her saved. Similarly, it is not meant that Jesus would wish to be, or could ever be, deceived by a sinful soul, but that He takes pleasure in being piously deceived by just souls who interpose themselves between Himself and sinners to excuse them and as it were conceal them behind their own love of reparation; in doing so they follow the example which He Himself gave from the Cross when He interposed Himself between God the Father and guilty humanity: ‘Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!’ In other words, having in the Gospel proclaimed the blessedness of the merciful, God has by that very fact revealed His infinite happiness in always showing mercy. On the other hand, His mercy can show itself only in the face of misery – and what misery could be greater than sin?”

(Taken from the book: “Jesus Appeals to the World,” by Father Lorenzo Sales, M.C.)

(Imprimatur: Francis Cardinal Spellman, March 11, 1955)