

RESPECT IN THE RULE OF ST. BENEDICT

Reflecting on Chapter 72 of the Rule, in which Benedict tells us to make every effort to show respect to one another, we might well read through the rest of the chapters and find other references to respect. Interestingly, there are hints of respect in every chapter!

In the Prologue: Benedict shows the respect that he himself had for the differences in people-that in laying down his Rule there would be nothing harsh, nothing burdensome.

Chapter 1: He had such respect even for the detestable kinds of monks that he passes over them in silence rather than speak of their disgraceful way of life.

Chapter 2: The abbot should show no favoritism, but have respect for all.

Chapter 3: That even the youngest would be heard with respect in community deliberations.

Chapter 4: Many examples here, but one focal point -- honor everyone and do not do to another what you would not want done to yourself.

Chapter 5: Respect the authority of the abbot.

Chapter 6: Submission and respect for the words of the abbot.

Chapter 7: Many instances of respect that lead to humility- respect for the feelings of others, common life, simplicity, etc.

Chapter 8: Respect for order in prayer; provision for time for those who need to learn the psalms; allow for the needs of nature.

Chapter 9: Respect for the Holy Trinity.

Chapter 10: Respect for the changes in the seasons - no burden on the members.

Chapter 11: Again, respect for the Trinity; respect for the Gospel; awareness of the weakness of those who may oversleep.

Chapters 12, 14, 15, 16: Respect for good order in prayer.

Chapter 13: Understanding that some may be slow in arriving; respect for human weakness and the need for forgiveness.

Chapter 17: Respect for variation-according to the size of the community.

Chapter 18: If someone has a better way, let him do it!

Chapter 19: Respect for the presence of God; all done for God's glory.

Chapter 20: Respect for the House of God.

- Chapter 21:** Respect for the need to have help with running a large group; for needs to live in smaller groups; respect for an elder to share the superior's duties.
- Chapter 22:** Respect for safety in sleep.
- Chapter 23:** Respect even for offenders—a warning comes first, and if lacking intelligence, let them undergo corporal punishment.
- Chapter 24:** Proportion for degree of offense.
- Chapter 25:** Offender given time to ponder and amend.
- Chapter 26:** Respect for the offender to be left alone—not have someone "side" with him.
- Chapter 27:** Concern of the abbot; pray for him; persistence in working for amendment; respect for the offender; respect for privacy; try not to lose any members.
- Chapter 28:** Respect for the need to have more chances, but separation to protect the community.
- Chapter 29:** Respect for changing one's mind; if one leaves, one may return three times.
- Chapter 30:** Respect for the needs of various age levels.
- Chapter 31:** Respect expected of the business manager (cellarer) for members and utensils.
- Chapter 32:** Respect even for tools—treated as vessels of the altar. Chapter 33: Respect for the common life — not private ownership— yet all needs are met.
- Chapter 34:** Respect for individual needs.
- Chapter 35:** That workers be blessed and get food ahead of time; tools to be left ready and in good condition; help be given if needed.
- Chapter 36:** Respect for the sick—and for their caregivers.
- Chapter 37:** Respect for the old and the young—bend the rule!
- Chapter 38:** Reader may get food and drink ahead of time if needed.
- Chapter 39:** Respect for individual differences in food needs; respect for health; prevent indigestion.
- Chapter 40:** Respect for individual drink needs—even if some need wine. Allowances for changes according to local or weather conditions; respect for peace in the monastery (no grumbling).
- Chapter 41:** Respect for the times of meals and an understanding of seasonal differences; and no grumbling!

Chapter 42: Respect for those of weak understanding; for those who may be late because of work; respect for night silence, yet with a concern for the guests.

Chapter 43: Respect for prayer; be on time, but come in even if late; respect also for table promptness.

Chapter 44: Respect for good order; punished if late.

Chapter 45: Respect for good order; make satisfaction for mistakes.

Chapter 46: Have respect for conscience.

Chapter 47: Respect for the time of prayer-let a signal be given. prayerful rendering in reading and singing -- Only those should do so who edify.

Chapter 48: Moderation; members must not be overworked; need for rest; respect for Sundays.

Chapter 49: LENT -respect shown that all are not strong; must have the abbot's approval for good works undertaken.

Chapters 50- 51: Respect for the needs of monks going on a journey.

Chapter 52: Respect for God's house, and for those who wish to pray privately.

Chapters 53 and 56: Respect for the guests, especially the poor. All are to be served as Christ. Respect for the good order of the monastery, and the needs of the monks to have help.

Chapter 54: Sharing of gifts.

Chapter 55: Sufficient clothing; see that it fits well. Respect for the next wearer (return washed); sufficient bedding; provide for the needs of the poor; respect for the weaknesses of the needy, but do not allow envy.

Chapter 57: Respect for the individual gifts of the members; artists, but no avarice! Do all for the glory of God.

Chapter 58: Respect the need for time to be given for one to be sure before making a final commitment; even the freedom to leave if desired.

Chapter 59: No distinction between rich and poor; respect all equally.

Chapters 60 and 62: No favoritism due to rank or status.

Chapter 61: Respect for visiting monastics; respect for the other monastery in the case of a transfer; again--never do to another. ...

Chapter 63: Respect of the young for the elderly; respect of the elderly for the young.

Chapter 64: Respect for the community-that the abbot consider the needs of the members.

Chapter 65: Respect for the peaceful ruling of the monastery .

Chapter 66: Respect for guests and all who come to the monastery; also respect for the boundaries of the enclosure-all things to be within the monastery area.

Chapter 67: Respect for the privacy of the interior life.

Chapter 68: Respect for weakness, but also for challenge.

Chapter 69: Respect for all, not just relatives.

Chapter 70: General respect for all; not to strike another; and repeated again-not to do to another what one would not want done to oneself.

Chapter 71: Mutual respect

Chapter 72: The main chapter of the Rule on the spirit of Good Zeal!

Chapter 73: Respect for the need to reach perfection; those who can do more, should do so! Respect for all those who have come before--especially their contributions to the spirit of monastic life!

BENEDICT WAS A VERY RESPECTFUL PERSON