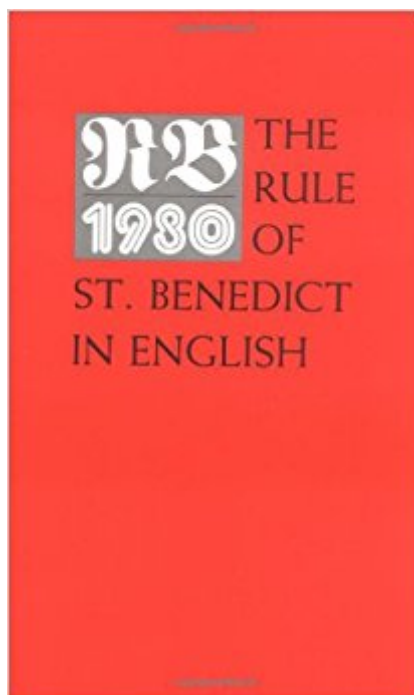


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RB 1980: The Rule Of St. Benedict In English



Synopsis

For fifteen centuries Benedictine monasticism has been governed by a Rule that is at once strong enough to instill order and yet flexible enough to have relevance fifteen hundred years later.

English-only Edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The Rule of St. Benedict is a fairly short book, pocket-sized, and only 96 pages long. It is a good example of the statement, 'good things come in small packages'. Father Timothy Fry, OSB (which stands for 'Order of St. Benedict', and is used by monastics and oblates) wrote a brief preface to the book, in which he explains that the rule is a guide of life, but not 'a rigid, brutal structure imposed legalistically'. Benedict was fully aware of human frailty, as true 1500 years ago as it is today. This frailty requires much to be done to give the person strength, and so Benedict's Rule is designed for an ever-increasing self-discipline which is supported by community worship and practice. Benedict's Rule for life includes worship, work, study, prayer, and relaxation. Benedict's Rule requires community -- even for those who become hermits or solitaries, there is a link to the community through worship and through the Rule. No one is alone. This is an important part of the relationship of God to the world, so it is an integral part of the Rule. Benedict's Rule was set out first in a world that was torn with warfare, economic and political upheaval, and a generally harsh physical environment. This Rule was set out to bring order to a general chaos in which people lived. This is still true today, and men and women all over the world use Benedict's 'little rule for beginners' as a basic structure for their lives. The first word of the rule is Listen. This is perhaps the best advice for

anyone looking for any guidance or rule of life.

Truly this is the centerpiece, with the Gospels and Cassian and Origen, etc., for any Catholic monastic library, and yet other translations can be found, in particular Doyle's clear and faithful reading version of The Rule of Saint Benedict. I shall give a few reasons for this determination in a moment. This review refers of course to the 627 page reference work published by Collegeville's Liturgical Press, with Imprimatur and Nihil Obstat, which still bear some small significance for some of us, upon the occasion of the 1500th anniversary of Saint Benedict's birth. Surprisingly the product detail page here on gives us few details of this irreplaceable and comprehensive and monumental and historic work. Permit me this disclaimer that my poor summary here in no way can replace a careful personal examination of this necessary book, and space prevents neither such a presentation nor a careful theological examination. Briefly therefore this work opens with a contextual and historical forward by Martin Burne, OSB, of Saint Mary's in Morristown. What follows is a Preface by the head stylist, Rev. Timothy Fry, OSB, of Atchison, who explains the process of translation by committee as well as explaining the lay-out and the production and producers of this monumental Benedictine work, and assorted acknowledgements. As Father Timothy explains, Part I is the Introduction with a history of monasticism in order to set the Rule of Saint Benedict in its historical and cultural context, including an understanding of the references to other authors made by Saint Benedict.

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