**STABILITY/COMMITMENT**

**Rule of Benedict**

* Prol. 33-35 “like a wise person who built their house on a rock”
* Prol. 48-50 “faithfully observe this teaching in the monastery until death”
* RB 4:75-78 The Tools of Good Works
* RB 7:35-36 “one’s heart quietly embraces suffering and endures it without weakening or seeing escape”
* RB 58:9-17 The procedure for receiving brothers/sisters

**Beliefs**

* Stability is integrally related to *conversatio morum* and obedience*.*
* Stability involves both stability of place and stability of heart.
* Stability involves faithfulness and perseverance in the way of life of my community.
* Stability is being rooted in God and in the community.
* Christian freedom is rooted in stability in God.
* Stability is necessary for spiritual growth.
* “Much of the challenge of stability is the interior task of learning to sit with our own impairment, allowing ourselves to be hollowed out.” (“The Value of Stability”, p. 293)
* Stability is a matter of learning to love. Without genuine love, stability is useless.
* Stability protects the process of purgation.
* Stability is at the service of contemplation.
* Trust in Providence is an important aspect of stability.
* Our ultimate stability is in Christ. (Col. 2.7 – Be rooted and built up in Christ) (Eph. 3.17 – and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love)

**Practices**

* Nurturing healthy, positive relationships with the sisters in community.
* Willingness to serve one another in community.
* Sharing with others in the community the joys and challenges of community living.
* Nurturing one’s relationship with God in prayer.
* Practicing patience with oneself and one’s sisters.
* Continuing and deepening in prayer, reflection, and reading

**Resources**

Casey, Michael. “The Benedictine Promises,” in *Tjurunga* 24 (1983).

* This article can also be found in *An Unexciting Life: Reflections on Benedictine Spirituality*, pp. 205-233.
* It contains a section on each of the promises.

Casey, Michael. “The Value of Stability” in *Cistercian Studies Quarterly* Vol. 31.3 1996:

287-301.

* This article is also in *An Unexciting Life: Reflections on Benedictine Spirituality*, pp. 235-257.
* Describes stability in terms of aggregation to a local community, localization, commitment to and perseverance in practice, stability of mind, trust in providence and lovers of the sisters.
* Casey describes stability as: aggregation to a local community, localization, commitment to and perseverance in practice, stability of mind, trust in providence and lovers of the sisters
* Reflection questions:
  + How does Casey’s description of stability add to your understanding of stability?
  + Which of these aspects of stability most speaks to you right now?

Chittister, Joan. “Stability: Revelation of the Many Faces of God,” in *Wisdom Distilled from*

*the Daily: Living the Rule of St. Benedict Today*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1990.

De Seilhac, Lazare. “The Dynamism of a Living Stability: Monastic Profession Inculturated”

1993 Symposium of Benedictine Women Sant’Anselmo, Rome, September 14-23, 1993, in *Benedictines* (Fall/Winter 1993): 36-49 and responses by Helen Lombard, “Stability’s Amazing Paradoxes,” pp. 50-53 and M. Ildegarde Sutto, OSB, “Stability’s Alternative Life Style” pp. 54-55, 64.

De Waal, Esther. “Stability,” in *Seeking God: The Way of St. Benedict,* 55-68. Collegeville, MN:

Liturgical Press, 1984.

Kardong, Terrence G. “Mobility and Stability,” in *Conversation with Saint Benedict: The Rule in*

*Today’s World*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2012, pp. 72-79.

Kodell, Jerome*. Life Lessons from the Monastery: Wisdom on Love, Prayer, Calling and*

*Commitment*. Frederick, Maryland: The Word Among Us Press, 2010: 59-77.

* Read: Jerome Kodell, OSB, *Life Lessons from the Monastery*, pp. 59-77 and Terrence Kardong, OSB, “Mobility and Stability,” in *Conversations with Saint Benedict*.
* Bring 3-4 points from the two readings to class for discussion
* Bring a symbol of stability for you.

Presentation on Stability from Ferdinand Benedictines.

Schlabach, Gerald W. “The Vow of Stability: A Premodern Way through a Hypermodern

World” Accessed April 5, 2015 <http://www.geraldschlabach.net/the-vow-of-stability/>

* This article also appeared as “Stability amid Mobility: The Oblate’s Challenge and Witness” in the *American Benedictine Review*, 52:1 (March 2001)
* Read this article and bring 3-4 points for discussion to class.

Tomaine, Jane. “Stability: Staying Power.” In *St. Benedict’s Toolbox: The Nuts and Bolts of*

*Everyday Benedictine Living*, 45-60*.* Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing, 2005.

Wilkes, Paul. “Stability - A Sense of Where You Are,” in *Benedictines*. 54:1(\_\_\_): 22-35.

**Reflection Questions**

1. How do you nurture and guard stability of heart?
2. What is your understanding and your experience of stability of heart?
3. What helps you persevere in the monastic life?
4. How has stability contributed to your spiritual development this year?
5. What have you found to be the benefits and challenges of stability for you in the monastery?
6. What is our deepest source of stability? What scripture passages best express that for you?
7. What does the promise of stability mean to you? Write a 1-2 page reflection paper.

**Skills/Personal Growth Plan**

The novice commits herself to stability in this monastery by:

* Giving her presence and service to community members
* Giving and receiving respectful affirmation and challenge
* Expressing the values of this Benedictine community in her daily life
* Nurtures a healthy balanced life
* Being faithful to prayer, reflection and reading

**Activities**

* Tools for stability can be found in *St. Benedict’s Toolbox*, pp.54-57.