

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

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

March 11, 2007 – Purple

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

Weekly Bulletin #979

Lent

OF DIVINE CHARITY

“So common is it to find souls for whom the years have passed without bringing any supernatural development, that we come to regard this, which is in itself an extraordinary and perplexing fact, as being a normal and comprehensible one. We come to look upon the presence of ordinary sanctity as being something exceptional, and the absence of it as being the rule in ordinary Christians and even in religious.

“And yet that there should be life without growth and development is surely abnormal, and the frequency of the instances of it should not blind us to this abnormality or dispense us from the effort to explore its causes as well in others as in ourselves... In baptism, we become children in the supernatural order, and the vast majority of us remain stunted and undeveloped spiritually up to the very end of our earthly pilgrimage. We live and die infants, as far as our spiritual life is concerned.

“St. Thomas shows that supernatural life in its origin and in its growth follows closely the analogy of natural life. In all living things, life is increased by the exercise of vital activity proportionate to the strength of the living principle that puts it forth. Our bodies grow in vigor as long as they are capable of energetic actions commensurate with the force of which they are possessed. Our wills gain firmness and power by being used to command acts of fortitude, temperance, and justice. Every strong determination, every right decision gives the will added strength. Our intelligence gains range and mastery by being applied to the task of grappling with more and more difficult questions of science if such questions task fully and yet do not prove too great for our intellectual powers. It is a law that every exercise of vital activity that bears the full impress of the vigor of the vital principle from which it springs increases the life of the being who exercises this activity. The same law holds in the supernatural order. Charity or the love of God is the essence of that participation of Divine Life, which we receive by sanctifying grace. Every act we elicit which is animated by the degree of charity of which our souls are possessed (and which is in direct proportion to the measure of sanctifying grace imparted to us) increases and strengthens that charity. Charity is the life of the soul and every act that is animated by the full vigor of the charity actually in the soul causes a growth and development in supernatural life, and supernatural love. Divine Charity, or love of God, does not involve, unless accidentally, elements of feeling and sensible emotion. It is a thing of the will and of the will as energized by a very secret divine force. This divine energy imparted to the will, by which this latter is invigorated and emboldened to extend to its God the pure love of friendship, is not felt or experienced in its movements, nor in its exercise. Of itself it does not descend into the natural consciousness, and, ordinarily speaking, is, in consequence, unattended by any emotion. Yet it can, in spite of that, be very deep, strong, and tender. The ordinary mark of true love is that the lover espouses the interests of the beloved. These interests he makes his own. What is an object of desire to the beloved becomes such to the lover. The latter seeks it as ardently as if it were an object of longing for himself – though it is with a view to placing it within reach of the beloved. The happiness of the beloved becomes the object of the lover, so that he pursues, with ardor, all that makes for or contributes to that happiness; what the beloved wills, that, too, the lover wills. So it is between God and the soul. The soul loves God when it wills what God wills and pursues the objects of the Divine will. God, in regard to His creature, desires and wills that creature's happiness and the perfection which is a means to that happiness. In this is involved the willing of all that makes for the creature's perfection. The perfection of the soul is proportioned to its likeness to God. Hence, when the soul is so disposed towards God that it shows itself prompt to embrace what the divine will determines in its regard, it loves God. In this promptitude it manifests the sign of pure love which, for the lover, consists in making the object of the will of the beloved the object of his own will. Love of God lies in making God's interests and objective the soul's own interest and objective. It is an identification of the soul's desires with the desires of God. It is making God another self.”

(In the Likeness of Christ, by Father Edward Leen)