

THE RULE
OF SAINT BENEDICT
TRANSLATED BY DOM JUSTIN McCANN

STANBROOK ABBEY PRESS
MXMXXXVII

REPRODUCED BY KIND PERMISSION
OF THE ABBOT AND TRUSTEES OF AMPLEFORTH ABBEY
MMXIII

PROLOGUE OF ST. BENEDICT TO HIS RULE

HEARKEN, my son, to the precepts of thy master and incline the
Hear of thy heart; freely receive and faithfully fulfil the
instructions of thy loving father, that by the labour of obedience thou
mayest return to him from whom thou hast strayed by the sloth of
disobedience. To thee are my words now addressed, whosoever thou
mayest be that renouncing thine own will to fight for the true King,
Christ, dost take up the strong and shining weapons of obedience.

JAN. 1
MAY 2
SEPT. 1

And first of all, whatever good work thou undertakest, ask him
with most instant prayer to perfect it, so that he who has deigned to
count us among his sons may never be provoked by our evil conduct.
For we must always so serve him with the gifts which he has given us,
that he may never as an angry Father disinherit his children, not yet as
our dread Lord be driven by our sins to cast into everlasting
punishment the wicked servants who would not follow him to glory.

Up with us then at last, for the Scripture arouseth us, saying:
*Now is the hour for us to rise from sleep.*¹ Let us open our eyes to the
divine light, and let us hear with attentive ears the warning that the
divine voice crieth daily to us: *Today if ye will hear his voice, harden
not your hearts.*² And again: *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear
what the Spirit saith to the churches.*³ And what doth he say? *Come, ye
children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the Lord.*⁴ *Run
while ye have the light of life, lest the darkness of death overtake you.*⁵

JAN. 2
MAY 3
SEPT. 2

¹ Rom xiii, 11

² Ps xciv, 8

³ Matt xi, 15; Apoc ii, 7

⁴ Ps xxxiii, 12

⁵ John xii, 35

And the Lord, seeking his workman among the multitudes to
whom he thus crieth, saith again: *What man is he that desireth life and
would fain see good days?*¹ And if hearing him thou answer, 'I am he,'
God saith to thee: *If thou wilt have true and everlasting life, keep thy
tongue from evil and thy lips that they speak no guile. Turn away from
evil and do good; seek after peace and pursue it.*² And when you have
done these things, my eyes will be upon you and my ears open unto
your prayers. And before you call upon me, I shall say to you, 'Lo,
here I am.' What can be sweeter to us, dearest brethren, than this voice
of our Lord inviting us? Behold in his loving mercy the Lord showeth
us the way of life.

JAN. 3
MAY 4
SEPT. 3

¹ Ps xxxiii, 13

² Ibid 14-16

Let us, therefore, gird our loins with faith and the performance of good works, and following the guidance of the Gospel walk in his paths, so that we may merit to see him who has called us unto his kingdom. And, if we wish to dwell in the tabernacle of his kingdom, except we run thither with good deeds we shall not arrive. But let us ask the Lord with the Prophet: *Lord, who shall dwell in thy tabernacle, or who shall rest upon thy holy hill?*¹ Then, brethren, let us hear the Lord answering and show us the way to that tabernacle and saying: *He that walketh without blemish and doeth that which is right; he that speaketh truth in his heart, who hath used no deceit in his tongue, nor done evil to his neighbour, nor hath slandered his neighbour.*² He that taketh the evil spirit that tempteth him, and casteth him and his temptation from the sight of his heart, and bringeth him to naught; who graspeth his evil suggestions as they arise and dasheth them to pieces on the rock that is Christ. Such men as these, fearing the Lord, are not puffed up on account of their good works, but judging that they can do no good of themselves and that all cometh from God, they magnify the Lord's work in them, using the word of the prophet: *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give the glory.*³ So the Apostle Paul imputed nothing of his preaching to himself, but said: *By the grace of God I am what I am.*⁴ And again he saith: *He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.*⁵

JAN. 4
MAY 5
SEPT. 4

¹ Ps xiv, 1 ² Ibid 2,3 ³ Ps cxiii, 9 ⁴ 1 Cor xv, 10 ⁵ 2 Cor x, 17

Wherefore the Lord also saith in the Gospel: *He that heareth these my words and doth them, shall be likened to a wise man that built his house upon a rock. The floods came and the winds blew, and they beat upon that house, and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock.*¹ Having given us these instructions, the Lord daily expects us to make our life correspond with his holy admonitions. And the days of our life are lengthened and a respite allowed us for this very reason, that we may amend our evil ways. For the Apostle saith: *Knowest thou not that the patience of God leadeth thee to repentance?*² For the merciful Lord saith: *I will not the death of a sinner, but that he should be converted and live.*³

JAN. 5
MAY 6
SEPT. 5

¹ Matt vii, 24, 25 ² Rom ii, 4 ³ Ezech xxxiii, 11

So, brethren, we have asked the Lord about the dwellers in his tabernacle and have heard what is the duty of him who would dwell therein; it remains for us to fulfil this duty. Therefore our hearts and bodies must be made ready to fight under the holy obedience of his commands; and let us ask God that he be pleased, where our nature is powerless, to give us the help of his grace. And if we would escape the pains of hell and reach eternal life, then must we, while there is still time, while we are in this body and can fulfil all these things by the light of this life, hasten to do now what may profit us for eternity.

JAN. 6
MAY 7
SEPT. 6

Therefore must we establish a school of the Lord's service; in founding which we hope to ordain nothing that is harsh or burdensome. But if, for good reason, for the amendment of evil habit or the preservation of charity, there be some strictness of discipline, do not be at once dismayed and run away from the way of salvation, of which the entrance must needs be narrow. But, as we progress in our monastic life and in faith, our hearts shall be enlarged, and we shall run with unspeakable sweetness of love in the way of God's commandments; so that, never abandoning his rule but persevering in his teaching in the monastery until death, we shall share by patience in the sufferings of Christ, that we may deserve to be partakers also of his kingdom. Amen.

JAN. 7
MAY 8
SEPT. 7

CHAPTER I OF THE KINDS OF MONKS

THERE are evidently four kinds of monks. The first are the Cenobites, that is, those who live in monasteries, serving under a rule and an abbot. JAN. 8
MAY 9
SEPT. 8

The second are the Anchorites or Hermits, that is those who not in the first fervour of their religious life, but after long probation in a monastery, having learnt in association with many brethren how to fight against the devil, go out well-armed from the ranks of the community to the solitary combat of the desert. They are able now to live without the help of others, and by their own strength and God's assistance to fight against the temptations of mind and body.

The third kind of monks is that detestable one of the Sarabaites, who not having been tested, as gold in the furnace, by any rule or by the lessons of experience, are as soft and yielding as lead. In their actions they still conform to the standards of the world, so that their tonsure marks them as liars before God. They live in twos or threes, or even singly, without a shepherd, in their own sheepfolds and not in the Lord's. Their law is their own good pleasure: whatever they think of or choose to do, that they call holy; what they like not, that they regard as unlawful. JAN. 9
MAY 10
SEPT. 9

The fourth kind of monks are those called Gyrovagues. These spend their whole lives wandering from province to province, staying three days in one monastery and four in another, ever roaming and never stable, given up to their own wills and the allurements of gluttony, and worse in all respects than the Sarabaites. Of the wretched life of all these folk it is better to be silent than to speak.

So, leaving them on one side, let us proceed with God's help to provide for the strong race of Cenobites.

CHAPTER II
WHAT KIND OF MAN THE ABBOT
SHOULD BE

AN abbot who is worthy to rule a monastery should always remember what he is called and realise in his actions the name of a superior. For he is believed to be the representative of Christ in the monastery, and for that reason is called by a name of his, according to the words of the Apostle: *Ye have received the spirit of the adoption of sons, whereby we cry Abba, Father.*¹ Therefore the abbot ought not to teach, or ordain, or command anything that is against the law of the Lord; on the contrary, his commands and teaching should be infused into the minds of his disciples like the leaven of divine justice. Let the abbot remember always that at the dread Judgement of God there will be an examination of both these matters, of his teaching and of the obedience of his disciples. And let the abbot realise that the shepherd will have to answer for any lack of profit which the Father of the family may discover in his sheep. On the other hand, if the shepherd have spent all diligence on an unruly and disobedient flock and devoted his utmost care to the amending of its vicious ways, then he will be acquitted at the Judgement and may say to the Lord with the prophet: *I have not hid thy justice within my heart:² I have declared thy truth and thy salvation; but they have despised and rejected me.*³ And so at the last, for these sheep disobedient to his care, let death itself bring its penalty.

JAN. 10
MAY 11
SEPT. 10

¹ Rom viii, 15

² Ps xxxix, 11

³ Is i, 2

Therefore, when anyone has received the name of abbot, he ought to rule his disciples with a twofold teaching, displaying all goodness and holiness by deeds and by words, but by deeds rather than by words. To intelligent disciples let him expound the Lord's commandments in words; but to those of harder hearts and ruder minds let him show forth the divine precepts by his example. And whatever he has taught his disciples to be contrary to God's law, let him show by his example that it is not to be done, lest while preaching to others he should himself become a castaway, and lest God should some day say to him in his sin: *Why dost thou declare my justice, and take my covenant in thy mouth? For thou hast hated discipline and hast cast my words behind thee.*¹ And again: Thou sawest the mote in thy brother's eye and didst not see the beam in thy own.

JAN. 11
MAY 12
SEPT. 11

¹ Ps xlix, 16, 17

Let him not make any distinction of persons in the monastery. Let him not love one more than another, unless he find him better in good works or in obedience. Let not a freeborn monk be put before one that was a slave, unless there be some other reasonable ground for it. But if the abbot, for just reason, think fit to do so, let him fix anyone's order as he will; otherwise let them keep their due places; because, whether slaves or freemen, we are all one in Christ, and have to serve alike in the army of the same Lord. *For there is no respect of persons with God.*¹ In this regard only are we distinguished in his sight, if we be found better than others in good works and humility. Therefore let the abbot show an equal love to all, and let the same discipline be imposed on all in accordance with their deserts.

JAN. 12
MAY 13
SEPT. 12

¹ Rom ii, 11

For the abbot in his teaching ought always to observe the rule of the apostle, wherein he says: *Reprove, entreat, rebuke.*¹ He must adapt himself to circumstances, now using severity and now persuasion, displaying the rigour of a master or the loving kindness of a father. That is to say he must sternly rebuke the undisciplined and restless; but the obedient, meek and patient, these he should exhort to advance in virtue. As for the negligent and rebellious, we warn him to reprimand and punish them. And let him not shut his eyes to the faults of offenders; but as soon as they begin to appear, let him, as he can, cut them out by the roots, mindful of the fate of Heli, the priest of Silo. Those of gentle disposition and good understanding should be punished, for the first and second time, by verbal admonition; but bold, hard, proud and disobedient characters should be checked at the very beginning of their ill-doing by the rod and corporal punishment, according to the text: *the fool is not corrected with words;*² and again: *Beat thy son with the rod and thou shalt deliver his soul from death.*³

JAN. 13
MAY 14
SEPT. 13

¹ 2 Tim iv, 2

² Prov xviii, 2; xxix, 19

³ Ibid xxiii, 14

The abbot should always remember what he is and what he is called, and should know that to whom more is committed, from him more is required. Let him realise also how difficult and arduous a task he has undertaken, of ruling souls and adapting himself to many dispositions. One he must humour, another rebuke, another persuade, according to each one's disposition and understanding, and thus adapt and accommodate himself to all in such a way, that he may not only suffer no loss in the sheep committed to him, but may even rejoice in the increase of a good flock.

JAN. 14
MAY 15
SEPT. 14

Above all let him not have greater solicitude for fleeting, earthly and perishable things, and so overlook or undervalue the salvation of the souls committed to him; but let him always remember that he has undertaken the government of souls and will have to give an account of them. And if he be tempted to complain of lack of means, let him remember the words: *Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his justice, and all these things shall be added unto you.*¹ And again: *They that fear him lack nothing.*² And let him know that he who has undertaken the government of souls, must prepare himself to render an account of them. And whatever number of brethren he knows he has under his care, let him regard it as certain that he will have to give the Lord an account of all these souls in the Day of Judgement, and certainly of his own soul also. And thus, fearing always the examination which the shepherd will have to face for the sheep entrusted to him, and anxious regarding the account which will have to be given for others, he is made solicitous for his own sake also; and while by his admonitions helping others to amend, he himself is cleansed of his faults.

JAN. 15
MAY 16
SEPT. 15

¹ Matt vi, 33 ² Ps xxxiii, 10

CHAPTER III
OF CALLING THE BRETHREN
TO COUNCIL

AS often as any important business has to be done in the monastery, let the abbot call together the whole community and himself set forth the matter. And, having heard the advice of the brethren, let him take counsel with himself and then do what he shall judge to be most expedient. Now the reason why we have said that all should be called to council, is that God often reveals what is better to the younger. Let the brethren give their advice with all deference and humility, and let them not venture to defend their opinions obstinately; but let the decision depend rather on the abbot's judgement, so that when he has decided what is the better course, all may obey. However, just as it is proper for disciples to obey their master, so it is becoming that he on his part should dispose all things with prudence and justice.

JAN. 16
MAY 17
SEPT. 16

In all things, therefore, let all follow the Rule as master, nor let anyone rashly depart from it. Let no one in the monastery follow the will of his own heart; not let anyone presume to contend with his abbot in an insolent fashion or outside the monastery. Should he presume to do so, let him undergo the discipline of the Rule. The abbot himself, however, should do all things in the fear of God and observance of the Rule, knowing that he will certainly have to render an account of all his judgements to God, the most just Judge. But if the business to be done in the interests of the monastery be of lesser importance, let him use the advice of the seniors only. It is written: *Do all things with counsel, and thou shalt not afterwards repent it.*¹

JAN. 17
MAY 18
SEPT. 17

¹ Ecclus xxxii, 24

CHAPTER IV
THE TOOLS OF GOOD WORKS

IN the first place, to love the Lord God with all one's heart, all one's soul and all one's strength. JAN. 18
Then, one's neighbour as oneself. MAY 19
Then not to kill. SEPT. 18
Not to commit adultery.
Not to steal.
Not to covet.
Not to bear false witness.
To honour all men.
Not to do to another what one would not have done to oneself.
To deny oneself, in order to follow Christ.
To chastise the body.
Not to seek soft living.
To love fasting.
To relieve the poor.
To clothe the naked.
To visit the sick.
To bury the dead.
To help the afflicted.
To console the sorrowing.
To avoid worldly conduct.
To prefer nothing to the love of Christ.

Not to yield to anger. JAN. 19
Not to nurse a grudge. MAY 20
Not to hold guile in one's heart. SEPT. 19
Not to make a feigned peace.
Not to forsake charity.
Not to swear, lest perchance one forswear oneself.
To utter the truth from heart and mouth.
Not to render evil for evil.
To do no wrong to anyone, and to bear patiently wrongs done to oneself.
To love one's enemies.
Not to render cursing for cursing, but rather blessing.
To bear persecution for justice' sake.
Not to be proud.
Not a wine-bibber.
Not a glutton.
Not somnolent.
Not slothful.
Not a grumbler.
Not a detractor.
To put one's hope in God.
To attribute to God, and not to self, whatever good one sees in oneself.
But to recognise always that the evil is one's own doing, and to impute it to oneself.

To fear the Day of Judgement.
 To dread Hell.
 To desire eternal life with all spiritual longing.
 To keep death daily before one's eyes.
 To keep constant guard over the actions of one's life.
 To know for certain that God sees one everywhere.
 When evil thoughts come into one's heart, to dash them at once on the rock of Christ and to manifest them to one's spiritual father.
 To keep one's mouth from evil and depraved talk.
 Not to love much speaking.
 Not to speak vain words or such as move to laughter.
 Not to love much or violent laughter.
 To listen gladly to holy reading.
 To apply oneself frequently to prayer.
 Daily in one's prayer, with tears and sighs, to confess one's past sins to God.
 To amend those sins for the future.
 Not to fulfil the desires of the flesh.
 To hate one's own will.
 To obey in all things the command of the abbot, even though he himself (which God forbid) should act otherwise: remembering the Lord's precept: *What they say, do ye; but what they do, do ye not.*¹
 Not to wish to be called holy before one is holy; but first to be holy, that one may be truly so called.

JAN. 20
 MAY 21
 SEPT. 20

¹ Matt xxiii, 3

To fulfil God's commandments daily in one's deeds.
 To love chastity.
 To hate no man.
 Not to be jealous.
 Not to give way to envy.
 Not to love contention.
 To shun vainglory.
 To reverence the seniors.
 To love the juniors.
 To pray for one's enemies in the love of Christ.
 To make peace with one's adversary before sundown.
 And never to despair of God's mercy.

JAN. 21
 MAY 22
 SEPT. 21

Behold these are the tools of the spiritual craft. If we employ them unceasingly day and night, and on the Day of Judgement render account of them, then we shall receive from the Lord in return the reward which he himself has promised: *Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, what God hath prepared for those that love him.*¹ Now the workshop, wherein we shall diligently execute all these tasks, is the enclosure of the monastery and stability in the community.

¹ 1Cor 11, 9

CHAPTER V OF OBEDIENCE

THE first degree of humility is obedience without delay. This becometh those who hold nothing dearer to them than Christ; who, because of the holy service which they have professed, the fear of hell, and the glory of life everlasting, as soon as anything has been ordered by the superior, receive it as a divine command and cannot suffer any delay in executing it. Of these doth the Lord say: *At the hearing of the ear he hath obeyed me.*¹ And again he saith to teachers: *He that heareth you heareth me.*²

JAN. 22
MAY 23
SEPT. 22

Such as these, therefore, immediately abandon their own affairs and forsaking their own will, dropping the work they were engaged on and leaving it unfinished, with swift obedience follow up with their deeds the voice of him who commands them. And almost in the same moment of time that the master's order is issued is the disciples work completed, in the swiftness of the fear of the Lord; the two things being rapidly accomplished together by those who are impelled by the desire of attaining life everlasting. Therefore they choose the narrow way, according to the Lord's words: *Narrow is the way which leadeth unto life;*³ so that not living by their own will, in the service of their own desires and pleasures, but walking by another's judgement and orders, they dwell in monasteries, and desire to have an abbot over them. Assuredly such as these imitate that saying of the Lord wherein he saith: *I came not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me.*⁴

¹ Ps xvii, 45 ² Luke x, 16 ³ Matt vii, 14 ⁴ John vi, 38

But this obedience itself will then be acceptable to God and pleasing to men, if what is commanded be not done timorously, or tardily, or tepidly, nor with murmuring or the raising of objections. For the obedience which is given to superiors is given to God, since he himself said: *He that heareth you heareth me.*¹ And disciples should give their obedience with a good will, because *God loveth a cheerful giver.*² For if the disciple obey with ill-will, and murmur not only in words but even in his heart, then, even though he fulfil the command, his work will not be acceptable to God, who sees that his heart is murmuring. For work such as this he will gain no reward; nay, rather, he will incur the punishment due to murmurers, unless he make reparation and amend.

JAN. 23
MAY 24
SEPT. 23

¹ Luke x, 16 ² 2 Cor ix, 7

CHAPTER VI OF SILENCE

LET us do as saith the prophet: *I said, I will take heed unto my ways, that I offend not with my tongue. I have set a guard to my mouth. I was dumb and was humbled, and kept silence even from good words.*¹ Here the prophet shows that if we ought at times to refrain from good words for the sake of silence, how much more ought we to abandon evil talk because of the penalties of sin. Therefore, on account of the great value of silence, let leave to speak be seldom granted to observant disciples, even though it be for good, holy, and edifying conversations; for it is written: *In much speaking thou shalt not escape sin;*² and elsewhere: *Death and life are in the power of the tongue.*³ For it becometh the master to speak and to teach; but it befits the disciple to be silent and to listen.

And therefore, if there be anything to be asked from the superior, let it be sought with all humility and reverent submission. But as for buffoonery and talk that is vain and stirs laughter, we condemn such things everywhere with a perpetual ban, and forbid the disciple to open his mouth for such conversation.

JAN. 24
MAY 25
SEPT. 24

¹ Ps xxxviii, 2, 3

² Prov x, 19

³ Ibid xviii, 21

CHAPTER VII OF HUMILITY

HOLY Scripture crieth out to us, brethren, saying: *Everyone that exalteth himself shall be humbled, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.*¹ When it so speaks, it teaches us that all exaltation is a kind of pride, which the prophet shows that he has shunned in the words: *Lord, my heart is not exalted nor mine eyes lifted up; neither have I walked in great things, nor in wonders above me.* What then? *If I was not humbly minded but exalted my soul, as a child weaned from his mother, so dost thou requite my soul.*²

JAN. 25
MAY 26
SEPT. 25

¹ Luke xiv, 11 ² Ps cxxx, 1, 2

Wherefore, brethren, if we wish to attain to the summit of humility and desire to arrive speedily at that heavenly exaltation to which we ascend by the humility of the present life, then must we set up a ladder of our ascending actions like unto that which Jacob saw in his vision, whereon angels appeared to him, descending and ascending. By that descent and ascent we must surely understand nothing else than this, that we descend by self-exaltation and ascend by humility. And the ladder erected is our life in this world, which for the humble of heart is raised up by the Lord unto heaven. Now the sides of this ladder we call our body and soul, into which sides our divine vocation has fitted various degrees of humility and discipline which we have to climb.

JAN. 26
MAY 27
SEPT. 26

The first degree of humility, then, is that a man keep the fear of God before his eyes, altogether shunning forgetfulness. Let him ever remember all the commandments of God and how hell will burn for their sins those that despise him; and let him constantly turn over in his heart the eternal life which is prepared for those that fear him. And guarding himself always from sins and vices, whether of thought, word, hand, foot or self-will, and checking also the desires of the flesh, let him consider that God is always beholding him from heaven, that his actions are everywhere visible to the eye of the Godhead, and are constantly being reported to God by the angels. The prophet shows this to us when he represents God as always present in our thoughts, in the words: *God searcheth the heart and the reins.*¹ And again: *The Lord knoweth the thoughts of men.*² And again he saith: *Thou hast understood my thoughts from afar;*³ and: *The thought of man shall confess to thee.*⁴ In order then that he may be careful regarding his wrongful thoughts, let the good brother say constantly in his heart: *Then shall I be spotless before him, if I shall have kept myself from my iniquity.*⁵

JAN. 27
MAY 28
SEPT. 27

¹ Ps vii, 10 ² Ps xciii, 11 ³ Ps cxxxviii, 3 ⁴ Ps lxxv, 11 ⁵ Ps xvii, 24

We are, indeed, forbidden to do our own will by Scripture, which saith to us: *Turn away from thine own will.*¹ Moreover we ask God in prayer that his will be done in us.

JAN. 28
MAY 29
SEPT. 28

And rightly are we taught not to do our own will, since we dread that sentence of Scripture: *There are ways which to men seem right, but the ends thereof lead to the depths of hell;*² and since we fear also what is said of the careless: *They are corrupt and have become abominable in their pleasures.*³ And in regard to the desires of the flesh, let us believe that God is always present to us, since the prophet says to the Lord: *All my desire is before thee.*⁴

¹ Eccles xviii, 30

² Prov xvi, 25

³ Ps xiii, 1

⁴ Ps xxxvii, 10

We must be on our guard, then, against evil desires, for death lies close by the gate of delight; whence Scripture gives this command: *Go not after thy concupiscences.*¹ So if *the eyes of the Lord behold the good and the evil,*² and the Lord is ever *looking down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there be any that understand and seek God;*³ and if our deeds are daily, day and night, reported to the Lord by the angels assigned to us: then, brethren, must we constantly beware, as the prophet says in the psalm, lest God some day behold us falling into evil ways, and turned unprofitable, and spare us for this present time, because he is merciful and awaits our amendment, but should say to us in the future: *These things didst thou do, and I was silent.*⁴

JAN. 29
MAY 30
SEPT. 29

¹ Eccles xviii, 30

² Prov xv, 5

³ Ps xiii 2, 3

⁴ Ps xlix, 21

The second degree of humility is that a man love not his own will, nor delight in fulfilling his own desires, but carry out in deed the saying of the Lord: *I came not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me.*¹ It is written also: Self-will hath its punishment, but subjection winneth a crown.

JAN. 30
MAY 31
SEPT. 30

¹ John vi, 38

The third degree of humility is that a man for the love of God subject himself to his superior in all obedience, imitating the Lord, of whom the apostle says: *He was made obedient even unto death.*¹

JAN. 31
JUNE 1
OCT. 1

¹ Phil ii, 8

The fourth degree of humility is that meeting in this obedience with difficulties and contradictions and even injustice, he should with a silent mind hold fast to patience, and enduring neither tire nor run away, for the Scripture saith: *He that shall persevere to the end shall be saved.*¹ And again: *Let thy heart take courage, and wait thou for the Lord.*² And showing how the true disciple ought to endure all things, however contrary, for the Lord, it saith in the person of sufferers: *For thy sake we are put to death all the day long. We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.*³ Then, confident in their hope of the divine reward, they go on with joy to declare: *But in all these things we overcome, through him that hath loved us.*⁴ And again in another place the Scripture saith: *Thou, O God, hast proved us: thou hast tried us by fire, as silver is tried. Thou hast brought us into the snare: thou hast laid afflictions on our back.*⁵ And to show that we ought to be under a superior, it goeth on to say: *Thou hast set men over our heads.*⁶ Moreover, in adversities and injuries they patiently fulfil the Lord's commands: when struck on one cheek they offer the other, when robbed of their tunic they surrender also their cloak, when forced to go a mile they go two, with the apostle Paul they bear with false brethren, and they bless those that curse them.

FEB. 1
JUNE 2
OCT. 2

¹ Matt x, 22 ² Ps xxvi, 14 ³ Rom viii, 36 ⁴ Ibid 37
⁵ Ps lxxv, 10,11 ⁶ Ibid 12

The fifth degree of humility is that he humbly confess and conceal not from his abbot any evil thoughts that enter his heart, and any secret sins he has committed. To this does Scripture exhort us, saying: *Make known thy way unto the Lord and hope in him.*¹ And again: *Confess to the Lord, for he is good, and his mercy endureth for ever.*² And further: *I have acknowledged my sin to thee, and my injustice I have not concealed. I said: I will confess against myself my injustice to the Lord, and thou hast forgiven the wickedness of my sin.*³

FEB. 2
JUNE 3
OCT. 3

¹ Ps xxxvi, 5 ² Ps cv, 1 ³ Ps xxxi,5

The sixth degree of humility is that a monk be content with the meanest and worst of everything, and esteem himself, in regard to the work that is given him, as a bad and unworthy workman, saying to himself with the prophet: *I am brought to nothing, and I knew it not. I am become as a beast before thee, and I am always with thee.*¹

FEB. 3
JUNE 4
OCT. 4

¹ Ps lxxii, 22, 23

The seventh degree of humility is that he should not only in his speech declare himself lower and of less account than all others, but should in his own inmost heart believe it, humbling himself with the prophet: *But I am a worm and no man, the reproach of men and the outcast of the people.*¹ *I was exalted and have been humbled and confounded.*² And again: *It is good for me that thou hast humbled me: that I may learn thy commandments.*³

FEB. 4
JUNE 5
OCT. 5

¹ Ps xxi, 7 ² Ps lxxxvii, 16 ³ Ps cxviii, 71

The eighth degree of humility is that a monk do nothing except what is commended by the common rule of the monastery and the example of his superiors.

FEB. 5
JUNE 6
OCT. 6

The ninth degree of humility is that a monk restrain his tongue and keep silence, not speaking until he is questioned. For Scripture showeth that *in much talking thou canst not avoid sin;*¹ and that *the talkative man shall not prosper on the earth.*²

FEB. 6
JUNE 7
OCT. 7

¹ Prov x, 19 ² Ps cxxxix, 12

The tenth degree of humility is that he be not ready and prompt to laughter, for it is written: *The fool lifteth up his voice in laughter.*¹

FEB. 7
JUNE 8
OCT. 8

¹ Ecclus xxi, 23

The eleventh degree of humility is that a monk, when he speaks, do so gently and without laughter, humbly and seriously, in few and sensible words, and without clamour. It is written: A wise man is known by the fewness of his words.

FEB. 8
JUNE 9
OCT. 9

The twelfth degree of humility is that a monk should not only be humble of heart, but should also in his behaviour always manifest his humility to those who look upon him. That is to say that whether he is at the work of God, in the oratory, in the monastery, in the garden, on the road, in the fields, or anywhere else, and whether sitting, walking or standing, he should always have his head bowed and his eyes downcast, pondering always the guilt of his sins, and considering that he is about to be brought before the dread judgement seat of God. Let him constantly say in his heart what was said with downcast eyes by the publican in the Gospel: Lord, I a sinner am not worthy to raise mine eyes to heaven. And again with the prophet: *I am bowed down and humbled on every side.*¹

FEB. 9
JUNE 10
OCT. 10

Then, when all these degrees of humility have been climbed, the monk will presently come to that perfect love of God which casts out all fear: whereby he will begin to observe without labour, as though naturally and by habit, all those precepts which formerly he did not observe without fear; no longer for fear of hell, but for love of Christ and through good habit and delight in virtue. And this will the Lord deign to show forth by the power of his Spirit in his workman now cleansed from vice and from sin.

¹Ps xxxvii, 7, 9; cxviii, 107

CHAPTER VIII
OF THE DIVINE OFFICE AT NIGHT

IN winter, that is from the first of November until Easter, the brethren shall rise at what is calculated to be the eighth hour of the night, so that they may sleep somewhat beyond midnight and rise with their rest completed. If any time remain after Matins, let the brethren, who are lacking in knowledge of the psalter and lessons, employ it in study. From Easter to the aforesaid first of November let the hour of rising be so arranged that there be a very short interval after Matins, in which the brethren may go out for the necessities of nature, to be followed at once by Lauds, which should be said at dawn.

FEB. 10
JUNE 11
OCT. 11

CHAPTER IX
HOW MANY PSALMS ARE TO BE
SAID AT THE NIGHT OFFICE

IN the aforesaid winter season, there is first the versicle *Domine labia mea aperies et os meum annuntiabit laudem tuam*¹ to be said three times; then must follow the third psalm and the *Gloria*; then the ninety-fourth psalm to be chanted with an antiphon, or at any rate to be chanted. Let the hymn follow next, and then six psalms with antiphons. When these are finished and the versicle said, let the abbot give a blessing; and then, all being seated in their places, let three lessons be read from the book on the lectern by the brethren in their turns, and let three responsories be chanted between them. Two of the responsories shall be said without the *Gloria*; but after the third lesson let the reader chant the *Gloria*. And as soon as he has begun it, let all rise from their seats in honour and reverence to the Holy Trinity. The books to be read at Matins shall be the inspired Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, and also the commentaries on them which have been made by well-known and orthodox Catholic Fathers. After these three lessons with their responsories, let there follow the remaining six psalms which shall be chanted with *Alleluia*. After these shall follow the lesson from the apostle, to be recited by heart, the versicle, and the petition of the litany, that is *Kyrie eleison*. And so shall end the Night Office.

FEB. 11
JUNE 12
OCT. 12

¹ Ps 1, 17

[O Lord open my lips and my mouth shall declare your praise]

CHAPTER X
HOW THE NIGHT OFFICE IS
TO BE SAID IN SUMMER

FROM Easter to the first of November let the number of the psalms be exactly as given above; but let there be this difference, that the lessons from the book be not read, on account of the shortness of the nights. Instead of the three lessons, let there be one from the Old Testament said by heart, and let it be followed by a short responsory. But all else should be done as has been said; that is to say that there should never be less than twelve psalms at the Night Office, not counting the third and ninety-fourth.

FEB. 12
JUNE 13
OCT. 13

CHAPTER XI
HOW THE NIGHT OFFICE IS
TO BE SAID ON SUNDAYS

ON Sunday let the brethren rise earlier for the Night Office, in which let this order be kept. When the six psalms and the versicle have been chanted, as we ordained above, and all are seated in their stalls, duly and in order, then let there be read from the book, as we said before, four lessons with their responsories. In the fourth responsory only shall the reader chant the *Gloria*, and when he begins it let all rise immediately with reverence. After these lessons let there follow in order another six psalms with antiphons, like the previous ones, and a versicle. After these again let four more lessons be read with their responsories, in the same way as before. After these let there be three canticles from the book of the prophets, as appointed by the abbot, and let these canticles be chanted with *Alleluia*. Then, when the versicle has been said and the abbot has given the blessing, let another four lessons be read from the New Testament, in the same way as before. When the fourth responsory is finished, let the abbot intone the hymn *Te Deum laudamus*. When that has been said, the abbot shall read the lesson from the book of the Gospels, all standing with fear and reverence. That having been read, let all answer *Amen*, and then let the abbot go on with the hymn *Te decet laus*, and the blessing having been given let them begin Lauds. This order of Matins shall be observed on Sundays all the year round, both in summer and winter; unless (which God forbid) they be late in rising, and the lessons or responsories have to be shortened. However, let the greatest care be taken that this do not happen; but if it happen, let him through whose neglect it has occurred, make due satisfaction to God in the oratory.

FEB. 13
JUNE 14
OCT. 14

CHAPTER XII
HOW THE OFFICE OF LAUDS
IS TO BE SAID

LAUDS on Sundays should begin with the sixty-sixth psalm chanted straight through without an antiphon. After that, let the fiftieth psalm be said, with *Alleluia*; then the hundred and seventeenth and the sixty-second; then the *Benedicite* and the *Laudate* psalms; then a lesson from the Apocalypse to be recited by heart, the responsory, the hymn, the versicle, the canticle from the Gospel book, the *Kyrie eleison*, and so the end.

FEB. 14
JUNE 15
OCT. 15

CHAPTER XIII
HOW LAUDS ARE TO BE SAID ON
ORDINARY DAYS

ON ordinary days Lauds shall be celebrated in the following manner: let the sixty-sixth psalm be said without an antiphon and somewhat slowly, as on Sunday, in order that all may assemble in time for the fiftieth, which should be said with an antiphon. After this let two other psalms be said according to custom: that is, on Monday the fifth and thirty-fifth; on Tuesday the forty-second and fifty-sixth; on Wednesday the sixty-third and sixty-fourth; on Thursday the eighty-seventh and eighty-ninth; on Friday the seventy-fifth and ninety-first; and on Saturday the hundred and forty-second and the canticle from Deuteronomy, which must be divided into two parts. But on the other days let there be a canticle from the prophets, each on its own day, according to the custom of the Roman church. After that, let the *Laudate* psalms follow; then a lesson from the apostle to be said by heart, the responsory, the hymn, the versicle, the canticle from the Gospels, the *Kyrie eleison*, and so the end.

FEB. 15
JUNE 16
OCT. 16

The Offices of Lauds and Vespers should never be allowed to pass without the superior at the end of all reciting the Lord's Prayer in the hearing of all the brethren, on account of the thorns of scandal which are wont to arise; so that warned by the covenant which they make in that prayer, saying: 'Forgive us as we forgive,' they may cleanse themselves of such faults. At the other Offices let the last part of that prayer be said aloud, so that all may answer: 'But deliver us from evil.'

FEB. 16
JUNE 17
OCT. 17

CHAPTER XIV
HOW THE NIGHT OFFICE IS TO
BE PERFORMED ON SAINTS' DAYS

ON the feast of Saints and on all festivals let the Office be performed as we have prescribed for Sundays, except that the psalms, antiphons and lessons belonging to the particular day are to be said; but the general arrangement of the Office shall be as laid down above.

FEB. 17
JUNE 18
OCT. 18

CHAPTER XV
AT WHAT SEASONS ALLELUIA
IS TO BE SAID

FROM the sacred feast of Easter until Pentecost let *Alleluia* be said always both with the psalms and with the responsories. From Pentecost until the beginning of Lent let it be said every night at Matins with the second six psalms only. On every Sunday out of Lent let *Alleluia* be said with the canticles of Matins, and with the psalms of Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext and None; but let Vespers then have an antiphon. The responsories are never to be said with *Alleluia*, except from Easter to Pentecost.

FEB. 18
JUNE 19
OCT. 19

CHAPTER XVI
HOW THE WORK OF GOD IS TO BE
PERFORMED IN THE DAY-TIME

THE prophet saith: *Seven times a day have I given praise to thee.*¹ We shall observe this sacred number of seven, if we fulfil the duties of our service in the Hours of Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers and Compline; for it was of these day Hours that he said: *Seven times a day have I given praise to thee.*¹ But of the Night Office the same prophet saith: *I arose at midnight to give praise to thee.*² At these times, therefore, let us render praise to our Creator for the judgements of his justice: that is, at Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers and Compline; and let us rise in the night to praise him

FEB. 19
JUNE 20
OCT. 20

¹ Ps cxviii, 164

² Ibid 62

CHAPTER XVII
HOW MANY PSALMS ARE TO BE
SUNG AT THESE HOURS

WE have already settled the psalmody of Matins and Lauds; let us now look at the remaining Hours. At Prime let three psalms be said, one by one and not under the same *Gloria*; and before the psalms begin, but after the verse *Deus in adiutorium*, the hymn proper to that Hour. Then, at the end of the three psalms, let there be the lesson, versicle, *Kyrie eleison*, and concluding prayers. The Offices of Terce, Sext and None are to be performed in the same way: that is, *Deus in adiutorium*, proper hymn, three psalms, lesson, versicle, *Kyrie eleison* and concluding prayers. If the community be a large one, let the psalms be sung with antiphons; but if small, let them be sung straightforward.

FEB. 20
JUNE 21
OCT. 21

Let the service of Vespers consist of four psalms with antiphons. After these psalms let a lesson be recited; and then the responsory, hymn, versicle, canticle from the Gospels, *Kyrie eleison*, Lord's Prayer and the conclusion. Let Compline be limited to the saying of three psalms, and these said straightforward without an antiphon. After the psalms let there be the hymn for that Hour, the lesson, versicle, *Kyrie eleison* and the blessing to conclude.

CHAPTER XVIII
IN WHAT ORDER THE PSALMS
ARE TO BE SAID

LET there be said the verse: *Deus in adiutorium meum intende, Domine ad adjuvandum me festina*,¹ and *Gloria*; then the hymn proper to each Hour. Then at Prime on Sunday, four sections of the hundred and eighteenth psalm; and at each of the remaining hours, that is Terce, Sext and None, three sections of the same hundred and eighteenth psalm. At Prime on Monday let three psalms be said, namely the first, second and sixth. And so at Prime every day until Sunday let there be said three psalms taken in their order up to the nineteenth; but let the ninth and seventeenth be each divided into two. Thus it comes about that the Night Office on Sundays always begins with the twentieth psalm.

FEB. 21
JUNE 22
OCT. 22

¹ Ps lxi, 2

[O God, come to my assistance; Lord, make haste to help me]

At Terce, Sext and None on Monday, let the remaining nine sections of the hundred and eighteenth psalm be said, three at each of these Hours. The hundred and eighteenth psalm having been said thus on two days that is Sunday and Monday, let Terce, Sext and None of Tuesday each have three psalms, taken in order from the hundred and nineteenth to the hundred and twenty-seventh. And let these psalms be repeated at these Hours every day until Sunday; but let the arrangement of hymns, lessons and versicles be kept the same on all days. This Prime on Sunday will always begin with the hundred and eighteenth psalm.

FEB. 22
JUNE 23
OCT. 23

Vespers shall be sung every day with four psalms. Let these begin with the hundred and ninth and go on to the hundred and forty-seventh, omitting those of them which are set aside for special Hours, namely the hundred and seventeenth to the hundred and twenty-seventh, the hundred and thirty-third and hundred and forty-second. All the rest are to be said at Vespers. And since there are three psalms too few, let the longer psalms in the number above be divided, namely the hundred and thirty-eighth, hundred and forty-third and hundred and forty-fourth. But the hundred and sixteenth psalm, being short, shall be joined to the hundred and fifteenth. The order of the vesper psalms being thus settled, let the rest of the Hour, that is to say lesson, responsory, hymn, versicle and canticle, be carried out as we prescribed before. At Compline let the psalms be repeated every day: that is, the fourth, ninetieth and hundred and thirty-third.

FEB. 23
JUNE 24
OCT. 24

The order of psalms for the Day Hours being thus arranged, let all the remaining psalms be equally distributed among the seven Night Offices, by dividing the longer psalms and assigning twelve psalms to each night. But we strongly recommend that if this arrangement of the psalms is displeasing to anyone, he should arrange them otherwise, as shall seem better to him; provided always that he take care that the psalter with its full hundred and fifty psalms be chanted every week and begun afresh every Sunday at Matins. For those monks show themselves very slothful in their sacred service who in the course of the week sing less than the psalter and the customary canticles: whereas we read that our holy fathers strenuously fulfilled in a single day what I pray we lukewarm monks may perform in a whole week.

(FEB. 24
IN L. Y.)
JUNE 25
OCT. 25

CHAPTER XIX
OF THE MANNER OF SAYING
THE DIVINE OFFICE

WE believe that God is present everywhere and that *the eyes of the Lord in every place behold the good and the evil*;¹ but let us especially believe this without any doubt when we are assisting at the Divine Office. Therefore let us ever remember the words of the prophet: *Serve ye the Lord in fear*;² and again, *Sing ye wisely*;³ and, *I will sing to thee in the sight of the angels*.⁴ Let us then consider how we ought to behave ourselves in the presence of God and his angels, and so sing the psalms that mind and voice may be in harmony.

FEB. 24
(OR 25)
JUNE 26
OCT. 26

¹ Prov xv,3

² Ps ii, 11

³ Ps xivi, 8

⁴ Ps cxxxvii,1

CHAPTER XX
OF REVERENCE IN PRAYER

IF we wish to prefer a petition to men of high station, we do not presume to do it without humility and reverence; how much more ought we to supplicate the Lord God of all things with humility and pure devotion. And let us be sure that we shall not be heard for our much speaking, but for purity of heart and tears of compunction. Our prayer, therefore, ought to be short and pure, unless it chance to be prolonged by the inspiration of divine grace. In community, however, let prayer be very short, and when the superior has given the signal let all rise together.

FEB. 25
(OR 26)
JUNE 27
OCT. 27

CHAPTER XXI
OF THE DEANS OF THE
MONASTERY

IF the community be a large one, let there be chosen out of it brethren of good repute and observant life, and let them be appointed deans. They shall take charge of their deaneries in all things, observing the commandments of God and the instructions of their abbot. And let such men be chosen as deans that the abbot may without anxiety share his burdens among them; and let them not be chosen by order, but according to their worthiness of life, learning and wisdom. Should any of these deans become puffed up with pride and be found worthy of censure, let him be corrected once, and a second, and a third time; if he will not amend, then let him be deposed from his office and another, who is worthy of it, put in his place. And we order the same to be done in the case of the prior.

FEB. 26
(OR 27)
JUNE 28
OCT. 28

CHAPTER XXII
HOW THE MONKS ARE TO SLEEP

LET them sleep each one in a separate bed. Let them receive beds in accordance with the character of their lives, as the abbot shall appoint. If it be possible, let them all sleep in one place; but if their numbers do not permit of this, let them take their rest by tens or twenties with the seniors who have charge of them. Let a light burn in the room continually until morning. Let them sleep clothed and girded with belts or cords; but they should not have their knives at their sides when they are sleeping, lest perchance they cut themselves in their sleep. Let the monks thus be always ready, and when the signal is given rise without delay and hasten to be before one another at the Work of God, yet with all gravity and moderation. Let the younger brethren not have their beds by themselves, but among those of the seniors. When they rise for the Work of God let them gently encourage one another, so that the drowsy may have no excuse.

FEB. 27
(OR 28)
JUNE 29
OCT. 29

CHAPTER XXIII
OF EXCOMMUNICATION FOR
OFFENCES

IF any brother shall be found contumacious, or disobedient, or proud, or a murmurer, or in any way despising and contravening the holy Rule and the orders of his superiors: let such a one, according to our Lord's commandment, be admonished secretly by his superiors for a first and a second time. If he do not amend, let him be rebuked publicly before all. But if even then he do not correct his life, let him suffer excommunication, provided that he understands the gravity of that penalty. If, however, he be perverse, let him undergo corporal punishment.

FEB. 28
(OR 29)
JUNE 30
OCT. 30

CHAPTER XXIV
WHAT THE MEASURE OF
EXCOMMUNICATION SHOULD BE

THE measure of excommunication and punishment should be determined according to the gravity of the offence, which shall be decided by the abbot. If a brother be found guilty of a lesser offence, let him be excluded from the common table. And this shall be the rule for one who is excluded from the common table: that until he have made satisfaction he shall not intone a psalm or antiphon in the oratory, nor read a lesson. Let him have his meals alone after the community meals: if the brethren, for instance, eat at the sixth hour, let him eat at the ninth; if they eat at the ninth hour let him eat in the evening; until by suitable satisfaction he have obtained pardon.

MAR. 1
JULY 1
OCT. 31

CHAPTER XXV
OF GRAVER OFFENCES

THE brother who is guilty of a graver offence shall be excluded both from the table and from the oratory. Let none of the brethren consort with him or speak to him. Let him work alone at the task enjoined him and abide in penitential sorrow, pondering that terrible sentence of the apostle: *Such a one is delivered to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of our Lord*¹ Let him take his meals alone, in the measure and at the hour which the abbot shall consider suitable for him. Let him not be blessed by anyone who passes by, nor the food which is given him.

MAR 2
JULY 2
NOV. 1

¹1 Cor v, 5

CHAPTER XXVI
OF THOSE WHO
WITHOUT LEAVE CONSORT WITH
THE EXCOMMUNICATED

IF any brother presume, without the abbot's leave, to consort in any way with an excommunicated brother, or to converse with him, or to send him a message, let him receive the like punishment of excommunication.

MAR 3
JULY 3
NOV. 2

CHAPTER XXVII
THAT THE ABBOT
SHOULD BE SOLICITOUS FOR
THE EXCOMMUNICATED

LET the abbot exercise all diligence in his care for erring brethren, *for they that are in health need not a physician, but they that are sick.*¹ He ought, therefore, as a wise physician, to use every remedy in his power. Let him send *senpectae*, that is old and prudent brethren, who may as it were secretly comfort the troubled brother, inducing him to make humble satisfaction and consoling him *lest he be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow.*² As the apostle saith: *Let charity be strengthened towards him;*³ and let everyone pray for him.

MAR. 4
JULY 4
NOV. 3

For the abbot is bound to use the greatest care, and to exercise all prudence and diligence, so that he may not lose any of the sheep entrusted to him. Let him know that what he has undertaken is the charge of weakly souls, and not a tyranny over the strong; and let him fear the threat of the prophet, wherein God saith: What you saw to be fat, that ye took to yourselves: and what was feeble, ye cast away.⁴ And let him imitate the merciful example of the Good Shepherd, who left the ninety and nine sheep in the mountains and went after the one sheep that had strayed; and had so great pity on its weakness, that he deigned to place it on his own sacred shoulders and so bring it back to the flock.

¹ Matt ix,12

² 2Cor ii,7

³ Ibid

⁴Cf. Ezech. xxiv, 3,4

CHAPTER XXVIII
OF THOSE WHO THOUGH OFTEN
CORRECTED WILL NOT AMEND

IF any brother, though often corrected for some offence and even excommunicated, do not amend, let him receive more severe correction; that is to say, let the punishment of the rod be administered to him. But if even so he do not amend, or perchance (which God forbid) being puffed up with pride would even defend his deeds then let the abbot follow the procedure of a prudent physician. Having applied the fomentations and ointments of his exhortations, having used the medicine of the Holy Scriptures and last of all the cautery of excommunication and the strokes of the rod: then, if he see that all his trouble is of no avail, let him employ a greater thing still, namely the prayers of himself and all the brethren, that God, who can do all things, may effect the cure of the sick brother.

MAR. 5
JULY 5
NOV. 4

But if he be not healed even in this way, then let the abbot use the knife of amputation, as the apostle saith: *Put away the wicked one from among yourselves;*¹ and again: *If the unbeliever depart, let him depart;*² lest one diseased sheep contaminate the whole flock.

¹ 1 Cor. v, 13

² 1 Cor. vii, 15

CHAPTER XXIX
WHETHER BRETHREN WHO
LEAVE THE MONASTERY SHOULD
BE RECEIVED AGAIN

A BROTHER who by his own fault leaves the monastery, should, if he wish to return, first promise full reparation for his having gone away; and then let him be received back again in the lowest place, in order that his humility may thus be tested. Should he depart again, let him be received back again, and so a third time; but after that he should understand that all prospect of return is denied him.

MAR. 6
JULY 6
NOV. 5

CHAPTER XXX
HOW BOYS ARE TO BE CORRECTED

EVERY age and degree of understanding should have its appropriate measure of discipline. Therefore, as often as faults are committed by boys, or by youths, or by those who do not understand the greatness of the penalty of excommunication, let such offenders be punished with severe fasts or chastised with sharp stripes, in order that they may be cured.

MAR. 7
JULY 7
NOV. 6

CHAPTER XXXI
WHAT KIND OF MAN THE
CELLARER OF THE MONASTERY
SHOULD BE

AS cellarer of the monastery let there be chosen out of the community a man who is prudent, of mature character, temperate, not a great eater, not proud, nor headstrong, not rough-spoken, not lazy, not wasteful, but a God-fearing man who may be like a father to the whole community. Let him have charge of everything; let him do nothing without the abbot's orders, but keep to his instructions. Let him not vex the brethren; but if any brother chance to make an unreasonable demand, let him not vex him with a contemptuous denial, but reasonably and humbly refuse the improper request. Let him keep guard over his own soul, remembering always the saying of the apostle that *he that hath ministered well purchaseth to himself a good degree.*¹ Let him take the greatest care of the sick, of children, of guests and the poor, knowing without doubt that he will have to render an account for all of these on the Day of Judgement. Let him look upon all the utensils of the monastery and its whole property as upon the sacred vessels of the altar. Let him not think that anything may be neglected. Let him neither practise avarice, nor be wasteful and a squanderer of the monastery's substance; but let him do all things with measure and in accordance with the instructions of the abbot.

MAR. 8
JULY 8
NOV. 7

Above all things let him have humility, and if he have nothing else to give, let him give a good word in answer; for it is written: *A good word is above the best gift.*² Let him have under his care all those things which the abbot has assigned to him, but presume not to deal with what he has forbidden to him. Let him give the brethren their appointed allowance of food without any arrogance or delay, that they may not be scandalized, mindful of what the Scripture saith that he deserves *who shall scandalize one of these little ones.*³ If the community be a large one, let helpers be given him, so that by their assistance he too may fulfil with a quiet mind the charge that has been committed to him. Let those things which have been asked for and those things which have to be given, be asked for and given at the proper time; so that no one may be troubled or vexed in the house of God.

MAR. 9
JULY 9
NOV. 8

¹ 1Tim iii, 13

² Ecclus xviii, 17

³ Matt xviii, 6

CHAPTER XXXII
OF THE TOOLS AND PROPERTY
OF THE MONASTERY

FOR the care of the monastery's property in tools, clothing and all other articles, let the abbot appoint brethren on whose life and character he can rely; and let him, as he shall judge fit, commit the various articles to them, to be looked after and to be collected again. Let the abbot keep a list of them, so that when the brethren succeed one another in their offices, he may know what he is giving out and what receiving back. If anyone treat the property of the monastery in a slovenly or careless manner, let him be corrected; if he do not amend, let him undergo the punishment of the Rule.

MAR. 10
JULY 10
NOV. 9

CHAPTER XXXIII
WHETHER MONKS SHOULD
HAVE ANYTHING OF THEIR OWN

THIS vice especially ought to be utterly rooted out of the monastery. Let no one presume to give or receive anything without the abbot's leave, or to have anything as his own, anything whatever, whether book or tablets or pen or whatever it may be; for monks should not have even their own bodies and wills at their own disposal. But let them look to the father of the monastery for all that they require, and let it be unlawful to have anything which the abbot has not given or allowed. And, as the Scripture saith, let *all things be common to all, nor let anyone say that anything is his own*¹ or claim it for himself. But if anyone shall be found to indulge in this most wicked vice, let him be admonished once and a second time; if he do not amend, let him undergo punishment.

MAR. 11
JULY 11
NOV. 10

¹ Acts iv, 32

CHAPTER XXXIV
WHETHER ALL SHOULD RECEIVE
NECESSITIES IN LIKE MEASURE

LET us follow the Scripture: *Distribution should be made to every man according as he had need.*¹ By this we do not mean that there should be respect of persons (God forbid), but consideration for infirmities. He that needeth less, let him thank God and not be discontented; he that needeth more, let him be humbled for his infirmity and not made proud by the mercy shown to him. Above all, let not the vice of murmuring show itself in any word or sign for any reason whatever. But if a brother be found guilty of it, let him undergo strict punishment.

MAR. 12
JULY 12
NOV. 11

¹ Acts iv, 35

CHAPTER XXXV
OF THE WEEKLY KITCHENERS

LET the brethren serve one another, and let no one be excused from the kitchen service, unless for sickness or because he is occupied in some business of importance. For this service brings increase of reward and of charity. But let the weak have help provided for them, that they may not perform their office with sadness; and indeed let every one have help, according to the size of the community or the circumstances of the locality. If the community be a large one, let the cellarer be excused from the kitchen service; and so also those who are occupied in more important business, as we have said before. Let the rest serve one another in charity. When the server is ending his week on the Saturday let him do the washing. He shall wash the towels which the brethren use for drying their hands and feet; and both the servers, that is the server who is ending his week and he who is about to begin, shall wash the feet of the whole community. Let the outgoing server restore the vessels of his office to the cellarer clean and sound; and let the cellarer then deliver them to the incoming server, in order that he may know what he is giving out and what receiving back.

MAR. 13
JULY 13
NOV. 12

Let the weekly servers, an hour before the meal, receive each of them, over and above the regular allowance, a drink and some bread, in order that at the meal time they may serve their brethren without murmuring and undue hardship; but on feast days they must wait until after Mass. On Sunday, immediately after Lauds, the incoming and outgoing servers shall prostrate themselves before all the brethren in the oratory and ask for their prayers. Let the server who is ending his week say this verse: *Benedictus es Domine Deus, qui adjuvasti me et consolatus es me.*¹ When this has been said three times and the outgoing server has received his blessing, then let the incoming server follow and say: *Deus in adjutorium meum intende, Domine ad adjuvandum me festina.*² Let this too be repeated thrice by all the brethren, and having received his blessing let him enter on his week.

MAR. 14
JULY 14
NOV. 13

¹ Ps. lxxxv, 17

[Blessed are you, Lord God, who have helped and consoled me]

² Ps. lxi, 2

[O God, come to my assistance; Lord, make haste to help me]

CHAPTER XXXVI
OF SICK BRETHERN

BEFORE all things and above all things care must be taken of the sick, so that they may be served in very deed as Christ himself; for he said: *I was sick and ye visited me*;¹ and, *what ye did to one of these least ones ye did unto me*.² But let the sick on their part consider that they are being served for the honour of God, and not provoke their brethren who are serving them by their unreasonable demands. Yet they should be patiently borne with, because from such as these is gained a more abundant reward. Therefore let the abbot take the greatest care that they suffer no neglect. For these sick brethren let there be assigned a special room and an attendant who is God-fearing, diligent and careful. Let the use of baths be afforded to the sick as often as may be expedient; but to the healthy, and especially to the young, let them be granted seldom. Moreover, let the use of flesh meat be granted to the sick who are very weak, for the restoration of their strength; but, as soon as they are better, let all abstain from flesh meat as usual. Let the abbot take the greatest care that the sick not be neglected by the cellarers and attendants; for he must answer for all the misdeeds of his disciples.

MAR. 15
JULY 15
NOV. 14

¹ Matt. xxv, 36 ² Ibid. 40

CHAPTER XXXVII
OF OLD MEN AND CHILDREN

ALTHOUGH human nature itself is drawn to pity towards these times of life, that is towards old men and children, yet let them be provided for also by the authority of the Rule. Let there be constant consideration for their weakness, and on no account let the rigour of the Rule in regard to food be applied to them. Let them, on the contrary, receive compassionate consideration and take their meals before the regular hours.

MAR. 16
JULY 16
NOV. 15

CHAPTER XXXVIII
OF THE WEEKLY READER

AT the meals of the brethren there should not fail to be reading: nor should the reader be anyone who may chance to take up the book, but let there be a reader for the whole week who shall enter upon his office on Sunday. Let this incoming reader, after Mass and Communion, ask all to pray for him that God may keep him from the spirit of pride. And let him intone the following versicle which shall be said three times in the oratory by all: *Domine labia mea aperies, et os meum annuntiabit laudem tuam.*¹ Then, having received a blessing, let him enter upon his reading. And let there be the greatest silence, so that no one's whisper or voice, but only the reader's may be heard there. But for the things that they need as they eat and drink, let the brethren pass them to one another so that no one need ask for anything. If, however, there be any need, then let the thing be asked for by means of some audible sign rather than by speech. Nor let anyone venture there to ask questions about the reading or anything else, lest it give occasion to the evil one, unless perchance the superior should wish to say a few words for the edification of the brethren. Let the brother who is the reader of the week be given a little bread and wine before he begins to read, on account of the Holy Communion and lest the fast might be hard for him to bear. Let him have his meal afterwards with the kitchen and table servers of the week. The brethren are not to read and sing according to their order, but those only who give edification to the hearers.

MAR. 17
JULY 17
NOV. 16

¹ Ps 1, 17

[O Lord open my lips and my mouth shall declare your praise]

CHAPTER XXXIX THE MEASURE OF FOOD

WE believe it to be sufficient for the daily dinner, whether that be at the sixth or the ninth hour, that every table should have two cooked dishes, on account of individual infirmities, so that he who perchance cannot eat of the one, may make his meal of the other. Therefore let two cooked dishes suffice for all the brethren; and if any fruit or young vegetables are available, let a third be added. Let a good pound weight of bread suffice for the day, whether there be one meal only, or both dinner and supper. If they are to have supper, let a third part of the pound be reserved by the cellarer, to be given them for their supper. But if their work chance to be heavier, the abbot shall have the choice and power, should it be expedient, to increase this allowance. Above all things, however, excess must be avoided, so that a monk may never suffer from a surfeit; for there is nothing so unfitting for a christian as surfeiting, according to our Lord's words: *Take heed lest your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting.*¹ Young boys shall not receive the same amount of food as their elders, but less; and frugality shall be observed in all circumstances. Except the sick who are very weak, let all abstain entirely from eating the flesh of four-footed animals.

MAR. 18
JULY 18
NOV. 17

¹ Luke xxi, 34

CHAPTER XL THE MEASURE OF DRINK

EVERY man hath his proper gift from God, one after this manner, and another after that.¹ It is therefore with some misgiving that we determine how much others should eat or drink. Nevertheless, keeping in view the needs of weaker brethren, we believe that a hemina of wine a day is sufficient for each; but let those on whom God bestows the gift of abstinence, know that they shall receive a special reward.

MAR. 19
JULY 19
NOV. 18

But if the circumstances of the place, or their work, or the heat of summer require more, let the superior be free to grant it. Yet let him always take care that neither surfeit nor drunkenness supervene. We do indeed read that wine is no drink for monks; but since nowadays monks cannot be persuaded of this, let us at least agree upon this, that we drink temperately and not to satiety: for *wine maketh even the wise to fall away.*² But when the circumstances of the place are such that the aforesaid measure cannot be had, but much less or even none at all, then let the monks who dwell there bless God and not murmur. Above all things do we give this admonition that they abstain from murmuring.

¹ 1 Cor vii, 7

² Ecclus xix, 2

CHAPTER XLI
AT WHAT HOUR THE BRETHREN
SHOULD DINE

FROM the feast of Easter until Pentecost let the brethren dine at the sixth hour and sup in the evening. From Pentecost throughout the summer, unless the monks have work in the fields or the heat of the summer oppress them, let them fast on Wednesdays and Fridays until the ninth hour; on the other days let them dine at the sixth hour. If they have field work or the summer heat be extreme, this dinner at the sixth hour shall be retained. Let this matter be determined at the abbot's discretion; and let him so arrange and ordain all things that souls may be saved and that the brethren may do their work without justifiable murmuring. From September the 14th until the beginning of Lent let them dine always at the ninth hour. In Lent until Easter let them dine in the evening. Vespers, however, should be so timed that the brethren may not need the light of a lamp as they dine, but that all may be accomplished by daylight. And at all times let the hour of the evening meal, whether dinner or supper, be so arranged that everything may be done by daylight.

MAR. 20
JULY 20
NOV. 19

CHAPTER XLII
THAT NO ONE SPEAK AFTER COMPLINE

MONKS should practise silence at all times, but especially at night. For every season, therefore, whether they be dining at midday or fasting let this be the rule: if dinner be at midday, then as soon as they have risen from supper let them all sit together and let a brother read the Conferences or the Lives of the Fathers, or something else that may edify the hearers; but not the Heptateuch or Kings because it will not be good for weak minds to hear those parts of Scripture at that time of day; let those books be read at other times. If the day be a fast-day, let there be a short interval after Vespers and let them pass then at once to the reading of the Conferences, as prescribed above. When four or five pages have been read, or as many as time permits, and this interval of reading has allowed of the assembly of all who may chance to be engaged in special duties: then, all being now assembled, let them say Compline; and when they come out of Compline, let there be no further permission for anyone to say anything. But if anyone be found to infringe this rule of silence, let him undergo severe punishment, except the coming of guests make speech necessary, or the abbot give someone an order. But even this should be done with the utmost gravity and the most becoming restraint.

MAR. 21
JULY 21
NOV. 20

CHAPTER XLIII
OF THOSE WHO COME
LATE TO THE WORK OF GOD
OR TO TABLE

AT the time of the divine Office, as soon as the signal has been heard, let them abandon what they have in hand and assemble with the greatest speed, yet with gravity, so that no occasion be given for levity. Let nothing, therefore, be put before the Work of God.

MAR. 22
JULY 22
NOV. 21

If anyone arrive at the Night Office after the *Gloria* of the ninety-fourth psalm, which we wish for this reason to be said very slowly and deliberately, let him not take his proper place in the choir, but stand last of all, or in the place apart which the abbot has appointed for such careless persons, so that they may be seen by him and by all; until, at the completion of the Work of God, he do penance by public satisfaction. The reason we have ordained that they should stand in the last place or apart, is that being seen by all they may amend for very shame. For if they were to remain outside the oratory, there might be one who would go to bed again and sleep, or at least sit himself down outside and indulge in idle talk, and thus an occasion would be provided for the evil one. But let them enter the oratory, that they may not lose the whole Office and may amend for the future. At the Day Hours let those who do not arrive at the Work of God until after the verse and the *Gloria* of the first psalm which follows it, stand in the last place, according to the ruling above, nor let them presume to join the choir of the brethren in the Office until they have made satisfaction, unless the abbot have pardoned them and given them permission. But, even so, the offender should make satisfaction for his fault.

In the case of meals, if anyone do not arrive before the verse, so that all may say the verse and the prayers together and all at the same time go to the table – if anyone by his carelessness or fault do not arrive, let him up to the second time be corrected for this; if then he does not amend, let him not be allowed to share the common meal, but let him be separated from the company of all the brethren and take his meal alone, and be deprived of his allowance of wine, until he have made satisfaction and amend. And let the same punishment be inflicted on him who is not present at the verse which is said after the meal. And let no one venture to take any food or drink before the appointed hour or afterwards. But if the superior offer a brother anything and he refuse it, then when he wants something he formerly refused or something else, let him receive nothing whatever, until he have made fitting amends.

MAR. 23
JULY 23
NOV. 22

CHAPTER XLIV
HOW THE EXCOMMUNICATED
ARE TO MAKE SATISFACTION

LET this be the rule for those who for serious offences are excommunicated from oratory and table. At the hour when the Work of God is being performed in the oratory, let him lie prostrate before the door of the oratory saying nothing, but just lying there with his face to the ground at the feet of the brethren as they come out of the oratory. And let him continue to do this until the abbot judge that he has made satisfaction for his offence. When at the abbot's bidding he has come into the oratory, let him throw himself first at the abbot's feet and then before the rest of the brethren, asking them to pray for him. And then, if the abbot so order, let him be received into the choir, to the place which the abbot appoints. Nevertheless, he must not presume to intone psalm, or lesson, or anything else in the oratory, unless the abbot give that further permission. And at every Hour, at the end of the Work of God, let him cast himself on the ground in the place where he stands; and let him make such satisfaction until the abbot order him anew that he should desist from it. But those who for slight offences are excommunicated from table only, shall make satisfaction in the oratory, and continue it at the abbot's good pleasure, until he bless them and say: 'It is enough.'

MAR. 24
JULY 24
NOV. 23

CHAPTER XLV
OF THOSE WHO MAKE MISTAKES
IN THE ORATORY

IF anyone make a mistake in the recitation of psalm, responsory, antiphon, or lesson, and do not make humble satisfaction there before all, let him undergo greater punishment, because he would not repair by humility the fault that he committed through carelessness. But boys for such faults shall be whipped.

MAR. 25
JULY 25
NOV. 24

CHAPTER XLVI
OF THOSE WHO OFFEND IN
ANY OTHER MATTERS

IF anyone while occupied in any task, whether in the kitchen, or store-room, or in his service, or in the bakehouse, or garden, or in any other craft or place, shall commit any fault, or break anything, or lose anything, or fall into any transgression whatever, and do not come at once before the abbot and community, confessing and making satisfaction of his own accord for his offence, but it become known through another: let him undergo greater punishment. But if it be a matter of a secret sin of the soul, then let him reveal it only to the abbot, or to a spiritual father who knows how to cure his own wounds and the wounds of others without disclosing and publishing them.

MAR. 26
JULY 26
NOV. 25

CHAPTER XLVII
THE SIGNAL FOR THE WORK
OF GOD

THE indicating of the hour for the Work of God by day and by night shall be the business of the abbot. Let him either do it himself or entrust the duty to such a careful brother that everything may be fulfilled at its proper time. The intoning of psalms and antiphons shall be done by those who are appointed for it, in their order after the abbot. But let no one presume to sing or read, unless he can fulfil the office to the edification of his hearers. Let it be done with humility, gravity and reverence, and by him whom the abbot has appointed.

MAR. 27
JULY 27
NOV. 26

CHAPTER XLVIII
OF THE DAILY MANUAL LABOUR

IDLENESS is the enemy of the soul. The brethren, therefore, must be occupied at certain hours in manual labour, and again at other hours in sacred reading. To this end we think that the times for each may be determined in the following manner. From Easter until September the 14th the brethren shall start with the morning and from the first hour until about the fourth hour do what work has to be done. From the fourth hour until about the sixth let them apply themselves to reading. After the sixth hour, having left the table, let them rest on their beds in perfect silence; or if anyone wishes to read by himself, let him read so as not to disturb the others. Let None be said early, at the middle of the eighth hour; and let them again do what work has to be done until Vespers. But if the circumstances of the place or their poverty require them to gather the harvest themselves, let them not be discontented; for then are they truly monks, when they live by the labour of their hands, like our fathers and the apostles. Yet let all things be done in moderation on account of the fainthearted.

MAR. 28
JULY 28
NOV. 27

From September the 14th to the beginning of Lent let them apply themselves to reading up to the end of the second hour. Let Terce be said at the second hour, and from then until the ninth hour let them all work at the tasks appointed to them. As soon as the first signal for None has been given, let them all abandon their work and hold themselves ready for the sounding of the second signal. After dinner let them apply themselves to their reading or to their study of the psalms.

MAR. 29
JULY 29
NOV. 28

In the days of Lent let them apply themselves to their reading from the morning until the end of the third hour, and from then until the end of the tenth hour let them perform the work that is assigned to them. In these days of Lent let them each receive a book from the library, which they shall read right through from the beginning; let these books be given out at the beginning of Lent. But one or two

senior monks should certainly be deputed to go round the monastery at the times when the brethren are occupied in reading, to see that there be no slothful brother who spends his time in idleness or gossip and neglects the reading, so that he not only does himself harm, but also disturbs others. If there be such a one (which God forbid), let him be corrected once and a second time; if he do not amend, let him undergo the punishment of the Rule, so that the rest may be afraid. And the brethren should not associate with one another at unseasonable hours.

On Sundays likewise all shall apply themselves to reading, except those who are assigned to various duties. But if there be anyone so careless and slothful that he will not or cannot study or read, let him be given some work to perform, so that he may not be idle. Sick or delicate brethren should be assigned a task or a craft of such kind that on the one hand they may not be idle, and on the other not be overborne by excessive toil and driven away from the monastery. The abbot should have consideration for their weakness.

MAR. 30
JULY 30
NOV. 29

CHAPTER XLIX OF THE OBSERVANCE OF LENT

THE life of a monk ought at all times to be Lenten in its character; but since few have the strength for that, we therefore urge that in these days of Lent the brethren should lead lives of great purity, and should also in this sacred season expiate the negligences of other times. This will be worthily done if we refrain from all sin and apply ourselves to prayer with tears, to reading, to compunction of heart and to abstinence. In these days, therefore, let us add something to the wonted measure of our service, such as private prayers and abstinence in food and drink. Let each one, over and above the measure prescribed for him, offer to God something of his own free will in the joy of the Holy Spirit. That is to say, let him stint himself of food, drink, sleep, talk and jesting, and look forward with the joy of spiritual longing to the holy feast of Easter. Let each one, however, tell his abbot what he is offering, and let it be done with his consent and blessing; because what is done without the permission of the spiritual father shall be reckoned as presumption and vainglory and not as merit. Everything, therefore, is to be done with the approval of the abbot.

MAR. 31
JULY 31
NOV. 30

CHAPTER L
OF BRETHREN WHO
ARE WORKING FAR FROM THE
ORATORY OR JOURNEYING

IF any brethren be at work at a great distance, so that they cannot get to the oratory at the proper time, and if the abbot recognise that such is the case, then let them perform the Work of God in the place where they are working, bending their knees in reverence before God. In like manner let those who are sent on a journey not miss the appointed Hours; but let them say them for themselves, as well as they can, and not neglect to pay the due measure of their service.

APR. 1
AUG. 1
DEC. 1

CHAPTER LI
OF BRETHREN WHO DO NOT
GO VERY FAR

IF a brother be sent out on some business and be expected to return to the monastery that same day, let him not presume to eat while abroad, even though he be urgently pressed to do so, unless his abbot have so bidden him. If he do otherwise, let him be excommunicated.

APR. 2
AUG. 2
DEC. 2

CHAPTER LII
OF THE ORATORY OF THE
MONASTERY

LET the oratory be what its name implies, and let nothing else be done or kept there. When the Work of God is finished, let all go out in deep silence, and let reverence for God be observed, so that any brother who may wish to pray privately be not hindered by another's misbehaviour. And at other times also, if anyone wish to pray secretly, let him go in simply and pray; not in a loud voice, but with tears and fervour of heart. He, therefore, who does not behave so, shall not be permitted to remain in the oratory when the Work of God is ended, as we have said, lest another should thereby suffer hindrance.

APR. 3
AUG. 3
DEC. 3

CHAPTER LIII
OF THE RECEPTION OF GUESTS

LET all guests that come be received like Christ, for he will say: *I was a stranger and ye took me in.*¹ And let fitting honour be shown to all, especially to those who are of the household of the faith and to pilgrims. As soon, therefore, as a guest is announced, let the superior or the brethren meet him with all charitable service. And first of all let them pray together, and then let them unite in the kiss of peace. This kiss of peace shall not be offered until after the prayers have been said, on account of the delusions of the devil. In the greeting of all guests, whether they be arriving or departing, let the greatest humility be shown. Let the head be bowed or the whole body prostrated on the ground, and so let Christ be worshipped in them, for indeed he is received in their persons.

APR. 4
AUG. 4
DEC. 4

When the guests have been received, let them be led to prayer, and afterwards let the superior, or a monk appointed by him, sit with them. Let the law of God be read before the guest for his edification, and then let all kindness be shown to him. The superior shall break his fast for the sake of a guest, unless it be a special fast-day which may not be violated; but the brethren shall observe the customary fasts. Let the abbot give the guests water for their hands; and let both the abbot and community wash the feet of all guests. When they have washed them, let them say this verse: *Suscepimus, Deus, misericordiam tuam in medio templi tui.*² In the reception of poor men and pilgrims special attention should be shown, because in them is Christ more truly welcomed; for the fear which the rich inspire is enough of itself to win them honour.

¹ Matt. xxv, 35

² Ps. xlvi, 10 [O God we have received your mercy in the midst of your temple]

Let there be a separate kitchen for the abbot and guests, so that the brothers may not be disturbed when guests – who are never lacking in a monastery – arrive at irregular hours. Let two brethren be appointed for a year to have charge of this kitchen, and let them fulfil their office well. Let help be given them according as they need it, so that they may serve without murmuring. And, on the other hand, when they have less to do, let them go out to whatever task is assigned to them. And not only in their case, but in every office of the monastery, let the same consideration be shown and help given whenever it is needed; and, on the other hand, when they are unoccupied, let them do whatever they are bidden.

APR. 5
AUG. 5
DEC. 5

The guest-house shall be assigned to a brother whose soul is full of the fear of God. Let there be a sufficient number of beds ready therein, and let the house of God be governed by prudent men in a prudent manner.

Let no one, without special instructions, associate or converse with guests. If he meet or see them, let him greet them humbly, as we have said, and ask a blessing; then let him pass on, saying that he is not permitted to talk with a guest.

CHAPTER LIV
WHETHER A MONK SHOULD
RECEIVE LETTERS
OR ANYTHING ELSE

ON no account shall a monk be allowed to receive letters, devout tokens, or any small gifts whatsoever, from his parents or other people or his brethren, or to give the same, without the abbot's permission. But if he have been sent anything, even by his parents, let him not presume to take it before it has been shown to the abbot. If the abbot allow it to be received, it shall be his to decide to whom it is given; and let not the brother, to whom it was sent, be vexed thereat, lest occasion be given to the devil. Should anyone presume to act otherwise, let him undergo the punishment of the Rule.

APR. 6
AUG. 6
DEC. 6

CHAPTER LV
OF THE CLOTHES AND SHOES
OF THE BRETHERN

LET clothing be given to the brethren according to the nature of the locality in which they dwell and its climate; for in cold districts they will need more clothing, and in warm districts less. It is the abbot's business to take thought for this matter. But we believe that in ordinary places the following dress is sufficient for each monk: a tunic, a cowl (thick and woolly in winter, but thin or worn in summer), a scapular for work, and for the feet shoes and stockings. And let the monks not complain of the colour or coarseness of any of these things, but be content with what is to be found in the district where they live and can be purchased cheaply.

APR. 7
AUG. 7
DEC. 7

Let the abbot see to the size of the garments, that they be not too short for their wearers, but of the proper fit. When the brethren receive new clothes, let them always return the old ones at once, that they may be stored in the clothes-room for the poor. For it is sufficient if a monk have two tunics and two cowls, to allow of night wear and of the washing of these garments; more than this is superfluity and should be cut off. And let them return their stockings, and anything else that is old, when they receive new ones. Those who are sent on a journey shall receive drawers from the clothes-room, which they shall wash and restore when they return. And let their cowls and tunics be somewhat better than the ones they wear usually. They shall receive them from the clothes-room when they are starting on their journey and restore them when they return.

For bedding let this suffice: a mattress, a blanket, a coverlet and pillow. The beds should be examined frequently by the abbot, lest any private property be concealed in them. If any brother be found to have anything that he has not received from the abbot, let him undergo the strictest punishment. And in order that this evil of private ownership may be rooted out utterly, let the abbot provide all things that are necessary: that is, cowl, tunic, stockings, shoes, girdle, knife, pen, needle, handkerchief and tablets; so that all pretext of need may be taken away. Yet let the abbot always consider those words of the Acts of the Apostles: *Distribution was made to everyone according as he had need.*¹ So too let the abbot consider the weaknesses of the needy, and not the ill-will of the jealous. But in all his decisions let him think upon the retribution of God.

APR. 8
AUG. 8
DEC. 8

¹ Acts, iv, 35

CHAPTER LVI OF THE ABBOT'S TABLE

LET the abbot always eat with the guests and strangers. But where there are no guests, let him have the power to invite whom he will of the brethren. Yet for discipline's sake let one or two seniors always be left with the brethren.

APR. 9
AUG. 9
DEC. 9

CHAPTER LVII OF THE CRAFTSMEN OF THE MONASTERY

IF there be craftsmen in the monastery, let them practise their crafts with all humility, provided the abbot give permission. But if one of them be puffed up because of his skill in his craft, supposing that he is conferring a benefit on the monastery, let him be removed from his work and not return to it, unless he have humbled himself and the abbot entrust it to him again. If any of the work of the craftsmen is to be sold, let those through whose hands the business passes, take care that they be not guilty of any dishonesty. Let them always remember Ananias and Saphira, and take care lest they, or any others who deal dishonestly with the property of the monastery, suffer in their souls the death which they endured in their bodies. And as regards the price, let not the sin of avarice creep in; but let the goods always be sold a little cheaper than they are sold by people in the world, *that in all things God may be glorified.*¹

APR. 10
AUG. 10
DEC. 10

¹ 1 Peter iv, 11

CHAPTER LVIII
THE ORDER OF THE RECEPTION
OF BRETHREN

WHEN anyone newly cometh to be a monk, let him not be granted an easy admittance; but, as the apostle saith: *Try the spirits, if they be of God.*¹ If such a one, therefore, persevere in his knocking, and if it be seen after four or five days that he bears patiently his harsh treatment and the difficulty of admission and persists in his petition, then let admittance be granted to him, and let him stay in the guest house for a few days. After that let him dwell in the noviciate, where the novices work, eat and sleep. And let a senior be assigned to them who is skilled in winning souls, that he may watch over them with the utmost care. Let him examine whether the novice truly seeks God, and whether he is zealous for the Work of God, for obedience and for humiliations. Let him be told all the hardships and trials through which we travel to God.

APR. 11
AUG. 11
DEC. 11

If he promise stability and perseverance, then at the end of two months let this Rule be read through to him, and let him be addressed thus: ‘Behold the law under which you wish to serve; if you can observe it, enter; if you cannot, freely depart.’ If he still abide, then let him be led back into the aforesaid noviciate and again tested in all patience. After the lapse of six months let the Rule be read to him, so that he may know on what he is entering. And if he still abide, after four months let the Rule be read to him again. If, upon mature deliberation, he promise to observe all things and to obey all the commands that are given him, then let him be received into the community; but let him understand that according to the law of the Rule he is no longer free to leave the monastery, or to withdraw his neck from under the yoke of the Rule, which it was open to him, during that prolonged deliberation, either to refuse or to accept.

¹ 1 John, iv, 1

He that is to be received shall make a promise before all in the oratory of his stability and of the discipline of his life and of obedience, before God and his saints, so that if he should ever act otherwise, he may know that he will be condemned by him whom he mocks. Of this promise of his let him draw up a formal petition in the name of the saints whose relics are there and of the abbot who is present. Let him write this document with his own hand; or, if he cannot write, let another do it at his request and let the novice put his mark to it. Then let him put it on the altar with his own hand; and, when he has placed it there, let the novice himself at once intone the verse; *Suscipe me, Domine, secundum eloquium tuum et vivam: et ne confundas me ab expectatione mea*¹ Let the whole community answer this verse three times and add to it *Gloria Patri*. Then let the novice prostrate himself before the feet of each monk, asking them to pray for him; and from that day let him be counted as one of the

APR. 12
AUG. 12
DEC. 12

community. If he possess any property, let him either give it beforehand to the poor, or make a formal donation bestowing it on the monastery, and keep back nothing at all for himself, as knowing that thenceforward he will not have the disposition even of his own body. So let them, there and then, in the oratory, take off him his own clothes which he is wearing and dress him in the clothes of the monastery. But let those clothes, which have been taken off him, be out aside in the clothes-room and kept there. Then should he ever listen to the persuasions of the devil and ever propose to leave the monastery (which God forbid) let them take off him the clothes of the monastery and so dismiss him. But his petition, which the abbot has taken from the altar, shall not be returned to him, but shall be preserved in the monastery.

¹ Ps. cxviii, 116 [Receive me, Lord, according to your word and I shall live and let not my hope in you be disappointed]

CHAPTER LIX
THE OFFERING OF THE SONS
OF THE RICH AND THE POOR

IF any man of good station offer his son to God in the monastery and the boy himself be still very young, let his parents draw up the petition which we mentioned above; and when they are making the offering, let them wrap the petition and the boy's hand in the altar cloth and so offer him. As regards his property, let them promise in the same document under oath that they will never of themselves, or through an intermediary, or in any way whatever, give him anything or provide him with the opportunity of possessing anything. But if they prefer not to do this and desire to give an alms to the monastery for their advantage, let them draw up a deed of gift of the property which they desire to give to the monastery, reserving the income to themselves if they wish. And in this way let every opening be stopped, so that the boy may have no expectations whereby (which God forbid) he might be deceived and ruined, as we have learned by experience. And let poorer folk do in like manner. But those who possess nothing at all, shall simply draw up the petition and offer their son at the offertory before witnesses.

APR. 13
AUG. 13
DEC. 13

CHAPTER LX
OF PRIESTS WHO MAY WISH TO
DWELL IN THE MONASTERY

IF anyone of the priestly order ask to be received into the monastery, permission shall not be granted him too readily. Nevertheless, if he persevere firmly in his petition, let him know that he will have to observe the full discipline of the Rule and that nothing will be abated for him. As the Scripture saith: *Friend, whereunto art thou come?*¹ However, let him be allowed to take rank next to the abbot, to pronounce blessings, and to celebrate Mass, provided that the abbot give him permission. Otherwise, let him not presume to do anything, knowing that he is subject to the discipline of the Rule; but rather let him give to all an example of humility. If there be question of an appointment or of some business in the monastery, let him hold the place that is his according to the date of his entrance into the monastery, and not that which is granted to him out of respect for his priesthood. If any clerics, likewise, should desire to become members of the community, let them be assigned a middle rank. Yet they too are to be admitted only on condition that they promise observance of the Rule and stability.

APR. 14
AUG. 14
DEC. 14

¹ Matt. xxvi, 50

CHAPTER LXI
HOW STRANGER MONKS ARE TO BE RECEIVED

IF a stranger monk come from a distant region and desire to dwell in the monastery as a guest, let him be received for as long a time as he wishes, provided that he is content with the customs of the place as he finds them, and does not disturb the monastery by his exorbitant wants, but is simply content with what he finds. Should he reasonably, modestly and charitably censure or remark upon any defect, let the abbot consider the matter prudently, lest perchance the Lord have sent him for this very end. And if later on he should wish to bind himself to stability, let not his desire be denied him, especially as his character can be discerned during the time that he is a guest.

APR. 15
AUG. 15
DEC. 15

But if during that time he be found exacting or depraved, not only should he not be made a member of the community, but he should be respectfully told to depart, lest others should be corrupted by his lamentable life. If, however, he do not deserve to be dismissed, not only should he be received on his asking as a member of the community, but he should even be urged to stay, so that others may be instructed by his example, and because wherever we are we serve the same Lord and fight for the same King. And the abbot may even give him a higher place in the community, if he consider him worthy of it. And so also, not only with a monk, but also with the aforesaid orders of priests and clerics: the abbot may give them a rank that is higher than is theirs by their entry, if he see that their life deserves it. But let the abbot beware lest he ever receive a monk of some other known monastery as a member of his community without the consent of his abbot and a letter or recommendation, because it is written: 'Do not thou to another what thou wouldst not have done to thyself'.

APR. 16
AUG. 16
DEC. 16

CHAPTER LXII
OF THE PRIESTS OF THE
MONASTERY

IF any abbot wish to have a priest or a deacon ordained for his monastery, let him choose out one of his subjects who is worthy to exercise the priestly office. But let the one who is ordained beware of elation or pride; and let him not presume to do anything but what is commanded him by the abbot, knowing that he is all the more subject to the discipline of the monastery. Let him not because of his priesthood forget the obedience and discipline of the Rule, but make ever more and more progress towards God.

APR. 17
AUG. 17
DEC. 17

Let him always keep the place which is his according to the time of his entry into the monastery, except in his duties at the altar, and if the choice of the community and the abbot's decision should perchance promote him for the worthiness of his life. Yet let him understand that he must observe the injunctions laid down for deans and priors. Should he presume to act otherwise, let him be judged not a priest but a rebel; and if after frequent admonitions he do not amend, let the bishop too be brought in as a witness. If he do not amend even then, but his offences are manifest, let him be dismissed from the monastery; provided that his contumacy be such that he refuses to submit and to obey the Rule.

CHAPTER LXIII
OF THE ORDER OF THE COMMUNITY

THE brethren shall keep their order in the monastery according to the length of their religious service and the merit of their lives, as the abbot shall determine. Yet the abbot must not disturb the flock committed to him, nor by an excuse of arbitrary authority ordain anything unjustly; but let him always consider that he will have to render God an account of all his judgements and deeds. Let the brethren, therefore, receive the kiss of peace, go to Communion, intone the psalms and stand in choir according to the order which the abbot has fixed, or which they have of themselves. And in no place whatever should age distinguish the brethren and decide their order; for Samuel and Daniel, though young, judged the elders. Therefore, excepting those whom, as we have said, the abbot has by special decision promoted or for definite reasons degraded, all the rest shall take their order according to the time of their entry. Let him, for instance, who came to the monastery at the second hour of the day, (whatever be his age or dignity) know that he is junior to him who came at the first hour. Boys, however, are to kept under discipline at all times and by everyone.

APR. 18
AUG. 18
DEC. 18

The juniors, therefore, shall honour their seniors, and the seniors love their juniors. In addressing one another, let them never use the bare name; but let a senior call his junior 'Brother', and a junior call his senior 'Nonnus', which signifies 'Reverend Father'. But let the abbot, since he is believed to hold the place of Christ, be called Lord and Abbot, not for any pretensions of his own, but for honour and love of Christ. Let the abbot himself be mindful of this, and behave so that he may be worthy of such honour. Wherever the brethren meet one another, let the junior brother ask the senior for his blessing. When a senior passes by, let a junior rise and make room for him to seat himself; nor let the junior presume to sit down, unless his senior bid him, so that the Scripture may be fulfilled: *With honour preventing one another*.¹ Boys and youths shall keep strictly to their order in the oratory and at table. But abroad and everywhere let them have supervision and discipline, until they come to the age of discretion.

APR. 19
AUG. 19
DEC. 19

¹ Rom xii, 10

CHAPTER LXIV
ON THE APPOINTMENT
OF THE ABBOT

IN the appointment of the abbot let this rule always be observed, that he be made abbot who is chosen unanimously in the fear of God by the whole community, or even by a minority, however small, if its counsel be more wholesome. Let him who is appointed be chosen for the merit of his life and the wisdom of his teaching, even though he be the last in order of the community. But if (which God forbid) the whole community should agree to choose a person who acquiesces in its evil ways, and if these come somehow to the knowledge of the bishop of the diocese, or become known to the neighbouring abbots or other christians, let them prevent the success of this conspiracy of the wicked, and set a worthy steward over God's house. Let them be sure that they will receive a good reward if they do this with a pure intention and zeal for God; as, on the contrary, they will sin if they neglect it.

APR. 20
AUG. 20
DEC. 20

Let the abbot appointed consider always what an office he has undertaken and to whom he has to give an account of his stewardship; and let him know that it is his duty rather to profit his brethren than to preside over them. It behoves him, therefore, to be learned in the law of God, that he may have a treasure of knowledge whence he may bring forth things new and old; and to be chaste, sober and merciful. Let him always set mercy before justice, that he himself may obtain mercy. Let him hate evil, but love the brethren. In administering correction let him act prudently and not go to excess, lest being too zealous in removing the rust he break the vessel. Let him always distrust his own frailty and remember that the bruised reed is not to be broken. By this we do not mean that he should allow evils to grow, but that, as we have said above, he should eradicate them prudently and with charity, in the way which may seem best in each case. And let him study rather to be loved than feared. Let him not be headstrong or anxious, extravagant or obstinate, jealous or over suspicious, for otherwise he will never rest. Let him be prudent and considerate in all his commands; and whether the work which he enjoins concern God or the world, let him always be discreet and moderate, bearing in mind the discretion of holy Jacob, who said: *If I cause my flocks to be overdriven, they will all perish in one day.*¹ So taking these and other examples of discretion, the mother of the virtues, let him so temper all things that the strong may still have something to long after, and the weak may not draw back in alarm. And, especially, let him keep this present Rule in all things; so that having ministered faithfully, he may hear from the Lord what the good servant heard who gave his fellow-servants wheat in due season: *Amen, I say unto you, he set him over all his goods.*²

APR. 21
AUG. 21
DEC. 21

¹ Gen. xxxiii, 13 ² Matt xxiv, 47

CHAPTER LXV
OF THE PRIOR OF THE
MONASTERY

IT frequently happen that the appointment of a prior gives rise to serious scandals in monasteries, when there are men puffed up by an evil spirit of pride who regard themselves as equal to the abbot, and arrogating to themselves tyrannical power foster troubles and dissensions in the community. This happens especially in those places where the prior is appointed by the same bishop, or by the same abbots, as appoint the abbot. But it is very clear that this is a foolish procedure, for it gives the prior matter for pride from the very beginning of his appointment, since his thoughts will suggest to him that he is not subject to the abbot: 'For,' he will say to himself, 'you were appointed by the same people that appointed the abbot.' Hence arise envies, quarrels, detraction, rivalry, dissensions and disorders. For while the abbot and prior are at variance, it must needs be that their souls are endangered by this dissension, and their subjects also, currying favour with this side or that, run headlong to perdition. The responsibility for this dangerous state of affairs rests ultimately on those whose action caused such disorder.

APR. 22
AUG. 22
DEC. 22

We believe, therefore, that it is expedient, for the preservation of peace and charity, that the abbot should have the appointment to all offices in his monastery. If it be possible, let all the affairs of the monastery, as we have already arranged, be administered by deans under the control of the abbot, so that the business being shared by so many, no individual may become proud. But if the circumstances of the place require it, or the community reasonably and humbly ask for it, and the abbot judge that it is expedient, let him himself appoint as his prior whomsoever he may choose with the advice of God-fearing brethren. Let the prior reverently perform what is enjoined him by his abbot, and do nothing contrary to the abbot's will or regulations; for the more he is set above the rest, the more scrupulously should he observe the precepts of the Rule. If it should be found that the prior has serious faults, or that he is deceived by pride and behaves arrogantly, or if he should be proved to be a despiser of the holy Rule, let him be verbally admonished up to four times; if he do not amend, let the punishment of the Rule be applied to him. But if he do not amend even then, let him be deposed from the office of prior and another who is worthy appointed in his place. But if afterwards he be not quiet and obedient in the community, let him even be expelled from the monastery. Yet let the abbot bear in mind that he must give God an account of all his judgements, lest perchance his mind be inflamed by the fire of envy or jealousy.

APR. 23
AUG. 23
DEC. 23

CHAPTER LXVI
OF THE PORTERS OF THE
MONASTERY

AT the gate of the monastery let there be placed a wise old man, who understands how to give and receive an answer, and whose years prevent him from straying. This porter should have a room near the gate, so that those who come may always find him there to answer them. As soon as anyone knocks, or a poor man hails him, let him answer *Deo gratias* or *Benedic**. Then let him attend to them promptly, with all the gentleness of the fear of God and with fervent charity. If the porter need help, let him have one of the younger brethren.

APR. 24
AUG. 24
DEC. 24

The monastery should, if possible, be so arranged that all necessary things, such as water, mill, garden and various workshops may be within the enclosure, so that the monks may not be compelled to wander outside it, for this is not at all profitable for their souls.

We desire that this Rule should be read aloud often in the community, so that no brother may excuse himself on the ground of ignorance.

* [Thanks be to God or your blessing please]

CHAPTER LXVII
ON BRETHREN WHO ARE SENT ON A JOURNEY

LET brethren who are sent on a journey commend themselves to the prayers of all the brethren and of the abbot; and always at the last prayer of the Work of God let there be a commemoration of all absent brethren. When brethren return from a journey, let them on the day they return, at the end of each canonical Hour of the Work of God, lie prostrate on the floor of the oratory and ask the prayers of all on account of any faults that may have surprised them on the road, through the seeing or hearing of something evil, or through idle talk. Nor let anyone presume to tell another what he has seen or heard outside the monastery, because this causes very great harm. But if anyone presume to do so, let him undergo the punishment of the Rule. And let him be punished likewise who shall presume to leave the monastery, or to go anywhere, or to do anything however trifling, without the permission of the abbot.

APR. 25
AUG. 25
DEC. 25

CHAPTER LXVIII
IF A BROTHER BE COMMANDED
TO DO IMPOSSIBLE THINGS

IF it happen that something hard or impossible be laid upon any brother, let him receive the command of his superior with all docility and obedience. But if he see that the weight of the burden altogether exceeds the measure of his strength, let him explain the reasons of his incapacity to his superior calmly and in due season, without pride, obstinacy or contradiction. If after his representations the superior still persist in his decision and command, let the subject know that this is expedient for him, and let him obey out of love, trusting in the assistance of God.

APR. 26
AUG. 26
DEC. 26

CHAPTER LXIX
THAT THE MONKS PRESUME NOT
TO DEFEND ONE ANOTHER

CARE must be taken that no monk venture on any ground to defend another monk in the monastery, or as it were to take him under his protection, even though they be connected by some tie of kinship. Let not the monks venture to do this in any way whatsoever, because it may give rise to the most serious scandals. But if anyone break this rule, let him be severely punished.

APR. 27
AUG. 27
DEC. 27

CHAPTER LXX
THAT NO ONE VENTURE TO
PUNISH AT RANDOM

EVERY occasion of presumption shall be avoided in the monastery, and we decree that no one be allowed to excommunicate or strike any of his brethren, except the abbot have given him authority. *They that offend shall be reprov'd before all, that the rest may have fear.*¹ However, boys up to fifteen years of age shall be carefully controlled and watched by all, yet this too with all moderation and prudence. But if anyone venture without the abbot's instructions to punish those of riper years, or to treat the boys with immoderate severity, let him undergo the discipline of the Rule, for it is written: 'Do not thou to another, what thou wouldst not have done to thyself.'

APR. 28
AUG. 28
DEC. 28

¹ 1 Tim. v, 20

CHAPTER LXXI
THAT THE BRETHREN BE
OBEDIENT TO ONE ANOTHER

NOT only shall the virtue of obedience be practised by all towards the abbot, but the brethren shall also obey one another, knowing that by this road of obedience they will come to God. The commands of the abbot, or of the superiors appointed by him, must rank first and no unofficial commands take precedence of them; but for the rest let all the junior monks obey their seniors with all love and diligence. If anyone be found quarrelsome, let him be corrected. And if any brother, for however trifling a reason, be corrected in any way by the abbot, or any of his superiors, or if he perceive that any superior, in however small a degree, is displeased or angry with him, let him at once without delay cast himself on the ground at his feet and lie there making reparation until that displeasure is appeased and he bless him. But if anyone should disdain to do this, let him either undergo corporal punishment, or, if he be stubborn, let him be expelled from the monastery.

APR. 29
AUG. 29
DEC. 29

CHAPTER LXXII
OF THE GOOD ZEAL WHICH
MONKS OUGHT TO HAVE

JUST as there is an evil zeal of bitterness which separates from God and leads to hell, so is there a good zeal which separates from evil and leads to God and life everlasting. Let monks, therefore, exercise this zeal with the most fervent love. Let them, that is, *in honour prefer one another*.¹ Let them bear with the greatest patience one another's infirmities, whether of body or character. Let them vie in paying obedience to one another. Let none follow what seems good for himself, but rather what is good for another. Let them practise fraternal charity with all purity. Let them fear and love God. Let them love their abbot with a sincere and humble charity. Let them prefer nothing whatever to Christ; and may he bring us all alike to life everlasting.

APR. 30
AUG. 30
DEC. 30

¹ Rom xii, 10

CHAPTER LXXIII
THAT THE FULL OBSERVANCE
OF JUSTICE IS NOT
ESTABLISHED IN THIS RULE

WE have written this Rule in order that by its observance in monasteries we may show ourselves to have attained some degree of virtue and the rudiments of the monastic life. But for him who would hasten to the perfection of that life, there are the teachings of the holy Fathers, by observing which a man is led to the summit of perfection. For what page or what utterance of the divinely-inspired books of the Old and New Testaments is not a most unerring rule of human life? Or what book of the holy Catholic Fathers does not loudly proclaim how we may come by a straight course to our Creator? Then the Conferences, the Institutes and Lives of the Fathers, as also the Rule of our holy Father Basil: what else are they but tools of virtue for good-living and obedient monks? But we slothful, ill-living and negligent people must blush with confusion. Whoever, therefore, thou art that hastenest to thy heavenly country, fulfil by the help of Christ this little Rule which we have written for beginners; and then at length under God's protection thou shalt attain to the loftier heights just mentioned of wisdom and moral perfection.

MAY 1
AUG. 31
DEC. 31