

Insert
ST BENEDICT

THE MEDAL OF ST BENEDICT



On the face of the medal is the image of Saint Benedict. In his right hand he holds the cross, the Christian's symbol of salvation. The cross reminds us of the zealous work of evangelizing and civilizing England and Europe carried out mainly by the Benedictine monks and nuns, especially for the sixth to the ninth/tenth centuries.

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 Prologue 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!)