

# Christ the King Abbey

(Traditional Benedictines)

Cullman, Alabama

[www.ChristTheKingAbbey.org](http://www.ChristTheKingAbbey.org)

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

## Saint Pius V Chapel

Birmingham, Alabama

9:30 AM

Every Sunday except  
first Sunday of each month

TWENTY THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

November 8, 2009 – Green

Mass of Sunday GI; Cr; Preface of Holy Trinity

Weekly Bulletin #1120

*O Lord, uphold us and  
our absent brethren.*

## THE POWER OF PRAYER

By

RICHARD GRÄF, CS.Sp. Part 16

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Prayer is the most important source of strength in the life of the Christian and indeed in the life of any worshipper of God, the reason being that it is the medium of all supernatural power. But only when prayer is experimentally appreciated as a source of strength will it be utilized to tap other sources of strength. Streams of life and power will then flow in upon us from every side, and our spiritual vigor never fails thereafter. Prayer is the quickener, the vivifying principle of the spiritual life; in its absence no interior life is possible. Let it become a living force within, then every faculty of the spiritual man palpitates with life. Prayer, if not the greatest source of our strength, should at least be continuously employed. Should be, but in fact with many it has long ceased to be such; it rather results in dissipating our reserves in that its practice actually costs us, at times, a greater effort than applying ourselves to the heaviest type of work. And so we are easily inclined to put prayer as much as possible on the long finger, preferring hard work to it. And it is here, perhaps, that our spiritual life is most seriously impaired. What should impart vigor for a programme of self-sacrifice and dedication spells a loss of strength and costs us a greater effort than would the programme itself. No wonder then that slowly but surely our spiritual life declines. How could it be otherwise? One is eating into one's capital instead of living on one's interest; and capital, were it ever so substantial, is bound to diminish when it is being constantly used up and nothing is added to it.

We pray because pray we must; prayer has become for us a sacrifice, is listed among the sacrifices we have to make. A falser notion of prayer can scarce be imagined. Prayer, no doubt, calls for effort; and as all else in life, it has to be learnt, and years of apprenticeship are never years of mastery. In the beginning we have to bargain for some sacrifices; only by patient practice is growth in prayer possible. We cannot expect to sow to-day and to reap in joy just to-morrow; between sowing and harvesting a fairly long period must elapse. So with our apprenticeship in the art of prayer. And, besides, there are times when sacrifice, especially interior sacrifice, is demanded of us. We have but to refer to those painful experiences of the spirit, the "dark night" of the sense and of the soul, when prayer can be a grievous burden to human nature. And yet such experiences should entail no loss of inner strength; despite the sacrifice involved one should become conscious of a strange power that flows from prayer. Difficulties, too, will often crop up, due to bodily indisposition.

These, however, are incidental and only illustrate how much the soul depends on the body precisely in this matter of prayer. Hence one must give the body what the body requires. It is not to *be* pampered and treated softly, but rather subjected to control and discipline; on the other hand it must not be denied its legitimate demands. If these are granted, it will be doubly obliged to the soul and will prove itself more co-operative, especially where prayer is concerned. When we are worn out with fatigue and at the end of our resources not much is to be expected from our prayer. However, with body and mind vigorous and alert, prayer becomes easy once more.

If we would renew our spiritual lives we have to begin the process with prayer. All other measures would merely retard, not arrest, the downward course. When the prayer that makes sacrifice possible costs us more than the sacrifice itself, not much is to be hoped for. If, for instance, eating and recreation were to cost us a greater effort than hard work, what chance would we have of renewing our bodily vigour? We should soon be at the end of our resources, completely disabled. Only when prayer has once more become a source of strength is there a good chance that our spiritual lives will take the upgrade again, and quickly too. We recall St Augustine's words, *ordo orandi, ordo vivendi*: "He knows how to live rightly who knows how to pray aright." When we again manage to pray well we pass without more ado from fervent prayer to fervent lives. **To be Continued...**

1. There will be Catechism class after 10:00 AM Mass this morning.
2. Do not forget that November is the Month of the Poor Souls in Purgatory. Therefore, let us not forget to give to them everything we are able too. Our special prayer must be directed to them, and for their benefit. This is not to be taken lightly. When the time arrives for us, and by the ever great grace of God, are sentenced to Purgatory. How profoundly will our need be, as we beg for help? "As we sow, so shall we reap."
3. The 2010 Calendars are available this Sunday at the usual price of \$8.00 each. At Christ the King Abbey in Cullman, please see Father Bernard, OSB. At St. Pius V Chapel in Birmingham, please see Mrs. George Niebuhr, Our Lady of Lourdes in Montgomery, please see Mrs. Alan Olson. A Catholic Calendar is a must in a Catholic home.
4. Monday November 9, 2009 Dedication of the Archbasilica of the Most Holy Savior
5. Friday November 13, 2009 is, for us the Feast of Benedictine All Saints. This is a particularly Benedictine Feast Day. Our Oblates are especially reminded to be mindful of this Benedictine day of special prayer.
6. Saturday November 14, 2009 is the Solemn Commemoration Day of Benedictine All Souls, and is another day of importance, especially to Benedictines. This is another occasion when prayer for our dead is emphasized.
7. We are now approaching the Holy Season of Advent – a good time for spiritual evaluation. It is a time well suited to analyze our true religious purpose. How sedulous are we, IN ACTUAL FACT, about the way of living a Catholic life which Traditional Catholicism places before us? Do we stop short of the "stops and starts" that common sense Catholic living asks of us? Have we constructed in our family circle a comfortable "homespun" religious practice which finds it convenient to attend a traditional church after we learn that the teachings of that particular church conform to our own private and personal catholic approach? If so, that would be but high quality Phariseism! It would be a false religious exhibition of piety on Sunday mornings while all of the rest of the time **WE GIVE AN ALMOST BUT NOT QUITE** catholic appearance in our dress, in our eating habits, in our prayer, in our entertainment and enjoyment, in our manner of behavior and all the rest! **RIGHT HERE** is where our fears and concerns **MUST** be focused — **not our frantic and frenzied fears of coming catastrophes!** What is the quality of our concern about the eternal judgment of our eternal God? We simply cannot continuously walk about in life giving a "weak sister" observance to our responsibilities and religious convictions.
8. Please pray for all the Sick and Shut-ins of our Chapels. LET US ALSO PRAY FOR EVERYONE. It is not for us to determine who to leave out of this prayer. Please pray for Mary Casey of our St. Pius V Chapel, Birmingham.
9. MASSES FOR THE WEEK: (Father Abbot Leonard's schedule only)
  - SUNDAY: For the People of our Chapels
  - MONDAY: For the Poor Souls
  - TUESDAY: Special Int. Margaret Rosenberg
  - WEDNESDAY: Dec. Fidencio Castro
  - THURSDAY: For the Poor Souls
  - FRIDAY: **For our Monks and Nuns and Oblates – Benedictine All Saints**
  - SATURDAY: **For the Dec. Monks and Nuns OSB – Benedictine All Souls**

*A Thought To Remember...*

**When we manage to learn how to pray well we pass  
without any ado from fervent prayer to fervent lives.**