

The Tools and Goods of the Monastery (Around the Monastic Table - RB 31 - 42: Growing in Mutual Service and Love. Around the Monastic Table. Aquinata Bockman. Liturgical Press, Collegeville, NM

Ref pages: Chapter 31: pages, 27 - 30
Chapter 32: pages, 44 - 56

Direct Quotes from Aquinata Bockman

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(Paragraph ii) ... "Consider how things are being handled in today's society. Everywhere we see vandalism, besmirching, and willful destruction. Apparently this is little respect for whatever belongs to others or is to served everyone. Was responsibility sufficiently taught? Even personal goods are being devalued in a throw away society. What ever is no longer fully serviceable is discarded, and something new and more modern takes its place (planned obsolesce). Thus we are constantly faced with the question of how to deal with garbage and how to manage our waste."

(Paragraph iii) "These topics are connected with respect for things, but also with responsibility for each other and for the future of humankind; eventually, all this also reflects back to how we treat ourselves. ...It translates the conservation of creation into small steps; moreover, we can also consider what a clean and well-tended environment supports our human relationships."

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(Paragraph iii)... "it is of great current interest because we are much more aware today that our environment is subjected to great dangers and how necessary the conservation of our creation has become. We know that overexploitation has continued over a long time and the neglect of things, even on a small scale, does add to the destruction of our cosmos. Joan Chittister says: "Benedict spirituality is as much about good order, wise management, and housekeeping as it is about the mediation and immaterial dimensions of life. Benedictine spirituality sees the care of the earth and the integration of prayer and work, body and soul, as essential parts of the journey to wholeness that answer the emptiness in each of us".

Journaling Questions:

1. Ponder, how can you continue to make little changes within your atmosphere or environment, or even your community? What actions are you choosing or can choose to help witness to your love of earth?

2. Benedict in Rule 32, speaks of reproof and discipline for not properly taking care of the tools and goods of God (the discipline of the Rule). Benedict is very much aware of our human weaknesses, we lapse into behavior not respecting ourselves or others as sacred vessels of God - in our human relationships, you may ask yourself whether you may get upset about admonitions, gentle corrections or requests from others, do you accept them gratefully and attempt to improve? In your own spiritual life, how do you address these weaknesses and attempts to improve - as a small act of daily obedience?