



IDAHO KNIGHTLY NEWS

Barry E. Newell, KTCH, KCT, Editor
306 Maple St., Emmett, ID 83617
ksigmason@gmail.com

Upcoming 2022 Events:

Grand York Rite of Washington..May 12-13
Grand York Rite of MontanaJune 2-4

New Officers

On May 22nd, the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Idaho convened. The following were chosen to serve for the ensuing Templar year:

Right Eminent Grand Commander

Gary A. S. LaBruyere

Very Eminent Deputy Grand Commander

Bruce A. Wethered

Eminent Grand Generalissimo

Barry E. Newell

Eminent Grand Captain General

Michael E. Keas

Eminent Grand Sr. Warden

Steven L. Hall

Eminent Grand Prelate Emeritus

Robert K. Perry

Eminent Grand Treasurer

G. Arthur Shoemaker, PGC

Eminent Grand Recorder

Norman C. Lane, HPGC

What is Monasticism: Part 4

By Barry E. Newell

Irish Monasticism

The first non-Roman country to adopt monasticism was Ireland. Monasticism in Ireland was unique as it developed a form closely related to its rural clan system. Irish monasticism more closely resembled the monasticism found in Egypt rather than in mainland Europe. As Ireland was not conquered by the ancient Roman Empire, it was unaffected by its fall and so did not develop in the same way the rest of Western Europe did.

Irish monasteries became the spiritual focus or center of the clan or tribes. These monasteries were often on lands granted by the local nobility and many of the abbots and abbesses were members of the noble family; this was done due to legal traditions to keep land within the family. In many ways, abbots were considered superior to church bishops and were the supreme authority of the

monastery. Bishops were usually located in urban centers and Ireland was primarily rural. Some monasteries were just for men, some just for women, and a few were mixed.

Irish monasticism spread to Scotland and northern England before spreading to places like France and Italy. Monasticism spread rapidly through Ireland and then to the British Isles. When Benedictine monks traveled to the British Isles in 597 AD, they had found Irish monasteries well established.

Rule of St. Benedict

After the rules of Pachomius and St. Basil, the Regula Magistri or Master's Rule was considered one of the most important rules of monasticism in Western Europe. It was believed to have been written somewhere south of Rome around 500 AD (though the precise date is problematic). It was composed of 95 chapters, 20 of which were dedicated to the Divine Office (also called Canonical Hours or Office of the Hours). This rule added legalistic elements that were not found in earlier rules, defining the activities of the monastery, its officers, and their responsibilities in great detail. Historically, this rule was never used in any specific monastery, but was an influence on the Rule of St. Benedict.

St. Benedict of Nursia is considered one of the most important monks of Western monasticism and is considered the Patron Saint of Europe. Benedict was from a noble family, but after meeting a monk chose to be a hermit for a few years before becoming an abbot of a monastery in Vicovaro. Apparently, his governance was severe as the monks tried to poison him and, according to legend, each attempt was defeated by some

miraculous intervention. He established several monasteries throughout Italy, but his most important achievement was the publication of what would be known as the "Rule of St. Benedict" in 516 AD (although some date it to 530 AD).

His rule is composed of 73 chapters which are similar to the Master's Rule in what they define. It was considered a middle ground between individual zeal and formulaic institutionalism (functional, yet practical) which caused it to be very popular and become one of the most used rules in monastic life. In the final chapter, St. Benedict acknowledges and applauds the Rule of St. Basil, but St. Benedict's Rule was clearly influenced by the Master's Rule, St. Augustine, John Cassian, and Pachomius.

Its popular adoption was not just due to its content, but also because it was sponsored by Pope Gregory I (who was a Benedictine monk) and Charlemagne the Great (who was educated by a monk), the latter had it copied and distributed throughout the Holy Roman Empire. His Rule has been utilized for 15 centuries by several monastic orders and knightly orders including the Knights Templar.

Even though it came to Western Europe long before him, but because of his Rule, St. Benedict is considered the "Father of Western Monasticism" and his Feast Day is celebrated on March 21 (the anniversary of his death).

Editor's Note

If anyone would like to submit an article for the Idaho Knightly News, please email me your article using Microsoft Word. Keep it between 1 page and 1.5 pages.