



The Rule of St. Benedict



The Benedictine Center
of St. Paul's Monastery



The Rule of St. Benedict

Listen carefully, my child, to the master's instruction, and attend to them with the ear of your heart...As we progress in this way of life and in faith, we shall run on the path of God's commandments, our hearts overflowing with the inexpressible delight of love.

I

Prologue, *Rule of St. Benedict*



The Benedictine Center
of St. Paul's Monastery

Phone 651.777.7251

www.stpaulsmonastery.org



Prologue, *Rule of St. Benedict*

Let us get up then, at long last, for the Scriptures rouse us when they say, “It is high time for us to arise from sleep” (Rom. 13:11). Let us open our eyes to the light that comes from God, and our hearts to the voice from heaven that every day calls out this charge: “If you hear his voice today, do not harden your hearts” (Ps. 94:8). And again: “You that have ears to hear, listen to what the Spirit says to the churches” (Rev. 2:7). And what does he say? “Come and listen to me, children; I will teach you the fear of the Lord” (Ps 33:12). “Run while you have the light of life, that the darkness of death may not overtake you” (John 12:35).

If I were looking for one single, simple phrase to sum up Benedict's whole way of life, I would find it in Verse 21: "The love of Christ must come before all else." ...This Christ-love is the center of the whole *Rule* and the center of our lives. If there is any one thing that is characteristic of Benedict, it is that he makes the love of Christ the focal point to which everything must lead. One should really not talk about a verse like this, but just stop and meditate on it.

Esther de Waal

Living With Contradiction, p. 30ff

Practices for Life from the Prologue

1. Be attentive to God's presence in the ordinary moments of life.
2. Be shaped by Scripture and prayer.
3. Listen with your heart and respond with generosity.
4. Practice moderation in what you do and the choices you make.



T*he Rule of St. Benedict* is not antique and irrelevant. It is modern life, rather, that is not in accord with the fundamental needs of the human heart.

From the viewpoint of the human soul, our modern style of living is the irrelevancy. By not enjoying a genuine common life and by not giving ourselves a degree of contemplation, we wound our need for emotional quiet and for meaning.

And so it is appropriate to return to this ancient sketch of an alternative life, to reread it and discuss it, and, with imagination and reflection, bring its spirit into the workplace, the home, and the city, where it could transform a culture of anxiety into a community of peace and mutual regard.

Thomas Moore

Preface to *The Rule of Saint Benedict*

Timothy Fry (editor)

Resources

The Benedictine Handbook, Liturgical Press (2003).

Benedict's Way: An Ancient Monk's Insights for a Balanced Life,
Lonni Collins Pratt and Daniel Homan: Loyola Press (2001).

Carried by the Current: A Benedictine Perspective,
Ambrose Tinsely OSB: Columbia Press (2005).

Essential Monastic Wisdom: Writings on the Contemplative Life,
Hugh Fiess: Harper Collins Publishers (1999).

Friend of the Soul: A Benedictine Spirituality of Work,
Norvene Vest: Cowley Publications (1997).

Humility Matters in Practicing the Spiritual Life,
Mary Margaret Funk OSB: Continuum (2005).

No Moment Too Small,
Norvene Vest: Cowley Publications (1994).

The Rule of Saint Benedict,
Timothy Fry OSB, ed.: Vantage Spiritual Classics (1993).

Sacred Reading: The Ancient Art of Lectio Divina,
Michael Casey OSCO: Liguoiri Publications (1995).

St. Benedict's Toolbox:
The Nuts and Bolts of Everyday Benedictine Living,
Jane Tomaine: Morehouse Publishing (2005).

Seeking God: The Way of St. Benedict,
Esther de Waal: Liturgical Press (2001).

Wisdom Distilled from the Daily,
Joan Chittister OSB: HarperSanFrancisco (1991).



The Benedictine Center
of St. Paul's Monastery

Phone 651.777.7251

www.stpaulsmonastery.org