

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

EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Weekly Bulletin #956

October 8, 2006 – Green

Mass of Sunday; Gl; Cr; Pref. Holy Trinity

On the Feast of Christ the King, October 29, 2006, at the 10:00 AM Mass, God willing, the following young men will enter the novitiate of Christ the King Abbey:

Mr. Nicholas McHenry of Ohio

Mr. Autrey Corley of Texas

Mr. Peter Linder of British Columbia

In preparation for this great blessing, the Bulletins for the next few weeks will focus attention on the monastic life as lived by both monks and nuns.

Of Living Stones

The monastery is a tabernacle in the desert. It is a place where the luminous cloud of the divine Presence almost visibly descends. The monk is a man – an ordinary man – who lives “in the secret of God's face,” immersed in the divine Presence. The monastery is never merely a house, a dwelling for men, a dormitory giving shelter to those who seek shelter. The monastery is a Church, a sanctuary of God. It is a Tabernacle of the New Testament, where God comes to dwell with men in the mystical humanity of His divine Son.

The monks, working together with a spirit of self-sacrifice and perfect solidarity, are not merely providing for their material needs in this life. The work of the monk contributes to a much more important common spiritual end – his union in Christ in union with all his brothers. In building and maintaining the monastery, the monk works toward the building of the New Jerusalem, a miniature mystical Body of Christ, the “Church” of his monastery. For the building of stones in which the monks chant the office is merely the outward symbol and expression of the building of living stones which is formed by the monks themselves – a corporate body living together in peace and harmony and holiness – for their own good and for the good of all who look to them for spiritual nourishment and comfort.

The members of a monastic community build a spiritual temple, of which they themselves form the very stones of the edifice, and this by their charity. This charity consists not merely in the labor of bearing one another's burdens, or the labor that brings them sustenance and shelter. Monastic charity consists of something far more than corporal works of mercy or of good example or of instruction and all the rest. Above all else, conditioned primarily by the Solemn Vows of the monks, the monastic environment is the proper place where the monks can more easily attain to their common end, which is the union with God in silence and solitude. For this reason, more than most others, the responsibility of the Father Abbot is to see to it that no thing nor any person ever be permitted to jump over the wall and into the monastic enclosure and disquiet the peace and the good of the monks. More than at any other time in recent history, the purpose of a monastery is critically essential to the spiritual welfare of those faithful souls who go there to seek and to find spiritual nourishment and fulfillment. The monks do not take lightly any invasion brought about by argument or debate of any sort, and they do not give welcome to any inversion or private interpretation of old religious certitudes. They know they are being watched by large and awful faces from beyond, and on those faces, there is no smile. It is a matter of serious consequence that the monks provide a place to pray, a place of peaceful and stable prayer, to the faithful laypeople who come to them seeking the same nourishment that gives life to the monks themselves. Prayer does not exist in the heart of man where quarrel and discord dominate. It is the privilege of the monks to lead the souls of the faithful to their sanctification and salvation.

The monks help one another not only in the fields and the shops; not only do they make bread and press the grapes of their vineyards; they also prepare a place for the Word of God to silently enter into their midst and to eat and drink with them. It is because the monks enable one another to live more easily and peacefully in solitude and silence, because they provide for one another an atmosphere of recollection and prayer, that they are able to achieve the supreme end of the monastic life which is this spiritual and hidden banquet – the feast in which the Word sits down at table in peace and quiet with His chosen ones and finds pleasure and consolation in their company. The monastery must be a place where God comes down in His charity to let Himself be seen and known by men. If it is not just exactly this, then the monastery is no more than a boarding house snuggled in the streets of the market place. *(Continued on page two)*