

Reflection Tuesday Week 14 St Benedict 2023

Benedict (480 - 547) was born in Nursia, in Umbria, and studied in Rome; disliking the dissolute life of the city, he became a solitary hermit at Subiaco. His reputation spread, and some monks asked him to be their abbot; not liking his discipline, however, they tried to poison him. Benedict organised various communities of monks and nuns in different places, including the great monastery of Monte Cassino. He provided rules to guide the communal life of these monasteries. Although not the first monastic rule, Benedict's Rule has proved so wise and balanced that it has served as a foundation of communal living – and not only in religious communities. The Rule of St Benedict recognises that people aim at perfection but often fall short. It aims to be a “rule for beginners” in which even the least perfect and least able can grow in spiritual stature. In a Benedictine monastery the members strive to live and grow together, becoming more like the person God intended them to be. It does not seek to force members into a false uniformity with an idealistic and authoritarian regime. The Rule of St Benedict drags our eyes to the stars but keeps our feet firmly on the ground; it calls us to perfection but keeps us sane.

Religious life offers people an opportunity to share a journey of discovery with others that brings them closer and closer to God and into an ever-deeper relationship of love with God.

St Benedict

"He who labours as he prays lifts his heart to God with his hands."

"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."

"...first show them in deeds rather than words all that is good and holy."

"Girded with faith and the performance of good works, let us follow in his [Jesus] paths by the guidance of the Gospel,"

When asked what I do for a living, I was embarrassed to say that I work at McDonald's, so instead, I say... "I handle transactions for a multi-billion-pound company and industry on a daily basis and help provide around £3 million to the economy each year."