



SAINT BENEDICT

Around the turn of the sixth century, Benedict of Nursia left school in Rome for the mountains near Subiaco, Italy, with visions of finding a more intimate union with God. The young student of law and philosophy spent three years of solitude, prayer and penance at a cave in search of that gift.

Soon local residents began to visit this holy young man to hear the message of Christ in a new way. Eventually, Saint Benedict established a monastery at Montecassino on a mountaintop near Cassino, Italy. He wrote a *Rule for Monks* to assist those seeking the grace and truth of God's word. His order grew and Benedictine Monasticism began to spread throughout Europe, later to America, and today, throughout the world.

help and the intercession of the saints, we can gain support in our daily challenges.

The Benedictine Medal has been used as a prayer of exorcism against Satan, for rejection of evil, for a peaceful death, for peace, courage and guidance and for strength in times of temptation.

Oblates of Saint Benedict wear the Medal instead of the small cloth scapular formerly worn by Oblates. The Benedictine Medal can also be used in the Blessing of St. Maur over the sick.

THE MEDAL

Early Christians often wore a cross as a symbol of their faith. Saint Benedict felt deep faith and devotion to the Cross, which he passed on to future generations of Benedictine monks. This devotion led to the creation of medals showing Saint Benedict with a Cross in one hand and his *Rule for Monks* in the other. When the first medal was created is uncertain, and various additions were made throughout the years, leading to the current design.

The various features were finally incorporated into a medal struck in 1880 and known as the Jubilee Medal of Montecassino. The Benedictines there supervised its creation to commemorate the 1400th anniversary of the birth of Saint Benedict. It was produced in Beuron, Germany, at St. Martin's Abbey by request of Montecassino's Prior, Boniface Krug, O.S.B., who had been a monk of Saint Vincent Archabbey before he was chosen to be prior, and later the abbot, at Montecassino. The

Baltimore, Maryland native was born in 1838 and died in 1909.

Since its creation in 1880, this version of the Benedictine Medal has been in demand, making it the most popular one ever struck in honor of Saint Benedict.

Covering all of the important features ever associated with the image, the features of the Jubilee Medal, as it came to be known, can be interpreted and applied to any medal of Saint Benedict.

THE FRONT

Saint Benedict holds the cross in his right hand, symbolizing our salvation. The cross also is a reminder of the work of Benedictine monks and nuns who evangelized England and Europe between the sixth and tenth centuries. As noted before, his *Rule for Monks* is in his left hand.

A raven on a pedestal to the left of Saint Benedict is about to carry away a loaf of poisoned bread sent by an enemy. On the pedestal at his right is a shattered cup, also containing poison, which fell to pieces when Saint Benedict made the Sign of the Cross over it. The Latin words *Cruz S. Patris Benedicti*, which mean the "Cross of Our Holy Father Benedict," are above the cup and the raven.

The Latin words for "May we be strengthened by his presence in the hour of our death" encircle Saint Benedict. They read *Eius in Obitu Nostro Praesentia Muniamur*, and symbolize Saint Benedict as a special patron of a happy death. Saint Benedict died at Montecassino after receiving Communion, arms raised to

BLESSING

Our help is in the name of the Lord.
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 his 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 temptations 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.

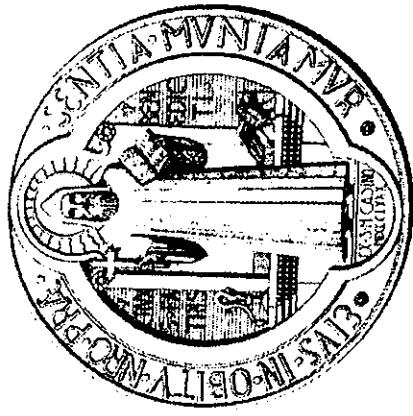
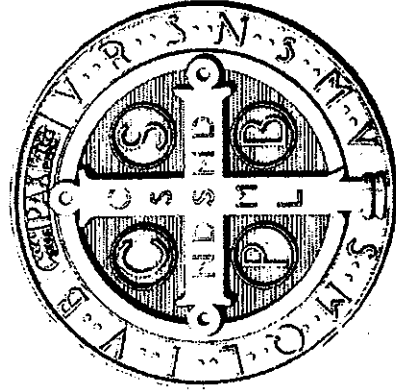
**HOLY WATER IS
SPRINKLED ON THE MEDALS.**

heaven and his brethren surrounding him. The Latin inscription below Saint Benedict gives the date and origin of the medal, "Abbey of Montecassino, 1880."

THE BACK

The initial letters of a Latin prayer, *Crux sacra sit mihi lux! Ninquam draco sit mihi dux!* appear on the arms of the cross. The prayer means "May the holy Cross be my light! The dragon never be my guide!" *Pax*, or peace, a centuries-old Benedictine motto, is above the cross. In its angles are the letters "C," "S," "P," and "B," which stand for *Crux Sancti Patris Benedicti*, or "The cross of our holy father Benedict."

The initial letters of another Latin prayer encircle the margin of the back of the medal, *Vade retro Satana! Ninquam suade mihi vana! Sunt mala quae libas, ipse venena bibas!* The prayer, an exorcism against Satan, is: "Begone, Satan! Tempt me not with your vanities! What you offer me is evil. Drink the poisoned cup yourself!)



THE BENEDICTINE MEDAL

Medals, rosaries, crosses, icons and items of similar nature have for centuries been a way of expressing devotion to God and reverence for the saints. Use of such items is intended to remind Christians of the presence of God in our lives and to create a desire to serve Him and our neighbors, and to invoke God's blessing and protection upon us.

The Benedictine Medal is no exception to this type of devotion. It can be worn on a chain around one's neck, attached to rosary beads, displayed in homes, or just carried in a purse or wallet. Devout use of the medal becomes a reminder of our prayer for God's blessing and protection, especially through Saint Benedict's intercession.

Study of the inscriptions on the Benedictine Medal can bring peace of mind and heart during the struggles of our day-to-day lives, and call to mind the realization that with God's