



## SAINT LOUIS ABBEY



**Solemnity of the Passing of Saint Benedict  
March 21, 2007  
Mass**

**Saint Louis Abbey  
5:45 p.m.**

### **Abbot Thomas's Homily**

**This Solemnity of the Passing of Saint Benedict celebrates his passing from this life into eternal glory, from this life into heaven. To help us to get to heaven, to the Lord Jesus Christ in heaven, was Saint Benedict's whole purpose in writing his Rule. He says at the beginning of that Rule that he is going to set up a "school of the Lord's service", which his Rule will describe, and which will teach us how to keep, by the grace of God, the law of the Lord so that we might merit being brought to heaven. His approach in this school is wonderfully on the mark. He reminds us that the Lord taught us that all the Law and the Prophets hang on two commandments: the first and greatest, to love the Lord our God with all our heart and soul and strength; the second like it, to love our neighbor as our self. So we will keep all the law, and merit heaven, if we keep and constantly grow in the law of love. And so Saint Benedict organizes his school precisely to teach us how to love: how to love God, first, by teaching us how to attain a state of unceasing prayer, of continuous loving contemplation of God, through the Mass, the Divine Office, lectio, meditation, prayer; then, secondly, how to love our neighbor, by giving us a community of brothers, surrounded by a larger community of those who in one way or another are guests of the monastery, and are served by the monastery, and teaching us how, slowly over the years, more and more with the eyes of our heart opened, to see Christ in our brother and our sister, and so to love them because we love Christ. The love of God; the love of those of our household, of our family; the love of all those whom we serve: what a wonderful life; what a life leading so directly to heaven and to God; what a life in which so many, according to their own vocations, can share! On this day let us thank God for Saint Benedict, and for calling us to be his sons and daughters. Let us keep in our heart the glorious consummation of his life, and the hope that by the Lord's mercy we might share in it, how at the end of his life he saw the whole world gathered up as into one ray of sunlight, how as he died he asked that his arms be held up by his brethren so that he could continue to pray, how, later on that day on which he died, his monks saw stretching upwards into the sky a path, strewn with rich coverings and flashing with innumerable lights, the path on which Benedict, the beloved of the Lord, ascended into heaven.**

**Our Holy Father Benedict, pray for us!**