"Simply Go In And Pray!": St. Benedict's Oratory In RB 52

Terrence G. Kardong

Introduction

When a Benedictine monk is asked to contribute an essay about prayer for a gathering in *The Merton Annual*, it is only natural for him to turn to the *Rule of St. Benedict (RB)*. This sixth-century document is not only one of the most precious sources for all of Christianity; it is also a primary inspiration for all the Benedictine and Cistercian monks and nuns in the world today. We may not live according to the letter of the Rule, for that is not possible in the modern world, but we do consider it our basic optic for living a Christian life in this day and age.

Since the Benedictine Rule is written to guide the spiritual life of its adherents, it is reasonable to look to it for instruction on private prayer. When we do that, we find many chapters devoted to the Divine Office (RB 8-18), but very few given over to discussion of private prayer. RB 19 and 20 have some intriguing comments on the meaning of prayer, but they are very laconic and essentially devoted to public prayer. There is another little chapter, however, that is sometimes overlooked as a source of insight into Benedict's views on private prayer. It is RB 52, his chapter on the prayer-room, which we will quote in full here.

RB 52: On the Oratory of the Monastery

1. The oratory should be in fact what it is called, and nothing else should be done or stored there. 2. When the Work of God is finished, they should all leave in deepest silence and show reverence for God. 3. Thus will the brother who may wish to pray by himself not be hindered by the thoughtlessness of another. 4. But if someone perhaps wishes to pray privately at some other time, let him simply go in and pray, not in a loud voice but with tears and full attention of heart. 5. Therefore, whoever is not busy with this kind of work is not permitted to

> remain after the Work of God in the oratory, as the place is called. For the prayer of another should not be disturbed.[1]

St. Benedict normally does not talk about rooms. Of course, he mentions several special rooms in his monastery such as the refectory, kitchen and dormitory, but he does not elaborate on the shape or décor or equipment of those rooms. This is not surprising, since a monastic *regula* is not an architecture treatise, but a blueprint for living a monastic life. There is one chapter, however, that is expressly devoted to a given room, namely, RB 52 entitled "The Oratory of the Monastery."[2] Still, we will see that Benedict is not interested in the oratory as such, nor the things in it, but rather in what is done there.[3]

In the first verse of the chapter, he insists that the oratory be used for what its name suggests, nothing more. Although he does not explicitly say so, the word "oratory" contains the Latin verb *orare*, which means to pray. Even though everyday English no longer uses this word, but rather synonyms like chapel, church and sanctuary, in the time of Benedict *oratorium* meant a private or public chapel.[4] At any rate, Benedict lays strong emphasis on the "truth-principle," namely, that the thing actually be what it is called. Apparently he is fond of this formulation, for he also uses it in connection with the abbot.[5] He goes on to say that "nothing else is to be done or stored there."

This remark that the oratory is for nothing else than prayer can be taken as a sort of aphorism pointing to St. Benedict's conviction that prayer is of the greatest importance. Perhaps that is something of a cliché coming from a monk, but monks are like other people in this: they sometimes get distracted from the central purpose of their lives. Clearly, the focus of a monk's life is on the spiritual, that is, God, so it is not unusual to find Benedict insisting on the centrality of prayer. In RB 43.3, we read: "Nothing is to be put ahead of the Work of God." That injunction refers to the public prayer of the community. Here in RB 52, the overriding importance of private, personal prayer comes to the fore.

Actually, Benedict's programmatic statement about the name and function of the oratory is not original. Rather, it is found in one of his favorite sources, namely, the *Rule of Augustine*:

> The place of prayer should not be used for any purpose other than that for which it is intended and from which it takes its name. Thus, if someone wants to pray there even outside the

> appointed hours, in his own free time, he should be able to do so without being hindered by others who have no business being there.[6]

As we will see, this whole chapter of Benedict is heavily reminiscent of earlier patristic and monastic documents.[7] Although this might seem to us to lessen its value, that was not the opinion of ancient writers. They liked to lace their most careful formulations with references to well-known and prestigious documents.

Benedict's argument that nothing except prayer is to be done in the oratory shows that this activity of prayer must be very important for him. Benedict's monastery was probably quite poor,[8] and it certainly did not have a lot of space. No doubt other rooms had to double up in their functions, but not this one. Nothing was to be done in the oratory but prayer. In fact, this is typical of societies where religion is very important. They do not want "all-purpose" chapels; they want sanctuaries devoted exclusively to the things of God. Aquinata Böckmann, in her commentary on RB 52, remarks that even among the Base Communities of Brazil, which are composed of the poorest peasants, there is an insistence that there be a special place for prayer.[9] For people with barely a roof over their heads, this is an extraordinary expression of faith. "Nothing else is to be done or stored there!"

To return to the meaning of *oratorium*, it does not refer exclusively to private prayer. Even though RB 52 will address itself primarily to personal, individual prayer, in his second and third verses Benedict notes that monks who are exiting the oratory after the performance of the Divine Office are not to make so much noise as to disturb those who might wish to remain there to pray (RB 52.2-3). Here we can see at a glance that the room was used for <u>both</u> kinds of prayer, but the transition from one kind of prayer to the other could be problematic.

Some Relevant Aspects of Ancient Monastic Life

In order to explain this little chapter better, it will be helpful to provide some background on certain aspects of life among the early monks. To begin, Benedict's prohibition against work in the chapel may leave us wondering what he might mean. Modern people do not normally mix work and worship. But among the earliest cenobitic monks, it was quite common to engage in simple handwork such as rope-plaiting while praying the public Office. And so we

read the following passage in the Egyptian *Rule of St. Pachomius*, the earliest of all the Christian monastic Rules (c. 340-60):

> 4. And when he begins to walk into the *synaxis* room (oratory), going to his place of sitting and standing, he should not tread upon the rushes which have been dipped in water in preparation for the plaiting of ropes, lest even a small loss should come to the monastery through someone's negligence.
>
> 5. But at night when the signal is given you shall not stand at the fire usually lighted to warm bodies and drive off the cold, nor shall you sit idle in the *synaxis*, but with quick hand you shall prepare ropes for the warps of mats, although exception is made for the infirmity of the body to which leave must be given for rest.[10]

Without going into too much detail, apparently it was the official practice for the Pachomian monks to plait and weave during the Office. Indeed, materials were set out to supply them for precisely this activity. Even though Pachomius has acquired an unearned reputation for being overly concerned for work and efficiency in his monastery, it is clear that this arrangement was not meant to boost monastic productivity. Rather, the purpose was to help keep the monks awake during the early morning liturgy. The reason why this was necessary might be seen in the fact that the earliest Office was largely performed by single chanters and readers with the rest of the congregation listening and occasionally responding with refrain antiphons.[11]

But not all of the early cenobitic legislators agreed with the practice of doing handwork during the psalmody. In the passage we quoted above, Augustine of Hippo, writing sixty years after Pachomius but a hundred years before Benedict, categorically precludes work in church. It could be that Augustine's Office gave the whole choir more to do and say, and therefore was less soporific. Or he simply may have not shared the peasant mentality of Pachomius that mixed plaiting and praying. At any rate, Benedict, although his monastery was more rural than Augustine's, chose to follow the African doctor and not the Egyptian pioneer in this matter.[12]

Another cultural factor that needs to be taken into account to fully understand RB 52 was the proclivity of ancient people to "think out loud." In contrast to our society, where it is seen as a mark of low education to read out loud, ancient people regularly

did so. That is why St. Benedict must warn his monks not to disturb others with their private reading during siesta period (RB 48.5). In his autobiographical *Confessions*, St. Augustine recalls that he once saw St. Ambrose of Milan reading silently to himself. It was the end of a long day, and the Bishop was too tired to do anything else![13]

Apparently the old monks tended to treat prayer in the same way. Like many people to this day in Asia and Africa, they saw nothing unusual with praying aloud in the presence of other people. Visitors to shrines in that part of the world speak of the deafening atmosphere as pilgrims all pray aloud, but not together, in the holy places. But not all the ancient monastic Rules agree with this. The Rule of the Master, which is the principal source of the Rule of Benedict,[14] will have none of this. When the monks finish the public Office, the Master wants them to cease vocalizing:

Chapter 68. Immediately Upon Leaving the Oratory They Must Keep Complete. Silence.

1. As soon as the brothers leave the oratory they are to keep silence 2. and not even repeat psalms as they come out 3. lest what was said inside at the right time with reverence be sung over and over outside at the wrong time with disrespect. 4. Therefore let them keep quiet as soon as they leave the oratory, 5. because the time for the psalms is over with and that of silence has begun, 6. as Scripture says: "A time for everything."[15]

It is clear that Benedict is influenced by this chapter of RM, as he is by many other passages of that strange Rule, but even a cursory glance at RM 68 shows that the Master's concern is quite restricted. For his part, Benedict uses the problem of the transition from public to private prayer as an occasion to create a much richer, if equally brief, chapter on private prayer.

In studying Benedict's insistence that the oratory be kept as silent as possible for personal prayer, we should also note that it was virtually the only place where the monk could be guaranteed such an atmosphere. Unlike most modern monasteries, Benedict's foundation provided no private rooms for the monks. His chapter on the common dormitory (RB 22) shows very clearly that this was the case, but again there was no unanimity among the early

cenobites on this matter: Pachomius provided semi-private rooms for his monks, and some of the other monastic legislators at the time of Benedict did so as well.[16] Although he does not provide private rooms, Benedict seems to realize that the monks do need a very quiet place to pray. Hence his strong emphasis on silence in the chapel.[17]

A final background item that could stand some examination concerns the horarium. When St. Benedict sets out his rather detailed daily time-table for the community in RB 48, he seems to allow little or no free time. And yet here in RB 52, he urges the individual who wishes to pray to simply go into the oratory and do so. We might suspect that Benedict's daily schedule was not as air-tight as it looks on paper. It is hard to believe that people would agree to have every minute of the day programmed for them. But beyond that, the time set aside for *lectio divina* was certainly available for private prayer. According to RB 48, about three hours a day were devoted to the Bible and collateral reading, which was expected to kindle devotion and prayer.[18] Probably the ancient monks had plenty of time to visit the oratory for private meditation and prayer.

Of course, there are days when monks do not have a lot of discretionary time for personal prayer, but a permanently overloaded schedule is the bane of monasticism. Throughout Benedictine history, the correct balance of work and leisure for prayer and *lectio* has been a problem. The great difficulty is to find work that will sustain material life, but also allow sufficient time for contemplation. In our own time, when technology has not produced more leisure time as predicted but much less, monks often find themselves caught up in a rat-race of overwork. Sometimes it must be accepted that only a simpler, poorer life-style will allow more time for prayer and reading.

Sensitivity to the Needs of Others

One of the main themes of RB 52 is the importance of being aware of the needs of others, and accommodating them as much as possible. On the surface, it might seem that this is an elementary principle and not one that needs much elaboration. There is again the simple logic of the matter: the oratory is for prayer, therefore those who wish to pray there should not be disturbed. We have seen above that people in some cultures seem to feel less need for quiet during prayer, but St. Benedict is not one of those. He demands

on behalf of his monks that they be afforded as much consideration as possible when they engage in the essential and difficult task of prayer.

Apparently Benedict feels quite strongly about this, since he uses some pungent language. For example, he labels the behavior of those who make noise in the oratory as *improbitas*. Now this is a word with a wide range of meaning, and it is not so easy to choose exactly the right translation for it. On one end of the scale, the word sometimes flatly refers to evil. It is hard to imagine someone deliberately and maliciously setting out to distract others at prayer, although the Devil might do so. But the rendition of "thoughtlessness," which I myself settled on in 1996, does not quite seem to do the job either.[19] It could be that someone is in the oratory for entirely the wrong reasons, as was indicated by St. Augustine in the passage of his Rule that we quoted earlier.[20] Still, who is to say that someone else does not belong in chapel? Nonetheless, an individual will find inconsiderate behavior intensely irritating at times and judge it quite harshly (*improbitas*).

Another linguistic clue to Benedict's views on mutual concern can be seen in the term *reverentia*. When he says that the monks exiting the oratory after Office should do so with reverence, he may be making a somewhat loaded comment. Our quote of the *Rule of the Master* showed that author using *reverentia* to refer to singing the psalms out loud at the right time, namely during the Divine Office. To sing them outside was for him a sign of "disrespect" (*extollantia*). Benedict may be playing on this usage, but he has modified it to his own purposes. For him it refers to a silent exit out of consideration for the recollection of those who have remained behind to pray.[21] Although Benedict normally uses the word *reverentia* to mean a respectful stance toward God, especially in the Liturgy (e.g. RB 9.7; 11.3; 20.1), here it seems he wants to inculcate a reverential attitude toward one's fellow monks.

Benedict, however, makes sure to address both sides of the question, for he warns the one who goes into the oratory for the right reasons not to become a nuisance himself. How can this happen? By "praying with a loud voice" (*clamosa voce*), in other words the very thing that one objects to in others! In deeply personal matters such as private prayer, it is not only possible, but all too easy, to lose a sense of proportion. Probably because I am very easily distracted, I may find the behavior of others off-putting. But it must be remembered that I too may be an impediment to

others.[22] And the only way to make sure that this does not happen is to remain constantly aware of the needs of others around me. If it bothers people for me to click my rosary beads, then I don't do it—even if I think they would be better off if they too prayed the rosary!

Private Prayer

Finally we come to a couple of expressions that could be seen as the very heart of this chapter. After warning the monk not to pray with a loud voice, Benedict suggests that he pray with "tears and full attention of heart" (*lacrimis et intentione cordis*). Indeed, it could be said that in these two phrases, Benedict sums up his whole theology of prayer.[23] There is a parallel expression in RB 20.3: "We should also realize that it is not in much talking that we shall be heard, but in purity of heart and tearful compunction." We will see that those phrases are virtually synonymous with tears and full attention of heart.

Why does Benedict suggest that we should pray "with tears"? He cannot mean that we should give ourselves over to sobbing, for that would contradict what he has to say about silence in the rest of the chapter. Since this is at least the third time tears are mentioned as a desirable accompaniment of prayer (see also RB 20.3 and 49.4), we can say for sure that Benedict thought highly of them. Because it is rather unusual in our culture for people to weep during prayer, this point needs some attention.[24] For one thing, the ancients considered tears to be a precious gift of God granted to the religious seeker. One of the reports on the Egyptian Desert Fathers describes an ascetic whose chest was furrowed with tears shed in continuous weeping.

Since tears were seen as a grace of God, they could not be produced by sheer will-power. Nor were they restricted to highly emotional or susceptible personalities. Actually, tears were associated with many different aspects of the spiritual life. In his magnificent treatise on prayer, Cassian lists no less than four kinds of spiritual tears: 1) Sorrow for my sins; 2) Desire for eternal glory; 3) Fear of hell; 4) Sorrow for the sins of others.[25] To judge from this list, the ancient concept of tears covers a far wider gamut of experiences and emotions than our narrow notion of sorrow. Indeed, A. De Vogüé claims that the ancient idea of *penthos* really covers the whole range of spirituality.[26] Yet it is still probably true

that the primary meaning of tears in every age is compunction of heart for sins, as is evident in RB 20.3.

What are we to make of the expression "full attention of the heart"? First, we should note that the exact Latin expression is *intentio cordis*. Granted that "attention" and "intention" are close in meaning, they are not exactly the same. And since we have only these extremely spare expressions of Benedict as windows into his views on prayer, we have to peer through them very carefully. How rich this particular expression really is can be seen from the fact that Michael Casey has written a whole article, and a very good one, on it.[27]

Casey points out that the "heart" meant something rather different for the old Romans than it does for us. We think of it as the seat of emotion, but for them it was the center of decision and will. Consequently, it would be closer to our notion of "mind" than "heart." As for *intentio*, it has to do with focus, with aiming the mind at some object. When Benedict speaks of prayer characterized by *intentio cordis*, he means that the mind is focused on God alone. In other words, he demands full attention on our part. Anyone who has pursued a serious life of prayer knows that this is easier said than done, for distraction is an on-going problem. But we can also say that the person who sincerely desires to stay focused on God is by that very fact essentially focused on God. A parallel concept is found in RB 19.7, where Benedict insists that our minds be "in harmony with our voices" in the vocal prayer of the Divine Office.[28]

The main thrust of RB 19.7 is to accentuate the need for interior attention in addition to the external activity of the Divine Office. The importance of interiorization is probably the main overall theme of the voluminous spiritual writing of John Cassian, so it is no surprise that *intentio cordis* is one of his favorite expressions. Thus we find the term in no less than seven places in Cassian.[29] The use of this term by Benedict at this strategic juncture seems to bind his spirituality tightly to that of Cassian. Nevertheless, it is possible to overdo the idea of interiority. At least we can say that vocalized prayer is by no means inferior to the silent or wordless kind. Many people find that prayer-mantras, silent or spoken, help them precisely to stay focused on what they are doing, and thereby focused on God.

Before we conclude our exegetical remarks, we should note one more statement by Benedict in his final verse: "Therefore,

whoever is not busy with this kind of work is not permitted to remain in the oratory, as the place is called." The reference to "this kind of work" seems to merit some comment. Since it refers to silent prayer, as mentioned in the previous two verses, we might be surprised. Has not Benedict made it quite clear that he does not want people doing "work" in the chapel? And is he not also contrasting personal prayer with public prayer, which is called "the work of God"? Why, then, does he use this kind of language?[30]

Could it not be that he wants to show clearly that prayer, in whatever form it takes, is indeed hard work? This is a point of some confusion for many people, so it is worth sorting out. It certainly does not mean that just any kind of work, if done properly, is a form of prayer. That may be the case, but it is not the point here. Benedict urges the monk to put aside his work and devote himself exclusively to prayer at some times during the day. But that does not mean that prayer is easy. In fact, at times it is the hardest thing that a person can do. Therefore, we don't find Benedict saying "If you feel like it, be sure to drop in to the chapel now and then for prayer." He probably would rather say, "Even if you do not feel like it, be sure . . . ."

Conclusion

At the end of this survey of Benedict's brief chapter, we may feel somewhat unsatisfied. After all, we have had to glean insight into a very big subject from a very few words. And we have tried to derive some ideas on prayer from a little chapter that is not a formal treatise on the subject but rather a modest comment on the monastic chapel. Still, it could be that these terse remarks of Benedict shed light on this subject in a way that is not common in more formal treatments. Therefore, even in just a few well-chosen words, Benedict is able to convey quite clearly his great concern for the prayer-life of his monks. Absolutely nothing should be done in the monastery to impede this central activity of the monk. For if we cannot pray in the monastery, where can we do so?

Notes

1. My translation in *Benedict's Rule: A Translation and Commentary* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 1996).

2. *De Oratorio Monasterii*. The titles in the Rule of St. Benedict appear to be original.

3. Actually, Benedict does mention several items that are found in the oratory in other places in his Rule: relics and altar (RB 58.19-20); benches and lectern (RB 9.5).

4. A. Blaise, *Dictionnaire Latin-Français des Auteurs Chrétiens* (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 1954) s.v., gives the following references: Aug. *Ep.* 211.7; 221.11; Eugipp. *Vit.*, p. 56.3; Cassian, *Inst.* 3.7 tit.; Gelas. *Ep.* 14.25, p. 375; Vict.-Ton. *Chron.* P. 199.36; RB 38; 52. In RB 38.2-4, Benedict has the blessing of the kitchen-workers in the *oratorium*.

5. The reasoning in RB 2 is far less straightforward, however, than that in RB 52. In RB 2, the abbot is to imitate the leadership of Christ because he is called by Christ's name, that is, *abba* = father. But of course, Christ himself called his Heavenly Father *abba*. For a clear and comprehensive survey of the patristic theme of the Fatherhood of Christ, see C. Peifer, *RB 1980* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 1981), pp. 356-363.

6. Augustine, *Praeceptum* (Rule for Male Religious) 2.2. The translation is by T. van Bavel in *The Rule of Augustine: with Introduction and Commentary* (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian, 1996), p. 13. The reference is found in M. Puzicha, *Kommentar zur Benediktusregel* (St. Ottilien, Germany: EOS 2002), p. 438.

7. What is more, the material on the abbot's name is copied directly from the *Rule of the Master* (RM 2).

8. We only have hints about the economic condition of Benedict's community: The monks are to bring in the harvest themselves if they are too poor to hire laborers (RB 48.7). They are not to grumble if local circumstances make it impossible to obtain wine for meals (RB 40.8). It is hard to see what, besides poverty, would make it impossible to obtain wine in Italy! On the other hand, the monks' clothing was not the poorest, for when it became worn, they were to give it to the poor (RB 55.9).

9. See "On the Oratory of the Monastery," *The American Benedictine Review* 49:1 [March, 1998], pp. 71-2. She derives this information from her experience in Brazil and from Marcelo de Barros Souza, *Na Estrada do Evangelho, Uma Leitura communitarian e latino-americana de Regra de Sao Bento* (Petropolis, Brazil 1993), p. 111.

10. Found in *Praecepta* 4-5, translated by A. Veilleux in *Pachomian Koinonia* 2 (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian, 1981), pp. 145-46.

11. For an account of the primitive Office, see my remarks in *Benedict's Rule* (note 1), pp. 210-11.

12. Apparently the controversy was not over by the time of Benedict, for Caesarius of Arles, legislating for a convent of nuns he founded in the early sixth century (same time as Benedict) seems to be of two minds on this matter. In *Reg. Virg.* 10 he prohibits handwork in church, but RV 15 he recommends it—precisely to keep people awake. It might be noted that the monks of South Gaul were notorious for their long Offices. The

best modern study of Caesarius' monastic writings is found in Sources Chrétiennes 345 and 398, by A. De Vogüé and J. Courreau (Paris: Cerf, 1988-94). An English translation of the *Rule for Nuns* was done by M.C. McCarthy (Washington D.C.: Catholic U, 1960).

13. *Confessions* VI.3, 3.

14. For a succinct explanation of this controversial relationship, see *RB 1980*, pp. 71-72.

15. Translation of L. Eberle in *The Rule of the Master* (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian, 1977), p. 233.

16. Ferrandus, *Vit. Fulgentii* 43 and Aurelian, *Reg. Mon.*, 8; 33, favor private rooms for the monks, but Caesarius, *Reg. Mon.* 3 and *Reg. Virg.* 49, forbids them. The reasons that Caesarius gives for ruling out private cells refer to avarice and secularism. For a complete survey of the question of monastic cells, see De Vogüé, "Comme les moines dormiront: commentaire d'un chapitre de la Règle de Saint Benoît," *Studia Monastica* 7 (1965) 25-62. Although he recognizes the dangers of private rooms, Vogüé is vehemently in favor of them precisely because they provide an ideal place for contemplation.

17. Someone reading RB 6 on Silence might get the impression that all areas of Benedict's monastery were perfectly quiet, but that does not seem to have been the case. If it were, then why does he need to stress quiet and restrained speech in steps 9-11 of the Ladder of Humility (RB 7.56-61)? And why does he suggest that during Lent the monks avoid idle talk and needless jesting (RB 49.7)? See my further reflections in *Benedict's Rule* (note 1), pp. 126-29.

18. The classic formulation of this matter was made by Guigo (II) the Carthusian (died c. 1188), who delineated four steps in the process: reading, meditation, prayer and contemplation. See his *Ladder of Monks*, trans. E. Colledge and J. Walsh (London and Oxford, 1978).

19. *Benedict's Rule* (note 1) p. 415. The translator in *RB 1980* also wrestled over this one, as is evident in his note on p. 177, where he comes down on "insensitivity."

20. See note 6 above.

21. Böckmann (note 6) 73, notes that many of the old commentators mistakenly thought that *reverentia* in this passage meant a bow toward the altar. See Hildemar, *Expositio Regulae* ed. R. Mittermüller, (Regensburg: Pustet, 1880), p. 499.

22. *Impedimentum* is the exact word Benedict uses in this chapter; indeed, uses twice (RB 52.3 and 5). The etymology of this word refers to a stumbling block that one falls over. To become a stumbling block for other people who are trying to pray is not something anyone would want to have on his conscience.

23. Böckmann (note 6), p. 82.

24. But the phenomenon is not entirely unknown. In his book entitled *The Father and the Son* (New York: HarperCollins, 1999) Matt Murray describes the conversion experience of his father (James Murray) as characterized by copious weeping, not only during private prayer, but also at Mass. What strikes the reader is that James Murray is not at all a highly emotional man, but rather sober and even rationistic.

25. Conference 9.29, cited by M. Puzicha (note 5).

26. This is discussed in his one-volume spiritual commentary on RB entitled *The Rule of St. Benedict* (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian 1983; French original, 1977), p. 255. For a complete treatment of this topic, see I. Hausherr, *Penthos* (English translation: Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian, 1982).

27. "Intentio Cordis: RB 52.4," in *Regulae Benedicti Studia* 6/7 (1981), pp. 103-120.

28. This connection is emphasized by A. Quartiroli in her study of RB 52 in *La Regola di San Benedetto* (Abbey of Praglia, Italy, 2002). She says "It is a call for sincerity and interiority of relations in prayer."

29. Conf. 1.7; 4.4; 9.6,7,12; 10.8; 23.11. See the concordance by M. Petschenig in his edition of Cassian in CSEL 13 and 17.

30. He calls prayer *simile opus*, "this kind of work." *RB 1980* avoids this literal translation, preferring "pray in this manner" but that ignores the word *opus*. I am pretty sure Benedict intends at least a gentle pun in this case.