



## Rule and Raven

In St. Benedict's left hand is his Rule for Monasteries that could well be summed up in the words of the Prolog exhorting us to "walk in God's ways, with the Gospel as our guide."

On a pedestal to the right of St. Benedict is the poisoned cup, shattered when he made the sign of the cross over it. On a pedestal to the left is a raven about to carry away a loaf of poisoned bread that a jealous enemy had sent to St. Benedict.

### C. S. P. B.

Above the cup and the raven are the Latin words: ***Crux s. patris Benedicti*** (The Cross of our holy father Benedict). On the margin of the medal, encircling the figure of Benedict, are the Latin words: ***Eius in obitu nostro praesentia muniamur!*** (May we be strengthened by his presence in the hour of our death!). Benedictines have always regarded St. Benedict as a special patron of a happy death. He himself died in the chapel at Montecassino while standing with his arms raised up to heaven, supported by the brothers of the monastery, shortly after St. Benedict had received Holy Communion.

### Monte Cassino

Below Benedict we read: ***ex SM Casino MDCCCLXXX*** (from holy Monte Cassino, 1880). This is the medal struck to commemorate the 1400th anniversary of the birth of Saint Benedict.

### Reverse Side of the Medal

#### Crux mihi lux

On the back of the medal, the cross is dominant. On the arms of the cross are the initial letters of a rhythmic Latin prayer: ***Crux sacra sit mihi lux! Nunquam draco sit mihi dux!*** (May the holy cross be my light! May the dragon never be my guide!).

In the angles of the cross, the letters **C S P B** stand for **Crux Sancti Patris Benedicti** (The cross of our holy father Benedict).

#### Peace

Above the cross is the word *pax* (peace), that has been a Benedictine motto for centuries. Around the margin of the back of the medal, the letters V R S N S M V - S M Q L I V B are the initial letters, as mentioned above, of a Latin prayer of exorcism against Satan: ***Vade retro Satana! Nunquam suade mihi vana! Sunt mala quae libas. Ipse venena bibas!*** (Begone Satan! Never tempt me with your vanities! What you offer me is evil. Drink the poison yourself!)

#### An approved Blessing of the Medal of St. Benedict

V. Our help is in the name of the Lord.

R. ***Who made heaven and earth.***

In the name of God, the Father + almighty, who made heaven and earth, the seas and all that is in them, I exorcise these medals against the power and attacks of the evil one. May all who use these medals devoutly be blessed with health of soul and body. In the name of the Father + almighty, of the Son + Jesus Christ our Lord, and of the Holy + Spirit the Paraclete, and in the love of the same Lord Jesus Christ who will come on the last day to judge the living and the dead, and the world by fire. **Amen.**

Let us pray. Almighty God, the boundless source of all good things, we humbly ask that, through the intercession of Saint Benedict, you pour out your blessings + upon these medals. May those who use them devoutly and earnestly strive to perform good works be blessed by you with health of soul and body, the grace of a holy life, and remission of the temporal punishment due to sin.

May they also with the help of your merciful love, resist the temptation of the evil one and strive to exercise true charity and justice toward all, so that one day they may appear sinless and holy in your sight. This we ask through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**