



SAINT LOUIS ABBEY



The Community

"No one is to pursue what he judges better for himself, but instead, what he judges better for someone else. To their fellow monks they show the pure love of brothers; to God, loving fear; to their abbot, unfeigned and humble love. "Rule of Benedict, 72

The Benedictine monk does not seek God alone but in the company of his fellow monks, his monastic family: it is both as an individual and as a member of a body that he grows in his love of God and of his neighbor. The monk chooses to live a celibate life and to belong, through his vow of stability, to a particular monastic community until death.

It is as if the overwhelming joy of the Kingdom has taken hold of his heart and has made him incapable of giving himself unconditionally to anyone except his Lord. He has discovered the pearl of great price, the treasure in the field. The freedom of religious consecration is enshrined in this mysterious abandonment of ourselves with all our being directly to God himself.

Our community is a microcosm of the Church. It is a community not of saints but of sinners, each striving to answer "Yes" wholeheartedly to the constant demands of the God to whom he has abandoned himself unconditionally. He grows in an awareness of his own weaknesses and strengths and through this awareness becomes more able to minister to his brothers. The monk strives to lay down his life daily in the service of each of his brethren and to be a source of life and encouragement to each.

The community has a simple lifestyle - moderation is a virtue that Saint Benedict cherished. The clothes simple and suited for the job being done: the habit, the standard dress in winter; a white shirt and black trousers, the summer dress. The food good but plain. A beer with the evening meal, if desired; wine on special feast days. The lifestyle witnesses to the fact that human beings living simply may achieve a quiet fulfillment. The whole community life is a sign to the world that, centered on Christ, men of vastly different backgrounds, temperaments, ages and interests may live at peace with one another under the same roof.