

Let Clothing Be Given to the Brethren

by St. Benedict of Nursia

St. Benedict emphasizes the importance of simple and practical clothing for monks, considering the climate and place of dwelling, and encourages contentment and stewardship.

Scripture: Matthew 6:28, Philippians 4:11, 1 Timothy 6:8, Hebrews 13:5, 1 Peter 5:5

Topics: "Christian Stewardship", "Simple Living"

Description

St. Benedict of Nursia emphasizes the importance of providing appropriate clothing for monks based on the climate of their region, urging them to be content with what is available and not to complain about the quality or color. He instructs the Abbot to ensure the garments are of proper fit and size, with monks only having what is necessary to avoid excess. Additionally, he encourages monks to give back their old clothes for the poor when receiving new ones, promoting a spirit of simplicity and generosity in their community.

Transcript

Let clothing be given to the brethren

according to the nature of the place in which they dwell

and its climate;

for in cold regions more will be needed,

and in warm regions less.

This is to be taken into consideration, therefore, by the Abbot.

We believe, however, that in ordinary places

the following dress is sufficient for each monk:

a tunic,

a cowl (thick and woolly for winter, thin or worn for summer),

a scapular for work,

stockings and shoes to cover the feet.

The monks should not complain
about the color or the coarseness of any of these things,
but be content with what can be found
in the district where they live and
can be purchased cheaply.

The Abbot shall see to the size of the garments,
that they be not too short for those who wear them,
but of the proper fit.

Let those who receive new clothes
always give back the old ones at once,
to be put away in the wardrobe for the poor.

For it is sufficient if a monk has two tunics and two cowls,
to allow for night wear and for the washing of these garments;
more than that is superfluity and should be taken away.

Let them return their stockings also and anything else that is old
when they receive new ones.

Those who are sent on a journey
shall receive drawers from the wardrobe,
which they shall wash and restore on their return.

And let their cowls and tunics be somewhat better
than what they usually wear.

These they shall receive from the wardrobe
when they set out on a journey,
and restore when they return.

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