

7 Pillars of Benedictine Spirituality

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Community

It is a lifestyle of learning to relate and respond to God through events and people one encounters in daily life. In community we seek the mystery of God through and in contemplation. The Benedictine spiritual disciplines include common prayer, serving God through hospitality and mutual service, conversion of life, relationships and solitude. Our energy naturally flows towards others. Relationships direct us toward God. As St. Benedict states "You cannot do life alone."

Hospitality

All guests who present themselves are to welcome as Christ. (RB Chapter 53) It is marked by embracing every human as sacred and every life as holy ground. In this act of faith equal dignity of all is assumed. Solitude and silence are the liberating force that frees the individual soul to be with God. Patience, discipline and waiting are key elements necessary to cultivate the art of practicing silence and solitude. In "waiting" we listen to the other and seek a deeper meaning and understanding of God in our life. Benedictine spirituality is about listening to the other attentively this action directs us toward wholeness because we let the other in our life. It means we have the positive intention to listen to the other ..to hear God's voice in that person.

Humility

It is to be authentic before God. It is facing the truth that we are humus that stuff in which the earth is made and our hearts recognize and honor our place in the universe. God is God and we are not! It is to recognize the presence of God in our lives through contemplation. In this contemplative stance we journey to wholeness to create balance of mind, body, spirit and heart. It calls us to remember the God within so we can recognize the gifts of others, the earth, and all creatures. We must continually surrender to God's power in our life and in the lives of those around us.

Reverence

It is an attitude in faith that we honor the Christ in the other, the mystery and awe of God in our lives. It is the holding sacred the precious encounters in human relationship, our earth partnership, and of all creation. It is to stand in the spiral mystery of faith wrapped in God's presence.

Stewardship/Partnership

We are one with the earth, not power over the earth. This lived gratitude allows us to use our human and earthly resources wisely. It holds all creation as sacred and holy.

Integration

It is the divine dance to embrace the Benedictine spiritual disciplines to live out of that relationship with our God from our heart place. In the center of our being dwells a heart that is one, a stranger to division, forever it whispers I am already within you: Believe in me! It is the undivided heart that leads the divine dance to connect the mind, body, and spirit, to universal harmony and peace

Discernment

To discern is to sort out, in the light of the whole, that which is God. It is the gift of sight to sort our thoughts to see if they are of God. It is to find the will of God in the circumstances of daily living. It is turning toward God in those little moments in our lived ordinariness, which we chose, to partnership with God. Discernment is a sorting process that moves issues, questions, and concerns out of the realm of thoughts, feelings, emotions, and body sensations away from self will to a disposition of complete surrender to the will of God in our choices. "Discernment is living life prayerfully, bringing oneself to God honestly and completely as possible, seeking God's guidance as openly as possible, and then in faith, responding as fully as possible."(Gerald May, *Addiction and Grace*, Chapter 8)