

## Saint Benedict Saturday 11 July



### About Saint Benedict - 480 - 547

Saint Benedict was born in Nursia, in Umbria, Italy, and studied in Rome. He was not comfortable with what life in a major city had to offer. So he went to become a solitary hermit at Subiaco. His reputation spread, and some monks asked him to be their abbot. However, they did not like the discipline he imposed on them and in retaliation they tried to poison him.

Saint Benedict organized various small communities of monks and nuns in various places including the great monastery of Monte Cassino. He drew up a set of rules to guide those living in community in monasteries. Although his Rule was not the first monastic rule ever written, it proved so wise and balanced that it has served as the foundation of every attempt to live in community including those living outside the religious life.

### What can we learn from Saint Benedict's life?

The Rule of St Benedict recognises that people aim at perfection but often fall well short of it. It aims to be a "rule for beginners" in which the least perfect person can grow and aim towards perfection. There are seventy-three chapters in his Rule covering a wide range of topics. Some will only apply to those living the religious life, others apply equally to those in and outside of the religious life.

**Saint Benedict recognized his own limitations, that is, the city life wasn't for him. So he chose to live a different life style. We too, must work out what the Lord is calling us to be. He has blessed each of us with gifts and talents which we must use to serve Him and His people. Gifts are not meant for us personally.**

He combined work and prayer with charity and moderation. The work-life balance is a matter of concern these days. We need to work towards a balance so that we do everything with the correct moderation. Hopefully, during the lockdown of COVID-19 people have taken the opportunity to reevaluate what is important in life and give those things the necessary attention and let go of those tasks that are not as important.

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In Western Australia, there is a community of Benedictine monks at New Norcia, the only monastic town in Australia. The town was founded in 1847 by Spanish Benedictine Monks. Since then the town has had many purposes, a mission, a monastery, a provider of education and now as a place of spiritual retreat. These days our lives can be extremely busy, and we don't often get time for silence and contemplation. New Norcia is a good place for us to go for a day or weekend retreat. A retreat of this kind provides a wonderful opportunity for us to stop, reflect, and continue with the mission the Lord has chosen for our life.

Bibliography: <https://www.newnorcia.wa.edu.au/>

Quote: Let everything be done in moderation however on account of the faint-hearted.

(Chapter XLVIII)

A Map of Italy during Saint Benedict's life



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### Collect

O God, who made the Abbot Saint Benedict  
an outstanding master in the school of divine service,  
grant, we pray,  
that, putting nothing before love of you,  
we may hasten with a loving heart  
in the way of your commands.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

### Gospel

Matthew 19:27-29

They will be repaid a hundred times over and inherit eternal life  
Peter spoke to Jesus.

**'What about us?' he said.**

**'We have left everything and followed you.**

**What are we to have, then?'**

Jesus said to him,

**'I tell you solemnly,**

when all is made new and the Son of Man sits on his throne of glory,  
you will yourselves sit on twelve thrones to judge the twelve tribes of Israel.

And everyone who has left houses, brothers, sisters, father, mother, children or land  
for the sake of my name will be repaid a hundred times over,  
**and also inherit eternal life.'**

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### Antiphon

This is the steward, faithful and prudent,  
whom the Lord set over his household  
to give them their allowance of food at the proper time.

Lk 12: 42

### Hymn for the Memorial of Saint Benedict

1. Saint Benedict you have shown us  
how to speak less and listen more,  
**so our thoughts be on heav'nly things  
and the Lord's blessings on us pour.**

2. Saint Benedict you a chose a life  
of quiet prayer and solitude,  
moving away from city life,  
and ways that were sinful and lewd.

3. **To God all glory should be giv'n,**  
you taught those who lived by your way,  
in which work and prayer are combined  
so that the Spirit fills each day.

4. May good works shine forth in our lives  
with virtues of faith, hope and love,  
though earthly praise we do not hear,  
**but treasures grow in heav'n above.**

88.88 LM

Text: Chris deSilva and Alessio Loiacono

### Music Links to the Scripture Readings

[Unless a Grain of Wheat](#) - Bernadette Farrell

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