

Let There Be a Separate Kitchen for the Abbot and Guests

by St. Benedict of Nursia

A separate kitchen and guest house management system should be established to ensure efficient and respectful service to guests.

Scripture: Proverbs 22:4, Philippians 2:3, Colossians 3:23, Hebrews 13:2, 1 Peter 4:9

Topics: "Monastic Life", "Christian Hospitality"

Description

St. Benedict of Nursia emphasizes the importance of hospitality and order within the monastery, instructing that a separate kitchen be designated for the Abbot and guests to avoid disturbing the brethren. He appoints capable brethren to oversee the kitchen, ensuring they are supported and able to serve without complaint. St. Benedict also highlights the need for diligent work and humility, assigning tasks as needed and requiring respectful interaction with guests, showing reverence and obedience to God's will.

Transcript

Let there be a separate kitchen for the Abbot and guests,
that the brethren may not be disturbed when guests,
who are never lacking in a monastery,
arrive at irregular hours.

Let two brethren capable of filling the office well
be appointed for a year to have charge of this kitchen.

Let them be given such help as they need,
that they may serve without murmuring.

And on the other hand,
when they have less to occupy them,

let them go out to whatever work is assigned them.

And not only in their case

but in all the offices of the monastery

let this arrangement be observed,

that when help is needed it be supplied,

and again when the workers are unoccupied

they do whatever they are bidden.

The guest house also shall be assigned to a brother

whose soul is possessed by the fear of God.

Let there be a sufficient number of beds made up in it;

and let the house of God be managed by prudent men

and in a prudent manner.

On no account shall anyone who is not so ordered

associate or converse with guests.

But if he should meet them or see them,

let him greet them humbly, as we have said,

ask their blessing and pass on,

saying that he is not allowed to converse with a guest.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/st-benedict-of-nursia/let-there-be-a-separate-kitchen-for-the-abbot-and-guests/>

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