



Quotes from The Rule of Benedict – Insights for the Ages Joan Chittister

“For the wise, it seems, life is not a series of events to be controlled. Life is a way of walking through the universe whole and holy.”

“The person who prays for the presence of God is, ironically, already in the presence of God. The person who seeks God has already found God to some extent.”

“Our task is not to put God in our lives. God is already there. Our task is simply to realize that.”

“Even the spiritual life can become an arrogant trap if we do not realize that the spiritual life is not a game that is won by the development of spiritual skills. The spiritual life is simply the God-life already at work in us.”

“It is so easy to go to church instead of going to a friend whose depression depresses us. It is so easy to want silence rather than the demands of children. It is so much easier to read a book about religion than it is to listen to a husband talk about his job or a wife talk about her loneliness.”

“It is so much more heroic to fast than it is to be patient with a noisy neighbor. It is so much easier to give the handshake of peace in church than it is to speak gently in the family.”

“It is not enough, for instance, to refuse to slander others; we must rebuild their reputations. It is not enough to disapprove of toxic waste; we must do something to save the globe. It is not enough to care for the poor; we must do something to stop the poverty. We must be people who bring creation to life.”

“Following the leader is not the end for which we’re made; finding God is. Benedict makes the superior of his monasteries a lover of people, a leader who can persuade a person to the heights, show them the mountain and let them go.”

“Benedict wants a community that is led, but not driven. “ “He does not want people in positions simply to get a job done. He wants people in positions who embody why we bother to do the job at all. He wants holy listeners who care about the effect of what they do on everybody else.”

“...(Leaders) are to keep clearly in mind their own weak souls and dark minds and fragile hearts when they touch the souls and minds and hearts of others.” “Knowing our own weaknesses and admitting them, we can with great confidence teach trust in the God who watches with patience our puny efforts and our foolish failures.”

“Leadership is not intent on making things right; leadership is intent on making life right.”

“A willingness to be formed is the basis of formation. Anything else is fraud. People cannot be beaten into sanctity. They can only be beaten into submission.”

“What Benedict wants is simply that we keep on trying. Failures and all. Pain and all. The God of mercy knows what we are and revels in weakness that tries.”

*Listen, listen, love, love