

## Reflection Saturday Week 14 – St Benedict - 2020

*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 centre of the whole Rule and the centre 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. 30f

St Benedict's practices for Life are:

- 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.

The Rule of St. Benedict offers a healthy and wholesome response to the fundamental needs of life, which modern life does not. From the viewpoint of the human soul, our modern way of living has nothing to offer. His rule promotes and encourages a genuine common life and stresses the importance of contemplation. Since our souls cry out for emotional quiet and for meaning, St Benedict's rule offers an alternative way of living in which prayer, contemplation and work are lived in harmony with each other. As with scripture, we need to discover the spirit of St Benedict's words so that with imagination and reflection we can bring that spirit, the love of God that we experience, into the workplace, the home, and the city, where it will transform a culture of anxiety into a community of peace and mutual regard. Listen to the wisdom of St Benedict:

- *Before all, and above all, attention shall be paid to the care of the sick, so that they shall be served as if they were Christ himself.*
- *Be careful to be gentle, lest in removing the rust, you break the whole instrument.*
- *Prayer ought to be short and pure, unless it be prolonged by the inspiration of divine grace.*
- *The Lord waits for us to respond day by day. Every day is an opportunity for life.*

***And finally . . . . .***

*A drunk appears in front of a judge. The judge says, "You've been brought here for drinking." The drunk says, "Okay, let's get started!"*