

Christ the King Abbey

(Traditional Benedictines)

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

SUNDAY AFTER THE ASCENSION

Weekly Bulletin #1148

May 16, 2010 – White

Mass of Sunday GI; Cr; Preface of Ascension

THE POWER OF PRAYER Part 30

RICHARD GRÄF, CS.Sp.

INTRODUCTION TO PRAYER IN GENERAL

I. Preliminary Remarks

The Jews were accustomed to pray often and long. Hence the apostles and disciples of Christ were familiar with prayer. The Master's prayer, however, must have been very different from that of the priests and scribes. How brightly His face must have shone when He returned to His chosen band from the seclusion of the mountain after holding speech with the Father! If Moses' face shone with such radiance after communing with God, how must it have been with the Saviour? "If that sentence of death, engraved in writing upon stone was promulgated to men in a dazzling cloud . . . how much more dazzling then must be the brightness in which the spiritual law is promulgated to them?" (2 Cor. 3, 7). The apostles' unspoken wish to learn to pray as the Master did became more pressing. They did not venture to ask Him directly; they chose an indirect approach instead: "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples" (Luke 11,1). But Christ could not yet initiate them into an understanding of the intimacies of His own life of prayer. The Holy Spirit had first to come upon them (John 16, 13). They were not yet mature enough for thorough acquaintance. Too preoccupied "with themselves and their earth-bound thoughts and aspirations, they had not yet reconciled themselves to the folly of the cross (Mark 9, 32; Luke 9, 45), nor understood all the parables He had propounded to them. "They understood not what He spoke to them" (John 10, 6). Only after the Resurrection could He give them an understanding of the Scriptures (Luke 24, 45). It was the Holy Ghost who would teach them all truth (John 16, 13).

Yet the Master gave them a summary form embracing the essential elements of what would later be developed. He indicated before all else that they might call God their Father. Besides, the Saviour had frequent occasion in His sermons and instructions to speak of prayer. In these He gave a clear exposition of its real nature.

If we would lovingly abide in God's presence we must get to know Him in prayer. Side by side with our duty to honour and glorify Him, we must believe in Him and love Him. Love of God is the final end we have to aim at, faith the immediate end. The end has to be kept in view from the first, though it is last to be attained; it decides the direction to be taken in order to reach the goal. We deal first with faith; we need not trouble ourselves specially in regard to love, as it will flower of itself from faith. In order to get to know God in prayer we must, as already mentioned, strive to lead a life pleasing to Him. However, it is not by action that we come to know Him; action does but create the necessary condition of learning to know Him in prayer.

We learn to know people best by speaking with them. Conversation is the bridge between man and man; across this bridge mind contacts mind. A person's speech reveals him, tells what spirit animates him. So too the bridge between man and God is conversation; across it we can enter into contact with the Divinity. The more frequently this contact is made by prayer the more intimate will our relations be with God, the better we learn to know Him and, by degrees, to love Him.

Prayer, therefore, is a speaking with a living person present to us and with whom we are on familiar terms. Speaking is to be understood in the widest sense of the term and so includes a communing without words. The persons whom we address familiarly include all those whom we can engage in prayer: God One-in-Three, the Holy Ghost, Christ the Redeemer, our Lady, the angels and saints.

Prayer is a speaking with a personal, living friend. Not therefore with some lifeless impersonal thing, some hazy undefined object. It is specially important to stress that the intimate friend in this case is present to us; He does not dwell in regions far removed and inaccessible; nor do we need to seek without to find him; He is within our very selves. "Too late have I loved Thee, O Thou Beauty of ancient days, yet ever new! Too late have I loved Thee! And behold Thou wert within me, and I abroad, and there I searched for Thee" (St Augustine, *Confessions* x, 27). We do not stand alone; we live in God, and He in us (John 15, 4). "In all your difficulties and troubles are there not two of us to bear them?" The Lord Himself will watch over us (Gen. 28, 15). He who tries to serve God faithfully can apply to himself that gospel text: "Thou art always with me, and all I have is thine" (Luke 15, 31).

To pray is to stand in conscious relationship with the intimate friend we are addressing. As long as this consciousness is alive we are praying. In prayer there is always involved a going out of self and an entering into contact with the person in question. Whereas if we remain within the closed circle of our own ego, instead of reaching outwards away from self, there can be no polarity, no mutual relationship between us and the person; hence no question of prayer, for a monologue is not prayer. □

1. The Annual Abbey Church picnic is being held TODAY. May God bless you, and have a lovely time.
2. Remain mindful that May is the month for DAILY ROSARY: both in the home as HERE in the Monastery. Rosary begins daily at 7:20 P.M. in the Abbey Church.
3. Please pray for our Sick and Shut-Inns. Let us pray for everyone.
4. **N.B.:** There will be no Mass at Our Lady of Lourdes Chapel in Montgomery on June 6 (First Sunday). There will be Mass at Our Lady of Lourdes in Montgomery on June 13 (Second Sunday). The Chapel Picnic will take place after Mass, June 13, (Second Sunday). There will be no Mass at St. Pius V Chapel in Birmingham on June 6, nor on June 13, we return to our regular schedule of Mass at St. Pius V Chapel on Sunday June 20.
5. Corpus Christi Assignments (Consult the Abbot if you cannot be available for that day.)

Celebrant:	Father Prior Sebastian OSB
Master of Ceremonies for Mass:	Father Michael OSB
Master of Ceremonies for Procession:	Father Bernard OSB & Father Michael OSB
Acolytes for the Mass:	Mr. Ronald Roberts & Mr. Danny Henderson
Censor Bearers:	Brother Louis OSB & Frater Dominic OSB
Eucharistic Standard Bearer	Mr. Danny Henderson
Torch Bearers:	Mr. Bernard Morin and Mr. Isaac Olsen
Cross Bearer	Mr. Ronald Roberts
Baldachin Bearers	Mr. Thomas Girardi, Mr. Sam Liburdi
	Mr. Danny Meilleur, Mr. Irwin LeBlanc
Flowers	Master John Patterson and Miss Nancy Patterson

6. MASSES FOR THE WEEK: (Father Abbot Leonard's schedule only)

SUNDAY:	For the People of our Chapels	FRIDAY:	Rev Mother Marie de Montfort CMSS
MONDAY:	Dec. Valentina Peterka	SATURDAY:	For the Poor Souls
TUESDAY:	For Father Martin Stepanich OFM (69 th Ordination Anniversary)		God Bless you,
WEDNESDAY:	Dec. Mary Rademacher		dear Father Martin
THURSDAY:	Special Int. of the Donor		

A Thought To Remember ...

JUST WHAT IS THE PREEMINENT PURPOSE OF SPIRITUAL READING?

Certainly not to satisfy one's vain spiritual curiosity! Certainly not to accumulate spiritual trivia and religious information! Certainly not to authenticate our spiritual sophistication! Unless there is real honesty of mind and heart, spiritual reading is no satisfactory way to apply any degree of effective discipline to the polluted and barren use of anyone's private leisure time!

Spiritual Reading applies FORCE on us - - A PRESSING FORCE - - a force strong enough to bring about courageous and pious change in the spiritual dimension of our souls. If Spiritual Reading fails to bring about an abiding desire for a determined effort to improve the spiritual structure of our religious way of living; if spiritual reading fails to beget a noticeable reformation of our mental attitude concerning the things that pertain to the activity of grace in our souls; if spiritual reading fails to bring us closer to sanctity;

It would be better for us never to Spiritual read at all!!!