

1: St. Benedict - Benedictine Abbey of Christ in the Desert

Saint Benedict, in full Saint Benedict of Nursia, Nursia also spelled Norcia, (born c. , Nursia [Italy]â€”died c. , Monte Cassino; feast day July 11, formerly March 21), founder of the Benedictine monastery at Monte Cassino and father of Western monasticism; the rule that he established became the norm for monastic living throughout Europe.

Saint Benedict of Nursia c. Detail from a fresco by Fra Angelico c. He later founded the Abbey of Monte Cassino. There is no evidence, however, that he intended to found an order and the Rule of Saint Benedict presupposes the autonomy of each community. When Monte Cassino was sacked by the Lombards about the year , the monks fled to Rome, and it seems probable that this constituted an important factor in the diffusion of a knowledge of Benedictine monasticism. Andrew in Rome that Augustine , the prior, and his forty companions set forth in on their mission for the evangelization of England. At various stopping places during the journey, the monks left behind them traditions concerning their rule and form of life, and probably also some copies of the Rule. Augustine and his companions in In many monasteries it eventually entirely displaced the earlier codes. By the ninth century, however, the Benedictine had become the standard form of monastic life throughout the whole of Western Europe, excepting Scotland, Wales, and Ireland, where the Celtic observance still prevailed for another century or two. Sacred Scripture was always at the heart of every monastic scriptorium. As a general rule those of the monks who possessed skill as writers made this their chief, if not their sole active work. An anonymous writer of the ninth or tenth century speaks of six hours a day as the usual task of a scribe, which would absorb almost all the time available for active work in the day of a medieval monk. The abbey was noted for its strict adherence to the Rule of St. The abbot of Cluny was the superior of all the daughter houses, through appointed priors. The dominance of the Benedictine monastic way of life began to decline towards the end of the twelfth century, which saw the rise of the Franciscans and Dominicans. Not being bound by location, the mendicants were better able to respond to an increasingly "urban" environment. This decline was further exacerbated by the practice of appointing a commendatory abbot, a lay person, appointed by a noble to oversee and to protect the goods of the monastery. Oftentimes, however, this resulted in the appropriation of the assets of monasteries at the expense of the community which they were intended to support. England[edit] The English Benedictine Congregation is the oldest of the nineteen Benedictine congregations. Augustine of Canterbury and his monks established the first English Benedictine monastery at Canterbury soon after their arrival in Other foundations quickly followed. Through the influence of Wilfrid , Benedict Biscop , and Dunstan , the Benedictine Rule spread with extraordinary rapidity, and in the North it was adopted in most of the monasteries that had been founded by the Celtic missionaries from Iona. Many of the episcopal sees of England were founded and governed by the Benedictines, and no fewer than nine of the old cathedrals were served by the black monks of the priories attached to them. The monks studied the healing properties of plants and minerals to alleviate the sufferings of the sick. Willibrord and Boniface preached there in the seventh and eighth centuries and founded several abbeys. During the 19th century they were able to return to England, including to Selby Abbey in Yorkshire , one of the few great monastic churches to survive the Dissolution. The two sides of a Saint Benedict Medal St. Currently the priory is home to a community of Benedictine nuns. During the next few years, so-called Prinknash Park was used as a home until it was returned to the order. In , Ampleforth set up a daughter house, a priory at St. Louis, Missouri which became independent in and became Saint Louis Abbey in its own right in Monks would read privately during their personal time, as well as publicly during services and at meal times. In addition to these three mentioned in the Rule, monks would also read in the infirmary. However, Benedictine monks were disallowed worldly possessions, thus necessitating the preservation and collection of sacred texts in monastic libraries for communal use. The first record of a monastic library in England is in Canterbury. Monasteries were again allowed to form in the 19th century under the Bourbon Restoration. Later that century, under the Third French Republic , laws were enacted preventing religious teaching. The original intent was to allow secular schools. Thus in and , Benedictine teaching monks were effectively exiled; this was not completed until Other houses either reformed by, or founded as priories of, St Blasien were:

2: St. Benedict's Monastery in Snowmass, Colorado is a Cistercian (Trappist)

*Saint Benedict: The Story of the Father of the Western Monks [Windeatt, Donald Walpole O.S.P.] on www.enganchecubano.com *FREE* shipping on qualifying offers. The famous life and great miracles of St. Benedict, for youth.*

Apr 30, Fr. The monastery was founded by Saint Joseph Trappist Abbey of Spencer, Massachusetts, in the late 18th century and began in New Mexico, at a former dude ranch outside the village of Pecos. I was happy that I lived close to their new home, as the abbey was and is a haven of contemplative quiet and prayer and a welcome refuge for many people. Like the other monks, he was always friendly if we guests happen to meet him. It seemed odd, but I later learned that Trappists love nicknames, and that most of the monks have them, as a form of familiarity, I guess. The nicknames are usually just abbreviations of the monastic name. But many others had nicknames, and that was the way it was and I presume it still is. When I knew him he must have been in his early 50s. I remember that at the end of one of my retreats, he gave me a ride to my family home in Portland, as he was heading to the big city on the same day that I was. At the time I may have asked him about his patron saint, Benedict Joseph Labre, or whom I presumed to be his patron saint, though his name was switched from Benedict Joseph to Joseph Benedict. In any case, ever since those days I have had a fondness for the popular eighteenth century saint of Rome, Benedict Joseph Labre. In Rome Saint Benedict Joseph is well known and loved. On April 16th this year some of us monks walked to the church where Saint Benedict Joseph is buried, and then went to the several-storied house where the saint died on April 16, This house is just around the corner from the church. Only on the anniversary of the death of Saint Benedict Joseph, April 16th, is it possible to visit the small chapel in the house and the room in which the saint died. Saint Benedict Joseph Labre was born in France in 1731, the eldest of fifteen children. At about the age of sixteen he expressed a desire in joining the Trappist monks at the Abbey of La Trappe in France. This was the monastery where the Trappist reform began. At the same time an uncle of Benedict Joseph, who was a priest named Father Francis, became a special mentor and confidante to the young Benedict Joseph. Two years later, in the summer of 1749, when Benedict Joseph was about eighteen, a dreadful epidemic swept through Europe. Father Francis and Benedict Joseph were involved in assisting the sick, both spiritually and physically. Sadly his uncle Father Francis died during the epidemic. After this ordeal, Benedict Joseph returned to his idea of entering the Trappists, but they declined the offer for various reasons. He was likewise gradually turned down by other communities as well, mostly of the more contemplatively bent, such as the Trappists or Carthusians. These rejections set in motion his decision to set off by foot on a pilgrimage that lasted several years. Benedict Joseph visited many of the great European shrines and churches during his wanderings, including those of Loreto, Assisi, Naples, as well as Einsiedeln and Santiago de Compostela, to mention some. He dressed in rags and never bathed, so was usually shunned, adding to prayerful isolation, which he much loved. Benedict Joseph Labre considered himself to be a vagabond more than a beggar, committed to detachment and poverty, only accepted what was freely offered to him. Otherwise he did without or picked up what he found left behind by others. At the same time he was gradually being recognized as a holy man. Benedict Joseph eventually settled in Rome and slept in the ruins of the Coliseum, to be near where early Christians had been martyred. During the day he would visit and pray in the many churches of the Eternal City. When his health began to fail, still in his early 30s, did he agree to sleep in a hospice for the homeless. At the age of thirty-five Benedict Joseph collapsed on the stairs of the church of Santa Maria ai Monti, where he had spent much of his time. After his collapse, Benedict Joseph was carried to the nearby house of a well-to-do woman, at Via dei Serpenti 2, where he died the next day, on April 16th, 1789, Wednesday of Holy Week. That was how his parents, still alive, learned of where he had been for the past years and where he had died. Years before he had simply written to his parents that he was heading to Italy to become a monk. They never heard more from him. He is a much loved patron saint of beggars and the homeless. Could we spare ten seconds to look into their eyes next time we drop a few coins into the plastic cup? Might we take a bit longer to share a few words of conversation and ask their name or where they come from? Who knows, we might even be meeting a Benedict Joseph

today! Saint Benedict Joseph Labre, pray for us!

3: Benedictine Monks - St. Benedict's Abbey - Benet Lake, Wisconsin

All in all, this is the wonderful story of the life and miracles of the great Saint Benedict, the famous man known as the "Father of Western Monasticism." Ages 10+ See more books by Mary Fabyan Windeatt.

Unsettled by the immorality around him, he decided to devote himself to a different sort of life. At first St Benedict settled near the church of the holy Apostle Peter in the village of Effedum, but news of his ascetic life compelled him to go farther into the mountains. There he encountered the hermit Romanus, who tonsured him into monasticism and directed him to live in a remote cave at Subiaco. From time to time, the hermit would bring him food. For three years the saint waged a harsh struggle with temptations and conquered them. People soon began to gather to him, thirsting to live under his guidance. The number of disciples grew so much, that the saint divided them into twelve communities. Each community was comprised of twelve monks and was a separate skete. The saint gave each skete an igumen from among his experienced disciples, and only the novice monks remained with St Benedict for instruction. The strict monastic Rule St Benedict established for the monks was not accepted by everyone, and more than once he was criticized and abused by dissenters. Finally he settled in Campagna and on Mount Cassino he founded the Monte Cassino monastery, which for a long time was a center of theological education for the Western Church. The monastery possessed a remarkable library. The Rule of St Benedict dominated Western monasticism for centuries by the year it had appeared in more than editions. The Rule prescribed the renunciation of personal possessions, as well as unconditional obedience, and constant work. It was considered the duty of older monks to teach the younger and to copy ancient manuscripts. This helped to preserve many memorable writings from the first centuries of Christianity. Every new monk was required to live as a novice for a year, to learn the monastic Rule and to become acclimated to monastic life. Every deed required a blessing. The head of this cenobitic monastery is the igumen. He discerns, teaches, and explains. The igumen solicits the advice of the older, experienced brethren, but he makes the final decisions. Keeping the monastic Rule was strictly binding for everyone and was regarded as an important step on the way to perfection. St Benedict was granted by the Lord the gift of foresight and wonderworking. He healed many by his prayers. The monk foretold the day of his death in The main source for his Life is the second Dialogue of St Gregory. Gregory the Dialogist so admired St. We present a few of these chapters here, which show St. In one of the monasteries which he had built in those parts, there was a monk who could not continue at prayers; for when the other monks knelt down to serve God, his manner was to go forth, and there with wandering mind to busy himself about some earthly and transitory things. When he had often been admonished by his Abbot for this fault without any amendment, at length he was sent to the man of God, who likewise very much rebuked him for his folly. Word was once more sent to the man of God, by the father of the Abbey he had appointed there. Benedict returned the answer that he would come himself, and reform what was amiss, which he did accordingly. It so fell out, that when the singing of psalms was ended, and the hour come in which the monks took themselves to prayer, the holy man perceived that the monk, who used at that time to go forth, was drawn out by the skirt of his garment by a little black boy. On seeing this, he spoke secretly to Pompeianus, father of the Abbey, and also to Maurus saying, "Do you not see who it is, that draws this monk from his prayers? On another day, when the man of God had ended his devotions, he went out of the oratory, where he found the foresaid monk standing idle. For the blindness of his heart he struck with a little wand, and from that day forward he was so freed from all allurements of the little black boy, that he remained quietly at his prayers, as the other monks did. The old enemy was so terrified, that he dare not suggest any such thoughts again. As though by that blow, not the monk, but the devil himself had been struck. Of a fountain that sprung forth in the top of a mountain, by the prayers of the man of God. Among the monasteries which he had built in those parts, three of them were situated on the rocks of a mountain, so that it was very painful for the monks to go down and fetch water, especially because the side of the hill was so steep that there was great fear of danger. Therefore the monks of those Abbeys with one consent came to the servant of God, Benedict, giving him to understand, how laborious it was for them daily to go down to the lake for water. They added that it was very necessary for them to move

to some other places. The man of God, comforting them with sweet words, caused them to return. The next night, having with him only the little boy Placidus of whom we spoke above, he ascended up to the rock of that mountain, and continued there a long time in prayer. When he had done, he took three stones, and laid them in the same place for a mark, and so, none of them being privy to what he had done, he returned to his own Abbey. The next day, when the foresaid monks came again about their former business, he said to them: They found it as if it were sweating drops of water. After they had made a hollow place with a spade, it was immediately filled, and water flowed out abundantly. So plentifully, that even to this day, the water springs out and runs down from the top of that hill to the very bottom. Of the fantastical fire, which burnt the kitchen. Then the man of God thought it good that they should presently dig up the ground in the same place before his departure. This was done, and a deep hole made, the monks found there an idol of brass, which being for a little while by chance cast into the kitchen, they beheld fire suddenly to come from it, which to all their sight seemed to set the whole kitchen on fire. For the quenching of it, the monks by casting on of water made such a noise, that the man of God, hearing it, came to see what the matter was. He himself beheld not any fire at all, but they said that they did. He bowed down his head forthwith in prayer, and then he perceived that they were deluded with a fantastical fire. He therefore bide them bless their eyes, that they might behold the kitchen safe and sound, and not those fantastical flames, which the devil had falsely devised. How by revelation venerable Benedict knew that his monks had eaten out of the monastery. Among other miracles which the man of God did, he began also to be famous for the spirit of prophecy: The order of his Abbey was, that when the monks went abroad to deliver any message never to eat or drink anything out of their cloister: And eat such and such kind of meat, and drink so many cups? How the man of God knew that one of his monks had received certain handkerchiefs. Not far from his Abbey, there was a village, in which very many men had, by the sermons of Benedict, been converted from idolatry to the true faith of Christ. Certain Nuns also there were in the same town, to whom he often sent some of his monks to preach to them, for the good of their souls. On a day, one that was sent, after he had made an end of his exhortation, by the entreaty of the Nuns took certain small napkins, and hid them for his own use in his bosom: How holy Benedict knew the proud thought of one of his monks. Once upon a time, while the venerable Father was at supper, one of his monks, who was the son of a great man, held the candle. As he was standing there, and the other ate his meal, he began to entertain a proud thought in his mind. He spoke to himself: And who am I, that I should do him any such service? He commanded him to cease his waiting, and to retire. Benedict, being demanded of the monks what it was that he had thought, told them, how inwardly that monk had swelled with pride, and what he spoke against the man of God, secretly in his heart. Of certain nuns absolved after their death. His common talk, Peter, was usually full of virtue: And if at any time he spoke aught, yet not as one that determined what was best to be done, but only in a threatening manner, his speech in that case was so effectual and forcible, as though he had not doubtfully or uncertainly, but assuredly pronounced and given sentence. For not far from his Abbey, there lived two Nuns in a place by themselves, born of worshipful parentage: But as nobility of family does in some breed ignobility of mind, and makes them in conversation to show less humility, because they remember still what superiority they had above others: But they, for all this, changed their conditions nothing at all: Having often times, at those words of the Deacon, seen them leave the church, and that they could not tarry within, she remembered what message the man of God sent them while they were yet alive. For he told them that he deprived them of the communion, unless they amended their tongues and conditions. Then with great sorrow, the whole matter was signified to the man of God, who immediately with his own hands gave an oblation, saying: It is very strange that you report: Was he not yet, Peter, mortal, that heard from our Saviour: For the virtue of his miracles, your words do yield a very good reason. How a monk, forsaking the abbey, met with a dragon on the way. A certain monk there was so inconstant and fickle of mind, that he desired to leave the Abbey. For this fault of his, the man of God daily rebuked him, and often times gave him good admonitions. But yet, for all this, he would by no means tarry among them, and therefore continually begged that he might be discharged. The venerable man, wearied with his importunity, in anger bid him depart. He was no sooner out of the Abbey gate, when he found a dragon in the way waiting for him with open mouth. About to be devoured, he began in great fear and trembling to cry out aloud, saying, "Help, help! They brought him back

again to the Abbey. He forthwith promised that he would never more forsake the monastery, and so ever after he continued in his profession. By the prayers of the holy man, he saw the dragon coming against him, whom before, when he did not see him, he had willingly followed. How holy Benedict wrote a rule for his monks. I am desirous, Peter, to tell you many things of this venerable father, but some of purpose I let pass, because I make haste to treat also of the acts of other holy men. Yet I would not have you be ignorant of the fact that the man of God, among so many miracles for which he was so famous in the world, was also sufficiently learned in divinity. He wrote a rule for his monks, both excellent for discretion and also eloquent for its style. If any be curious to know further of his life and conversation, he may understand all his manner of life and discipline in the institution of that rule for the holy man could not otherwise teach, than he himself had lived.

4: Saint Benedict | Biography, Rule, & Facts | www.enganchecubano.com

Patron of Europe, dying people, fevers, monks, civil engineers, coppersmiths, kidney and inflammatory disease, schoolchildren and spelunkers. On July 11, the Catholic Church celebrates the feast of St. Benedict of Nursia, the sixth-century abbot who gave Christian monasticism its lasting foundation in Western Europe.

Book Two consists of a prologue and thirty-eight succinct chapters. It provides instead a spiritual portrait of the gentle, disciplined abbot. To establish his authority, Gregory explains that his information came from what he considered the best sources: A tradition which Bede accepts makes him a twin with his sister Scholastica. If it is accepted as the year of his birth, the year of his abandonment of his studies and leaving home would be about 480. He was old enough to be in the midst of his literary studies, to understand the real meaning and worth of the dissolute and licentious lives of his companions, and to have been deeply affected by the love of a woman. He was at the beginning of life, and he had at his disposal the means to a career as a Roman noble; clearly he was not a child. Benedict was sent to Rome to study, but was dissatisfied by the life he found there. He does not seem to have left Rome for the purpose of becoming a hermit, but only to find some place away from the life of the great city. He took his old nurse with him as a servant and they settled down to live in Enfide. A short distance from Enfide is the entrance to a narrow, gloomy valley, penetrating the mountains and leading directly to Subiaco. The cave has a large triangular-shaped opening and is about ten feet deep. On his way from Enfide, Benedict met a monk, Romanus of Subiaco, whose monastery was on the mountain above the cliff overhanging the cave. By his advice Benedict became a hermit and for three years, unknown to men, lived in this cave above the lake. He now speaks of Benedict no longer as a youth puer, but as a man vir of God. Romanus, Gregory tells us, served the saint in every way he could. The monk apparently visited him frequently, and on fixed days brought him food. Benedict was acquainted with the life and discipline of the monastery, and knew that "their manners were diverse from his and therefore that they would never agree together: The experiment failed; the monks tried to poison him. The legend goes that they first tried to poison his drink. He prayed a blessing over the cup and the cup shattered. Thus he left the group and went back to his cave at Subiaco. There lived in the neighborhood a priest called Florentius who, moved by envy, tried to ruin him. He tried to poison him with poisoned bread. When he prayed a blessing over the bread, a raven swept in and took the loaf away. From this time his miracles seem to have become frequent, and many people, attracted by his sanctity and character, came to Subiaco to be under his guidance. Having failed by sending him poisonous bread, Florentius tried to seduce his monks with some prostitutes. To avoid further temptations, Benedict left Subiaco. He founded 12 monasteries in the vicinity of Subiaco, and, eventually, he founded the great Benedictine monastery of Monte Cassino, [4] which lies on a hilltop between Rome and Naples. Immediately the Saint detected the impersonation, and Totila came to pay him due respect.

5: The Singing Monks of Norcia | July 31, | Religion & Ethics NewsWeekly | PBS

Benedict, Gregory wrote, "perceived that the glass had in it the drink of death," called his monks together, said he forgave them, reminded them that he doubted from the beginning whether he was a.

Benedict, and commonly known as "black monks". The order will be considered in this article under the following sections: History of the Order; II. Influence and Work of the Order; IV. Present Condition of the Order; V. Benedictines of Special Distinction; VI. Other Foundations Originating from, or Based upon, the Order. History of the order The term Order as here applied to the spiritual family of St. Benedict is used in a sense differing somewhat from that in which it is applied to other religious orders. In its ordinary meaning the term implies one complete religious family, made up of a number of monasteries, all of which are subject to a common superior or "general" who usually resides either in Rome or in the mother-house of the order, if there be one. It may be divided into various provinces, according to the countries over which it is spread, each provincial head being immediately subject to the general, just as the superior of each house is subject to his own provincial. This system of centralized authority has never entered into the organization of the Benedictine Order. There is no general or common superior over the whole order other than the pope himself, and the order consists, so to speak, of what are practically a number of orders, called "congregations", each of which is autonomous; all are united, not under the obedience to one general superior, but only by the spiritual bond of allegiance to the same Rule, which may be modified according to the circumstances of each particular house or congregation. It is in this latter sense that the term Order is applied in this article to all monasteries professing to observe St. Benedict's Rule. St. Benedict did not, strictly speaking, found an order; we have no evidence that he ever contemplated the spread of his Rule to any monasteries besides those which he had himself established. Subiaco was his original foundation and the cradle of the institute. Gregory we learn that twelve other monasteries in the vicinity of Subiaco also owed their origin to him, and that when he was obliged to leave that neighbourhood he founded the celebrated Abbey of Monte Cassino, which eventually became the centre whence his Rule and institute spread. These fourteen are the only monasteries of which there is any reliable evidence of having been founded during St. Benedict's lifetime. The tradition of St. Very little more can be said in favour of the supposed introduction of the Benedictine Rule into Gaul by St. Maurus in 480, though it also has been strenuously upheld by many responsible writers. At any rate, evidences for it are so extremely doubtful that it cannot be seriously regarded as historical. There is reason for believing that it was the third Abbot of Monte Cassino who began to spread a knowledge of the Rule beyond the circle of St. Benedict. It is at least certain that when Monte Cassino was sacked by the Lombards about the year 580, the monks fled to Rome, where they were housed by Pope Pelagius II in a monastery adjoining the Lateran Basilica. There, in the very centre of the ecclesiastical world, they remained for upwards of a hundred and forty years, and it seems highly probable that this residence in so prominent a position constituted an important factor in the diffusion of a knowledge of Benedictine monasticism. It is generally agreed also that when Gregory the Great embraced the monastic state and converted his family palace on the Palatine to a monastery, it was the Benedictine form of monachism that he adopted there. It was from the monastery of St. Andrew in Rome that St. Augustine, the prior, and his forty companions set forth in 597 on their mission for the evangelization of England, and with them St. Honoratus in 634, probably received its first knowledge of the Benedictine Rule from the visit of St. Augustine and his companions in 597. Dismayed by the accounts they had heard of the ferocity of the English, the missionaries had sent their leader back to Rome to implore the pope to allow them to abandon the object of their journey. Not long after their departure, Aegulf, Abbot of Fleury, was called in to restore the discipline and he probably introduced the full Benedictine observance; for when St. Columbanus came to Gaul in 630, it had to contend with and supplement the much stricter Irish or Celtic Rule introduced by St. Columbanus in 630. Gregory of Tours says that at Ainay, in the sixth century, the monks "followed the rules of Basil, Cassian, Caesarius, and other fathers, taking and using whatever seemed proper to the conditions of time and place", and doubtless the same liberty was taken with the Benedictine Rule when it reached them. In other monasteries it entirely displaced the earlier codes, and had by the end of the eighth century so completely superseded them

throughout France that Charlemagne could gravely doubt whether monks of any kind had been possible before St. Benedict. The authority of Charlemagne and of his son, Louis the Pious, did much, as we shall presently see, towards propagating the principles of the Father of western monachism. Augustine and his monks established the first English Benedictine monastery at Canterbury soon after their arrival in England. Other foundations quickly followed as the Benedictine missionaries carried the light of the Gospel with them throughout the length and breadth of the land. It was said that St. Benedict seemed to have taken possession of the country as his own, and the history of his order in England is the history of the English Church. Nowhere did the order link itself so intimately with people and institutions, secular as well as religious, as in England. Through the influence of saintly men, Wilfrid, Benedict Biscop, and Dunstan, the Benedictine Rule spread with extraordinary rapidity, and in the North, when once the Easter controversy had been settled and the Roman supremacy acknowledged Synod of Whitby, it was adopted in most of the monasteries that had been founded by the Celtic missionaries from Iona. Many of the episcopal sees of England were founded and governed by the Benedictines, and no less than nine of the old cathedrals were served by the black monks of the priories attached to them. Even when the bishop was not himself a monk, he held the place of titular abbot, and the community formed his chapter. Germany owed its evangelization to the English Benedictines, Sts. Willibrord and Boniface, who preached the Faith, there in the seventh and eighth centuries and founded several celebrated abbeys. From thence spread, hand in hand, Christianity and Benedictine monasticism, to Denmark and Scandinavia, and from the latter even to Iceland. In Spain monasteries had been founded by the Visigothic kings as early as the latter half of the fifth century, but it was probably some two or three hundred years later St. Mabillon gives as the date of its introduction into that country *Acta Sanctorum* O. In Switzerland the disciples of Columbanus had founded monasteries early in the seventh century, two of the best known being St. Gall and St. Emmenthal. The Celtic rule was not entirely supplanted by that of St. Benedict until more than a hundred years later, when the change was effected chiefly through the influence of Pepin the Short, the father of Charlemagne. By the ninth century, however, the Benedictine had become the only form of monastic life throughout the whole of Western Europe, excepting Scotland, Wales, and Ireland, where the Celtic observance still prevailed for another century or two. At the time of the Reformation there were nine Benedictine houses in Ireland and six in Scotland, besides numerous abbeys of Cistercians. Benedictine monasticism never took such deep root in the eastern countries of Europe as it had done in the West. The Bohemians and the Poles, nevertheless, owed their conversion respectively to the Benedictine missionaries Adalbert and Boniface and his disciples. A few of the larger abbeys founded in these countries during the ninth and tenth centuries still exist, but the number of foundations was always small in comparison with those farther west. Into Lithuania and the Eastern Empire the Benedictine Rule never penetrated in early times, and the great schism between East and West effectually prevented any possibilities of development in that direction. Early constitution of the order During the first four or five centuries after the death of St. Benedict there existed no organic bond of union amongst the various abbeys other than the Rule itself and obedience to the Holy See. The earliest departures from this system occurred when several of the greater abbeys began sending out offshoots, under the form of daughter-houses retaining some sort of dependence upon the mother abbey from which they sprang. This mode of propagation, together with the various reforms that began to appear in the eleventh and succeeding centuries, paved the way for the system of independent congregations, still a feature peculiar to the Benedictine Order. Reforms A system which comprised many hundreds of monasteries and many thousands of monks, spread over a number of different countries, without any unity of organization; which was exposed, moreover, to all the dangers and disturbances inseparable from those troublous times of kingdom-making; such a system was inevitably unable to keep worldliness, and even worse vices, wholly out of its midst. Hence it cannot be denied that the monks often failed to live up to the monastic ideal and sometimes even fell short of the Christian and moral standards. There were failures and scandals in Benedictine history, just as there were declensions from the right path outside the cloister, for monks are, after all, but men. But there does not seem ever to have been a period of widespread and general corruption in the order. Here and there the members of some particular house allowed abuses and relaxations of rule to creep in, so that they seemed to be falling away from the true spirit of their state, but whenever such did occur they soon called forth efforts for a restoration of primitive austerity; and

these constantly recurring reform movements form one of the surest evidences of the vitality which has pervaded the Benedictine Institute throughout its entire history. It is important to note, moreover, that all such reforms as ever achieved any measure of success came invariably from within, and were not the result of pressure from outside the order. The first of the reforms directed towards confederating the monastic houses of a single kingdom was set on foot early in the ninth century by Benedict of Aniane under the auspices of Charlemagne and Louis the Pious. Though a Benedictine himself born in Aquitaine and trained at Saint-Seine near Dijon, Benedict was imbued with the rigid austerity of the East, and in his Abbey of Aniane practiced a mode of life that was severe in the extreme. Over Louis he acquired an ascendancy which grew stronger as years went on. At his instigation Louis built for him a monastery adjoining his own palace at Aix-la-Chapelle, which was intended to serve as a model according to which all others were to be reformed, and to bring about this end Benedict was invested with a general authority over all the monasteries of the empire. Absolute uniformity of discipline, observance, and habit, after the pattern of the royal monastery, was then the general scheme which was launched at an assembly of all the abbots at Aachen Aix-la-Chapelle in and embodied in a series of eighty capitula passed by the meeting. Though by reason of the very minuteness of these capitula, which made them vexatious and ultimately intolerable, this scheme of centralized authority lasted only for the lifetime of Benedict himself, the capitula printed in full in Herrgott, "Vetus Disciplina Monastica", Paris, were recognized as supplying a much needed addition to St. A century later, in, the first real reform that produced any widespread and general effect was commenced at the Abbey of Cluny in Burgundy, under St. Berno, its first abbot. The object was an elaboration of the Benedictine ideal, for the uniform preservation of which a highly centralized system of government, hitherto unknown to Benedictine monachism, except as suggested by St. Benedict of Aniane, was introduced. It was in fact the establishment of a veritable order, in the common acceptance of that term, within the Benedictine family, the abbot of Cluny retaining an actual headship over all dependent houses, the latter being governed only by priors as his vicars. For two centuries or more Cluny was probably the chief religious influence in the Latin Church, as it was also the first abbey to obtain exemption from episcopal oversight. Although the congregation had its own constitutions and was absolutely autonomous, its members always claimed to be and were actually recognized as real Benedictines; hence it was not strictly a new order but only a reformed congregation within the order. Following the example of Cluny, several other reforms were initiated from time to time in different parts during the next three centuries, which while taking the Rule of St. Benedict as a basis, aimed frequently at a greater austerity of life than was practised by the black monks or contemplated by the holy Rule. Some were even semi-eremical in their constitution, and one — Fontevault — consisted of double monasteries, the religious of both sexes being under the rule of the abbess. Benedict in some form or other. Those of the former category are treated here, since they and their successors constitute the order as we understand it at the present day. All of these will be described in detail under the respective titles. The influence of Cluny, even in monasteries which did not join its congregation or adopt any of the other reforms mentioned above, was large and far-reaching. Many such abbeys, including Subiaco and Monte Cassino, adopted its customs and practices, and modelled their life and spirit according to the example it set. Monasteries such as these often became in turn the centres of revival and reform in their respective neighbourhoods, so that during the tenth and eleventh centuries there arose several free unions of monasteries based on a uniform observance derived from a central abbey. These unions, the germ of the congregational system which developed later on, deserve a somewhat detailed enumeration here. In England there had been three distinct efforts at systematic organization. The various monasteries founded by St. Augustine and his fellow-monks had preserved some sort of union, as was only natural with new foundations in a pagan country proceeding from a common source of origin. As Christianity spread through the land this necessity for mutual dependence diminished, but when St.

6: CATHOLIC ENCYCLOPEDIA: The Benedictine Order

Saint Benedict's Abbey is a community of Benedictine monks located on the state borders of Wisconsin and Illinois. Our Abbey is located in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee but we serve both the Archdiocese of Milwaukee and Chicago.

July 13, St. Benedict July 11 Patron of Europe, dying people, fevers, monks, civil engineers, coppersmiths, kidney and inflammatory disease, schoolchildren and spelunkers. On July 11, the Catholic Church celebrates the feast of St. Benedict of Nursia, the sixth-century abbot who gave Christian monasticism its lasting foundation in Western Europe. Benedict was declared a co-patron of Europe along with SS. In a general audience, the pope said St. However, he soon became disgusted with the loose morals that prevailed among the students. Withdrawing from the city, he lived briefly with a group of monks, then as a hermit. The young man spent three years in solitude, facing and overcoming severe temptations through prayer and asceticism. Only after doing so did he have the confidence to emerge as an organizer of monastic communities. His first monasteries were established in the Anio valley outside Subiaco. His monastic movement, like its forebears in the Christian East, attracted large numbers of people who were looking to live their faith more deeply. The move was geographically and spiritually significant, marking a more public emergence of the Western monastic movement. Benedict destroyed a pagan temple atop the mountain, and built two oratories in its place. She most likely died shortly before him, around the year In his final years, the abbot himself had a profound mystical experience, which is said to have involved a supernatural vision of God and the whole of creation. Around age 63, Benedict suffered his final illness. He was carried into the church by his fellow monks, where he received the Eucharist for the last time. Held up by his disciples, he raised his hands in prayer for the last time, before dying in their arms. Although his influence was primarily felt in Western Europe, St.

7: The Monks of Norcia

The Benedictines, officially the Order of Saint Benedict (Latin: Ordo Sancti Benedicti, abbreviated as OSB), are a monastic Catholic religious order of monks and nuns that follow the Rule of Saint Benedict.

Benedictine monks started the college in to provide a Catholic education to the children of pioneers and to celebrate Mass with German and Irish settlers. Benedictine Monks are a common presence on campus and in the town of Atchison, Kansas. They live much the same way Benedictine monks have lived since St. Benedict of Nursia established the order in sixth century. Archivist Father Dennis Meade is my guide. Father Dennis has been affiliated with the Atchison abbey for 66 years. His only time away was for missionary work in Brazil and study in Rome. Evening Their ritualized life is guided by the Rule of St. Benedict and a strict schedule of prayers. A stream of students join the monks who make their way to the altar to take communion. The prayers, singing of hymns even random coughs bounce off the limestone walls of the nave. Monks with The Order of St. Many of the rules are outdated. For example, one says a monk must sleep in his habit, but may remove his knife. For example, Benedictines take their breakfast in silence. After dinner, the monks retreat to a living room for conversation or reading. Some watch television in a separate room or go to their bedrooms. I have to admit that for the first few hours at the abbey, I was a bit anxious. In fact, the quiet in general. Indeed, upon checking, I found there is science that confirms the positive impact of my experience on health. Gothic and Renaissance images of the Madonna and Pieta line the walls. Night nurses assist the elderly monks, but the order is seeing more younger men join. The overall population has dwindled over the last 50 years from some to a few dozen today. But the abbey is seeing an uptick in younger men committing to monastic life. The monastery goes quiet. Morning At 6 a. The food is simple but good. One of the brothers has made delicious sourdough bread. After breakfast is when the monks fan out into the community. They teach at the college and the parish schools. They minister in hospitals, hospice homes and prisons. Others take care of the administrative chores of keeping the abbey up and running. The monks live very much like they did centuries ago, with a few minor exceptions, such as trips for supplies to Wal Mart. He is such an inspiration and a light. The cheery redhead with a full red beard scours the shelves for Grape-Nuts, batteries and deodorant while Father Ralph pushes the cart, stopping to give workers grief. They all seem to love it. Being out and about with the monks, I found myself wondering how they navigated the dichotomy between monastic and secular life. Especially the younger men, like Brother Tim. He took his final vows last year. I asked him if he ever questions his decision. I found Brother Leven Harton playing chess with a fellow Benedictine grad, who now teaches philosophy at the college. Father Roderic Giller says as he nears the end of his life, the monastery provides comfort and freedom from everyday chores. That way, he says, he can focus on his departure from this earth. You can reach her on twitter laurazig or email at lauraz kcur.

8: Benedictine Monks | Benedictine life from the perspective of a Monk.

Benedict's main achievement is his "Rule of Saint Benedict", containing precepts for his monks. It is heavily influenced by the writings of John Cassian, and shows strong affinity with the Rule of the Master.

The city of Norcia in central Italy. A quiet town of stone streets, tiled roofs, and spectacular scenery beneath the mountains of Umbria. Benedict, founder of Western monasticism. Now Norcia will be known for something else, too: We sing the praises of God nine times a day. Father Cassian Folsom is the prior, or leader, of the monastery in Norcia. He says this form of sung prayer is as essential to monks as their daily bread. When a monk gives his life to God, he has to express that in a physical way, not just an intellectual way, and singing involves the whole body and the mind and the soul. Across the US, monastic music is experiencing a renaissance. These Benedictine sisters living on the plains in Gower, Missouri topped the Billboard chart three times in the past two years with CDs of their chant. Would it be the same if other singers were performing this music, say, an opera singer, or very good pop singer? Would it be the same? We sing this all the time. The chant means something to them, and you can hear that in the sincerity of their singing. It has something eternal to it. One feels one is in touch with the past. He was studying voice at Indiana University when he says he felt a call to monastic life. He entered the Benedictine order at St. Meinrad Abbey in Indiana in 1964. There had been no monks living in Norcia since 1801, when they were evicted under Napoleonic laws in a wave of anti-clericalism. But that demonstrated their enthusiasm. Father Cassian was tapped to re-establish the monastery named for St. Benedict. The townspeople, they look to the monks if they have problems, if they want to talk to somebody about their family life. And to have the monks back after almost years helps to complete the identity of the town, you know. The monks have to be self-supporting. We learned the art from the Trappist monks in Belgium. We renovated an old car garage below the monastery as the brew hall. All the monks take part on bottling days, signing up for an hour slot to feed the bottling machine. And yes, the monks do occasionally tip a glass or two. The beer is very good, and it has served, in a remarkable way, as a kind of drawing card for evangelization, because even if people are not churchgoers, most everybody likes to drink beer. So they come to the monastery for beer, and then pretty soon they start talking about other things, other more important things. Lately, Father Cassian has been thinking about some important matters of his own. The 70-year-old monk has been diagnosed with a recurrence of cancer—the multiple myeloma that he first battled in 1988 and thought he had beaten. As anybody who is diagnosed with cancer, it changes your life. I would say this: Is it a thief or a messenger? He says his diagnosis has also brought him closer to the people of Norcia. Anyone nowadays who gets diagnosed always comes to me because there is an immediate kind of bond there. So what it has done, aside from the acceptance of death, is make me more compassionate to those who suffer similar things. He has been told it can return and may be fatal the next time. Music has become an even greater source of comfort, one he says he wants to share with others. What would you like people to take away from the CD? An experience of serenity and peace and the calming of agitation. With the monastic community now firmly re-established in Norcia, and this CD as part of its legacy, Father Cassian feels that he can leave this world with the words on his lips of Simeon, an old man mentioned in the Gospel of Luke. Let him go in peace.

9: St. Benedict: Father of Western Monasticism | Oblates of St. Benedict

The famous life and great miracles of St. Benedict, for all children 10 and up. The story of poisoned wine, saving a body from drowning, raising one from the dead, plus, how he founded the Benedictine Order, his sister, St. Scholastica, etc.

It is a conscious decision to push yourself toward a greater good. For rugby players and all athletes, the good is a victory. The struggle is against the opposing team. For Catholics, the good is radical discipleship in Christ. The struggle is against sin, especially when the flesh burns. Like an athlete, a disciple understands there is a cost associated with victory. Saint Benedict made the decision to struggle against sin. He wanted a deeper conversion. The evil spirit recalled to his mind a woman he had once seen, and before he realized it his emotions were carrying him away. Temptations against chastity, sobriety and excellence are common. It is consoling to read St. Bad news, what to do before fifty? Sin is promising you comfort and freedom from the struggle in your own mind and body. It is tempting to not struggle. At the same time we know when we chose not to struggle we become a spiritual couch potato, not a spiritual athlete. We often forget, when you take hold of sin, it will soon take hold of you. Struggle to reject sin. Temptation makes discipleship look like the problem. Vacation from sexual purity or sobriety? Or, quite a Bible study? Saint Benedict conquered sin by deciding to struggle. Throwing his garment aside—he rolled and tossed until his whole body was in pain and covered with blood. Yet once he had conquered pleasure through suffering, his torn and bleeding skin served to drain off the poison of temptation from his body. Athletes and people in every profession constantly decide to struggle. The decision to struggle is worth every bruise and bloody nose. Are you holding you back? What can strengthen you when you decide to struggle? What can you do when your flesh burns? When tempted against chastity or sobriety? Someone once said if you find yourself alone, surfing the internet, with a beer in your hand—go find the people who love you and spend time with them. Study in a lounge. When tempted against excellence? Ask yourself if you are growing in your love of God? Am I all in? Saint Benedict realized the decision to struggle was worth it. I beg you to be my protector. Dig me out from the mass of sin that buries me, free me from the ropes of sin that bind me, loose me from the wickedness that entangles me. Lift up him who is cast down, strengthen the wavering, prepare the helpless with spiritual weapons of virtue, lead and protect him who is fighting in the battle. Bring me to the victory and lead me to the crown.

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