

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

TWENTY THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Weekly Bulletin #961

November 12, 2006 – Green

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

THE JOY OF LOVING GOD

St. John tells us that, “God is charity, and he that abideth in charity abideth in God and God in him.” How intelligible and how simple is everything said in the Gospel. If only we would stop long enough to try to absorb it. It is through love, therefore, that we become united with Jesus, and through the union that we achieve with Him – that we obtain every fruit of sanctification in abundance and superabundance. It follows then that it is in the union that we have with Jesus that virtues flow into our souls, and it follows also that the greater the union the easier becomes the flow. If we would but follow the dictates of the First Commandment of God how easy would the workings of God become. All that is important with God and asked for by God is sculptured in the forge of love.

Sin is anti-love. Sin is the most anti-love act that can be thought of. It was sin that caused man to turn his back on his God, Who was and is the source of all love. Therefore it must be sin that must first be attended to, and properly so, before the spiritual and interior life of the soul can begin its growth. Here it is that we once again come face to face with the ever present word: “CONVERSIO.” We have to turn back around completely with our backs toward sin. Reparation for the sins of our lives must be our first and most important work – reparation that is determined and committed – not haphazard or intermittent. Sin has caused damage in our souls, and that damage must be repaired, and the work of repairing the damage must be continuous, determined, and conscientious. Saint Francis de Sales has this to say: “Repentance which excludes the love of God is INFERNAL (emphasis added). Repentance which does not reject love but is without it, is imperfect and cannot procure salvation by itself until it has attained to love and has become united with it.” The Gospel has this to say: “Many sins are forgiven her, because she hath loved much.” At another time our Lord says this and with greater firmness and clarity: “To whom less is forgiven, he loveth less!”

Are not the Gospels intended for all times and for all souls? If one wishes to do penance for sins committed, then one must love God with all one's soul and mind and body and heart. Sin is the greatest evil, and must therefore be attended to with the greatest effort – the greatest amount of love possible. Love is the best penance for sin. In like manner, if we desire our reparation for the sins of others to be effective, it is imperative that love – charity – first immolate us. No matter what, everything is done by way of love, and only by way of love. For menfolk, this instruction is thought to be dressed in somewhat effeminate robes, and for that reason many menfolk shy away from it. NOT SO! This instruction is not effeminate and to be of use only by the womenfolk in our lives. Nothing done by any man, no effort put forth by the most masculine amongst us, requires more muscle power than does the observance of this one single simple instruction. It takes a real MAN to be able to live out the impact of this instruction. As for masculinity, can anyone question the masculinity of Jesus Christ? Can anyone call into question the quality of love that existed in that one solitary Figure? The living out of a life of love, the love called for by God Himself, in no way tarnishes the masculinity of man. In deed, rather, it enhances it.

Furthermore, love is not only reparation for sin. Love is the purification of the soul. In fact, it is a light which reveals to the soul the slightest defects that are still marring its beauty – blemishes which yet have to be done away with. In the darkness of a life of sin, blemishes cannot be seen! Only in the light can they make their appearance. Love is the force which gives the soul the necessary energy and which prompts the soul to eradicate defects to the very root. Love is the fire which burns away and consumes the poisonous and ugly weeds which spring up in the soul. Saint Theresa has this to say: “I know that the fire of love is more sanctifying than that of purgatory.” Love will make all of our deficiencies vanish. We cannot love and at the same time hurt the one we love. The love of God gives freedom! It is not dreary. It does not create dreariness in our lives and minds. It produces the most profound joy and serenity. Love permits us to look beyond our defects and deficiencies. Love's greatest desire is to work for and to give pleasure to the beloved, and in so doing the soul becomes renewed and purified. With prudent acts of reparation the soul becomes holy and pleasing to God. Love is not hysterical. It does not run about – helter-skelter – from one painful misguided mortification to another, thinking that all such give pleasure to God. Love does all things under the calm and peaceful direction of the Beloved. That is why love is always happy and joyful. It even absorbs happiness into the sufferings and trials of life.

(Continued on page two)