

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

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

Weekly Bulletin #973

January 28, 2007 – Green

Mass of Sunday; GI; Cr; Pref. Trinity; comm. St. Cyril and St. Agnes

WHAT IS THIS PRESENT LIFE?

The time has now arrived for us to put away the decorations of the Christmas Season. We must now turn our attention to a life of penance. With wisdom and prudent good taste the atmosphere in our homes should begin to reflect mortification. The little children should be taught that doing without candy and sweet goodies is not some form of punishment, but a way to indicate love and appreciation to our blessed Lord, Who, because He loves us dearly, gave up His life so that we might save our precious souls. Penance must be motivated by thoughts of love, not by fear of punishment and chastisement.

For the largest part of Mankind, the question of penance and mortification and reparation has no meaning whatsoever. The main reason for this lies in the fact that most people today refuse to accept the fact that there is existence after the time of the present existence comes to an end. It is a most unfortunate fact that the largest portion of Mankind fails to recognize the existence of a creator God, an omnipotent God who demands reparation for sin. Such talk as this arouses the ire of many people. Their usual retort is that penance and mortification is suited to the thinking of Medieval Man. Modern Man knows better, and will not be persuaded to go back to an existence of medieval restrictions.

May we ask, "What is this present life?" In answer let us say that this present life is a preparation, it is an introduction to another existence. The infinite wisdom and knowledge of our God would not have brought into existence a being of limited lifespan for the purpose of enjoying self-centered sin and pleasure, offensive to Himself. The very thought of this offends right reason. Divine wisdom and knowledge created man for more than death! Man was created for another existence, a supernatural existence which he can attain only by passing through the gate of death. The supreme destiny of man is not in this world. Man's destiny will be realized in a life of intimate communion with his Creator, provided, of course, that he follows the pattern of life as outlined by the Creator. Should man fail to follow the set pattern of life required by the Creator, his existence will continue, but in a place totally separated from the Creator in alienation and in total frustration and hate.

God is a living God. It is true that He is far above us, and this in virtue of His eternal majesty and His creative omnipotence. Nevertheless, He is very near to the soul of Man in virtue of His merciful goodness. Throughout Sacred Scripture, do we not find many holy Patriarchs at all times holding the protective and providing hand of the Lord God? In a spirit of tranquil submission the Patriarchs never failed to take their steps in the presence of God. Man was created for beatitude, and this beatitude, magnificent beyond description, consists in uniting himself to God and possessing Him in His kingdom. But in order to live in harmony with his true nature and the reason for his existence, man must develop in himself a clear sense of his supernatural destiny. Man must WILL to do whatever is necessary to give unhindered development to his divine calling.

The desire – the divine calling – for the divine union must not be merely a vague longing. On the contrary, this desire to belong to God must at all times be a deliberate determination to submit to God and to live in accordance with His divine will. This desire must be such that it knows no weariness. It must be such that it shuns the many fears which ordinarily confine the majority of men to mediocrity and failure.

No one, absolutely no one, can still his attraction toward the invisible God. No matter the argument or concocted proof, a certainty follows man wherever he goes, as does a shadow, that there is something more in store for him than death. The unflinching effort of the pagan or the atheist or the agnostic to prove non-existence is itself the best proof for existence. No one dreads immortality unless his own life gives him reason to dread immortality! No one dreads the existence of a creator and omnipotent God unless his own life gives him reason to dread a creator and omnipotent God! No one shuns or dreads a life of penance or mortification unless attachment to sin continues within him. If he is attached to sin he will inevitably go away sad! No one can evaluate his own spiritual condition by the criteria and sentiments and notions set forth to him by his own justifications, interpretations, or the various inappropriate attachments.

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