

Ancient Wisdom for a Contemporary Christian Parish

From time to time over the next few weeks, the Welcoming Committee will share with you excerpts from an article in Good News Magazine about St. Benedict's Rule, to see how it can apply to us today.

The Benedictines are the oldest and largest religious community in the West, and the Rule of St. Benedict has survived 1500 years confronting the same problems we encounter today. Its profound understanding of human nature makes it no less practical and applicable today. So it is invaluable to contemporary people, parishes and families.

Let's look first at *prayer*. The Benedictine Rule gives primacy to prayer saying "nothing shall be preferred to the work of God." It says prayer is a time for communion with God, thus it is the most important activity of any parish. Without Jesus we can bear no fruit (John 15:4), and where praise, worship and love are at the center of the parish, it flourishes; where they wane, it suffers. St. Benedict calls the monk to, "lay aside everything he is doing, and hasten with all speed", to prayer. For the layman as well as the monk, prayer can often be delayed by, or squeezed between other activities. We need a plan to ensure we will spend time with God so that the Lord is worthily praised, and we need to stick to it.

What opportunities are offered here at Holy Cross Parish to pray and spend time with God?

1. Private personal prayer.
2. Reading the scriptures: spend some time, even a few minutes becoming familiar with the scriptures. This enables us to make informed decisions about how Jesus would act in certain situations.
3. Daily Mass or try one extra Mass during the week.
4. Visit Jesus in the Eucharistic Adoration Chapel and also bring the family to Eucharistic Adoration for a short visit. This will mean a lot in later years to the younger ones.
5. Pray as a family at home.
6. Pray the rosary after Mass on First Saturdays or daily after the 6:45 AM weekday Mass.
7. Meet with the men's group every Thursday at 7:30 AM in the Quinn Hall Chapel.
8. Attend the Sacred Heart Novena a 5:45 PM on Thursdays before the First Fridays and after the First Friday 8:30 Mass.
9. Help start a parish group that meets for prayer and discussion.

If you would like to find out more about any of these opportunities call Mary Stuart (301-942-1020 ext. 10), the parish secretary, who will put you in contact with a helpful source of information.