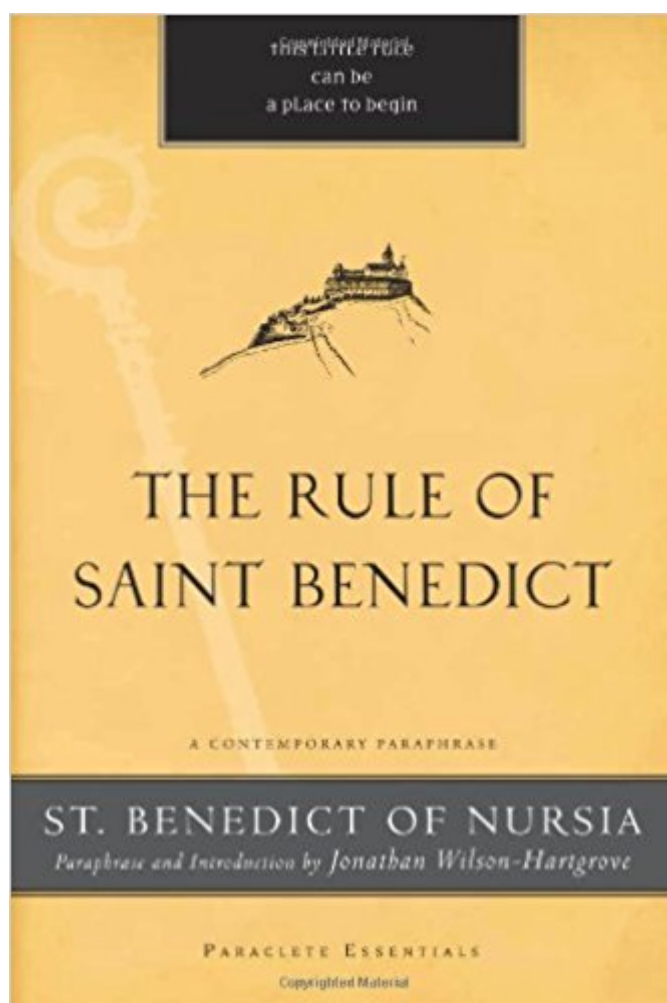


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The Rule Of Saint Benedict: A Contemporary Paraphrase (Paraclete Essentials)



Synopsis

Discussion around the bestseller *The Benedict Option* by Rod Dreher has led many people to want to know more about Benedictine principles. Listen, my child. I want you to put the ear of your heart to the solid ground of the master's wisdom (what I received, I'm passing on to you). It's advice from a spiritual father who loves you—the sort of counsel you receive by letting it shape your whole life. Listening is hard work, but it's the essential work. It opens us up to the God we've rejected by only listening to ourselves. If you're ready to give up your addiction to yourself, this message is for you: to listen is to equip yourself with the best resources available to serve the real Master, Christ the Lord. So begins the famous opening paragraph of Benedict's Rule in Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove's vital, new, contemporary paraphrase. The entire text of the Rule is here plus a lengthy introduction from Jonathan, and detailed explanatory notes throughout that explain difficult passages. The result is a classic re-introduced that will enliven any 21st century expression of religious community.

Book Information

Series: Paraclete Essentials

Paperback: 116 pages

Publisher: Paraclete Press (June 1, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1557259739

ISBN-13: 978-1557259738

Product Dimensions: 5.4 x 0.2 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 4.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars 10 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #741,244 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #177 in *Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Worship & Devotion > Monasticism & Asceticism* #178 in *Books > Religion & Spirituality > Worship & Devotion > Monasticism & Asceticism* #5753 in *Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Christian Living > Inspirational*

Customer Reviews

St. Benedict of Nursia (ca. 480-547) is considered the founder of Western monasticism. Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove is a leader of the new monastic movement and co-founded the Rutba House community in Durham, North Carolina. An associate minister at St. John's Baptist Church

in Durham, he also directs the School for Conversion, a partnership among new monastic communities for alternative theological education. His other books include *Becoming the Answer to Our Prayers*, *New Monasticism*, and *God's Economy*. ã ã

This paraphrase is really easy and enjoyable. The author does take wide liberties to modernize and mold this Classic to meet the needs/beliefs of 21st Century Christians. Since the author is clear that this is his intent, that's ok. It does, however, greatly move away from this 6th Century classic that has been the foundation for monastic life in Western Christianity. The author is a Baptist preacher living in an intentional community. He clearly is a dedicated Christian. It is very nice to see that efforts such as this modern paraphrase of the Rule of St. Benedict are working to bridge the unfortunate divisions in the Church. The spirit behind this book should serve as an inspiration to us all.

There is a 'reality' to this that I find refreshing. Monasteries are so "tidy"...centuries old or at least decades old most are coloring inside the lines before they are accepted in community. This is for us hard scrabble souls in or on the edge of homelessness...

This is a fantastic way to read Benedict's Rule. Some paraphrased renditions of classic texts distort the ancient wisdom by riddling the rendition with cliché. Hartgrove's approach here is vastly different than that; as I read along, I felt the text coming right into my life (cliché's unheard, words sinking deep within). I highly recommend this read for both those familiar with The Rule and for those newly introduced.

Thought-provoking in the best sense I felt connected to the Church throughout history in a way I'd never imagined. Short but not superficial, I found myself having to read small bits at a time, and rereading some sections, in order to digest Benedict's wisdom more fully. Excellent modern translation-- makes it very contemporary.

One uses a guide book to travel. The rule of Benedict is an excellent guide book for living! Very practical and sound advice.

Okay, but IMO if you are interested in exploring the Rule of St. Benedict as it intersects with discipleship today Joan Chittister's book "The Rule of St Benedict" is far more helpful.

While the author is clearly conversant with the Rule of St. Benedict, this reader was put off by the unnecessarily intrusive switching between the words "he" and "she" to satisfy the "inclusivity police."

The Rule of Saint Benedict: A Contemporary Translation By St. Benedict of Nursia / Paraphrase and Introduction by Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove I am enjoying this latest translation of Benedict's Rule from Paraclete Press and Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove very, very much. As I have been working through it, I have made repeated comparisons with my dog-eared copy of The Rule of Saint Benedict edited by Timothy Fry, O.S.B. I am finding that I enjoy this fresh perspective of the Rule interpreted through the eyes and experience of Wilson-Hartgrove immensely; so much, that I have taken to reading the Rule aloud to my family as a part of our morning devotional time. There are a couple of reasons for this, not the least of which is the contemporary vernacular and application that Jonathan applies (which still remains relatively faithful to the Rule as edited by Timothy Fry--in my opinion). One of the reasons I like reading it aloud to my family is that I feel this interpretation is more applicable to the context of their present lives. I respect and practice a form of Benedict's Rule in my life and have now for a few years. My family has not always understood this, but respect my practices. The Rule, in its original language and even subsequent interpretation by Timothy Fry is still more amenable to a true monastic lifestyle--hard to make the jump to "everyday" societal living. The experience of Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove and his intentional community of Rutba House, bring monastic living and everyday society a little closer together. I sense this connection as I read through this paraphrase and I think my family, who has little connection to or affinity for the monastic life, will realize it as well. I also appreciate the side bar commentaries interspersed throughout the book. Jonathan shares personal experience from the Rutba Community and practical interpretation of the Rule, which help to bridge some elements of the monastic life to the everyday life of community outside of the monastery. Personally, I think this is an excellent addition to my library of resources concerning The Rule of St. Benedict. I believe it would serve well the person who is just introduced to the Rule and I believe it might help to give fresh insight to others who are in need of a perspective that extends beyond the walls of the monastery. As I have mentioned, I feel like this paraphrase is faithful to the spirit of Benedict's Rule, at least the modern translations, and it will be an asset to most anyone who decides to listen to the ancient and timeless wisdom it shares from the Way of Jesus. Thank you Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove and thank you Paraclete Press.

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