



# FORWARD *in* MISSION

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*The experience of intentional living*

## Benedictine community meets monthly at St. Barnabas Church

Since the sixth century, men and women have found peace and fulfillment in the rule of life set out by Benedict of Nursia, Italy. Balancing work and worship, study and rest, the Rule of St. Benedict offers a discipline that steers between haste and laziness, allowing the individual time for



prayer and introspection, while providing for the day-to-day needs of the community. It was his goal that "Christ ... may bring us all together to life eternal."

Within his own lifetime, Benedict founded 12 monasteries. Benedictine communities exist around the world today. In addition, there have always been individuals who adopted a modified version of the Rule while remaining outside the monastic house. Some of these feel called to make a formal profession, becoming "oblates" of a particular community.

Julia Smead, a member of St. Barnabas, Fort Worth, has been an oblate of a house in the Northeast for about a decade. Four years ago she

offered to share the Benedictine experience with friends on the last Saturday of each month. The group gathers about 6 p.m. for a chanted service of Vespers, a meal, study of one chapter of the Rule, and chanted Compline. For years, the group met without hands-on clergy leadership. Recently Fr. Jonathan Duncan has become a regular attendee, giving the group welcome instruction in proper Gregorian Chant.



Conversation is kept to a minimum; silence is observed during the meal, except for one member who reads aloud to the group. Following the last prayer at the evening's close, individuals enter the Great Silence that governs the nighttime hours.

Anyone interested in experiencing the Benedictine order is welcome to join this ad hoc community for its monthly gathering. Send your RSVP to [breadforthejourney@sbcglobal.net](mailto:breadforthejourney@sbcglobal.net). In the near future, a longer retreat may be arranged, led by monastic clergy, to give a fuller experience of the Benedictine Rule of Life.

