

**THE IDEAL OF THE
MONASTIC LIFE FOUND
IN THE APOSTOLIC AGE**

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The ideal of the monastic life found in the apostolic age by Dom Germain Morin

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BY

DOM GERMAIN MORIN, O.S.B.

OF THE ABBEY OF MAREDSOUS

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY

C. GUNNING

WITH A PREFACE BY

DOM BEDE CAMM, O.S.B.

OF DOWNSIDE ABBEY

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I hereby approve of Dom Germain Morin's
book, "L'Idéal Monastique et la Vie Chrétienne
des Premiers Jours," and authorize its translation
into English according to arrangements made
with Dom Bede Camm, O.S.B.

✠ COLUMBA MARMION,
Abbot of Maredsous.

Die 30 Octobris, 1918.

nihil Obstat.

FR. INNOCENTIUS APAP., O.P.
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WESTMONASTERII,
Die 15 Novembris, 1918.

EDITOR'S PREFACE

I HAVE been asked by the Abbot of Maredsous to prepare this translation of Dom Germain Morin's work for the press, and to write a few words of introduction. I cannot refuse one to whom I owe so much, but it is obviously quite unnecessary, if not impertinent, for me to say anything in commendation of either the author or his book.

Dom Morin has a European reputation as a savant, and the University of Oxford has honoured not so much him as itself in giving him a Doctor's degree *honoris causa*.

His discoveries in the field of patristic study, his illuminating treatment, to take only one example, of the problem of the authorship of the *Quicumque vult*, his enormous labours in preparing a complete and final edition of the

works of St. Cæsarius of Arles, his brilliant studies on the most difficult questions of liturgical research, have indeed made his name famous in the annals of erudition. The French edition of this work was published anonymously, but the present writer has been fortunate enough to succeed in persuading the learned author to allow his name to appear in this translation.

To those who do not know Dom Morin, save as a savant, these simple pages may come as a revelation.

For here we find no parade of erudition, no affectation of research. We have the humble and devout monk speaking simply and earnestly, to his brethren in the cloister, of the eternal truths and of those special obligations which the monastic life imposes. The whole work breathes the simple piety of the ages of faith, and is impregnated with that peace of heart and liberty of spirit which are characteristic of the true son of St. Benedict.

Yes, this is no mere collection of pious exhortations; it is a work full of solid doctrine founded on the Benedictine Rule, and on the

writings of the Saints and Fathers, by one who has drunk deeply of their spirit.

If we read these pages attentively, we shall be more and more impressed by the fact that, simple as they seem, they are very far from being commonplace, but are indeed the fruit of no ordinary mind. Only one, in fact, who, like Dom Morin, was deeply versed in the annals of monastic antiquity could possibly have written them.

The present writer had the happiness of being a member of the Community to whom these meditations were first addressed. It was his very first retreat as a Catholic, and he has never forgotten it. Some of the meditations, especially, perhaps, that on the Analogy between Baptism and the Monastic Ceremony of Profession, left an impression on his mind which has never been effaced. It is therefore to him a special pleasure to introduce this work to the English-speaking world.

It will be found most useful, not merely to Benedictines, for whom it was first intended, not merely to religious, for whom it has so many precious lessons, but to all Christians

who are interested in those eternal verities which were at once the strength and consolation of our fathers in the faith, and in those great and sacred principles which formed in the Benedictine cloister such giants of sanctity as Gregory, Anselm, and Dunstan, to whom Christendom in general and England in particular owe so enormous a debt.

DOM BEDE CAMM,

Monk of Downside Abbey.

Feast of St. Dunstan, April 19, 1914.