

Therefore, When Anyone Receives the Name of Abbess

by St. Benedict of Nursia

An Abbess should govern her disciples with a twofold teaching, showing them good deeds and explaining commandments, while being mindful of her own flaws and avoiding hypocrisy.

Scripture: Psalm 50:16

Topics: "Spiritual Leadership", "Personal Discipline"

Description

St. Benedict of Nursia emphasizes the importance of leading by example as a spiritual leader, teaching disciples through both words and actions. He highlights the need for consistency between preaching and living out God's commandments to avoid being hypocritical and facing judgment from God. St. Benedict warns against neglecting personal discipline and failing to address one's own faults while pointing out the faults of others.

Transcript

Therefore, when anyone receives the name of Abbess, she ought to govern her disciples with a twofold teaching.

That is to say, she should show them all that is good and holy by her deeds even more than by her words, expounding the Lord's commandments in words to the intelligent among her disciples, but demonstrating the divine precepts by her actions for those of harder hearts and ruder minds.

And whatever she has taught her disciples to be contrary to God's law, let her indicate by her example that it is not to be done, lest, while preaching to others, she herself be found reprobate (1 Cor. 9:27), and lest God one day say to her in her sin, "Why do you declare My statutes and profess My covenant with your lips, whereas you hate discipline and have cast My words behind you" (Ps. 49[50]:16-17)?

And again, "You were looking at the speck in your brother's eye, and did not see the beam in your own" (Matt. 7:3).

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