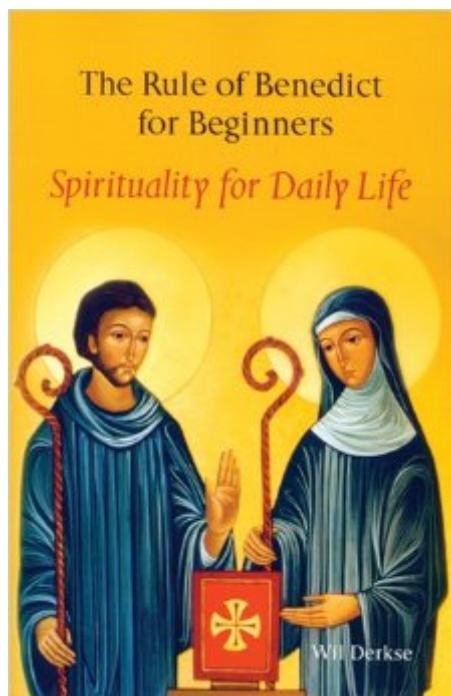


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The Rule Of Benedict For Beginners: Spirituality For Daily Life



Synopsis

Benedictine spirituality is simple and down to earth. Not only does the Benedictine lifestyle fit well within the walls of the monastery, its interpretation of life is also suitable to other forms of society. In *The Rule of Benedict for Beginners*, Wil Derkse reveals how elements from Benedictine spirituality and the Benedictine lifestyle may be fruitful outside the monastery to strengthen the quality of societal living and working. *The Rule of Benedict for Beginners* is a useful source of life orientation and lifestyle for those interested in living by the Rule. It applies the monastic vows to life within organizations and examines the valuable elements of Benedictine leadership and Benedictine time management. Chapter one sketches Derkse's own acquaintance with the Benedictine lifestyle. Chapter two examines the basic patterns of Benedictine spirituality in order to translate these patterns into nonmonastic contexts. Inspired leadership, listening decision-making, fruitfully prospering human resources, and sensible time management are themes in the remaining chapters. Chapters in Part I: *A First Acquaintance with Benedictine Spirituality* are a lesson from the *Imagery of Hildegard's Abbey in Eibingen*, "What I Learned Through My Own Acquaintance with Benedictine Life," and "Growing Toward the Oblature." Chapters in Part II: *Basic Patterns of Benedictine Spirituality and First Translation to Nonmonastic Contexts* are "The Benedictine Way of Life: Listening Attentively to Gain Results," "The Benedictine Vows: Directed Toward Growth and Liberation," and "Additional Aspects of the Benedictine Art of Listening." Chapters in Part III: *Benedictine Leadership: Stimulating People Toward Growth* are "Leadership Demands a Special Talent for Listening," "The Person of the Abbot," and "The Person of the Cellarer: 'A Man For all Seasons.'" Chapters in Part IV: *Benedictine Time Management: A Full Agenda, But Never Busy* are "Living a Wholesome Rhythm," and "Bearing Fruit in Season." Wil Derkse is an oblate of the Benedictine St. Willibrord's Abbey in Doetinchem, the Netherlands. He occupies the Andreas van Melsen Chair in Science, Society and Worldviews at the Catholic University of Nijmegen, the Netherlands.

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Customer Reviews

Wil Derkse's book on the Rule of Benedict for beginners is a wonderful introduction to this subject. The Rule of St. Benedict itself is a fairly short book, usually printed in fewer than 100 pages, with its 73 chapters of a few paragraphs in length at most. However, often a simple reading of the Rule leaves modern readers dis-satisfied; it is a rule in many ways of and for a different world, just as the biblical texts can be so characterised. However, it is also, like the Bible, a text that speaks to us today, and has application and inspiration for modern followers. Benedict's Rule for life includes worship, work, study, prayer, and relaxation. Benedict's Rule requires community -- even for those who become hermits or solitaries, there is a link to the community through worship and through the Rule. No one is alone. This is an important part of the relationship of God to the world, so it is an integral part of the Rule. Benedict's Rule was set out first in a world that was torn with warfare, economic and political upheaval, and a generally harsh physical environment. This Rule was set out to bring order to a general chaos in which people lived. This is still true today, and men and women all over the world use Benedict's 'little rule for beginners' as a basic structure for their lives. The first word of the rule is Listen. This is perhaps the best advice for anyone looking for any guidance or rule of life. While Benedict's Rule is decidedly Christocentric and hierarchical (though not as hierarchical as much popular ideas about monastic practice would have one think), it nonetheless can give value to any reader who is looking to construct a practice for oneself. Benedict's establishment of a monastery was in fact the establishment of a school for spirituality.

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