

THE POWER OF THE MONASTERY

Benedictine Monasteries civilized the barbarians of early Europe by the quiet example of the monks. The monks did not preach, they did not conduct workshops, they did not publish, they did not argue or debate. They had no cause to promote or to push. Their work was done in silence, and their silence reached the Ears of God and the hearts and minds of the people around them. The silence of the monks, and the simplicity of their lives forced the barbarians to wonder. The gentle breeze seemed to carry the calm serenity of the monastery from troubled door to troubled door. They looked and they listened, as the power of the humble prayer of the monks proved to be more of a mighty force than any eloquent words they might have had to present to the hordes. The monks worked on the hearts of the barbarians, not their minds, and they, with the ears of their hearts learned of the things that were of God.

Monks have a *distinctive vocation*, and it can be fulfilled only within the walls of the monastery. To try to work outside the limits of his monastery, places the monk in the great danger of losing his monastic vocation. When outside of his monastery, the monk is prevented from giving the most effective example of prayer, and work, and humility, and poverty, and obedience, and the Love of God to those who are in need of good example. A plentitude of words will never replace good example. Silent example is the work of the monk, and his only workshop is the solitude of his monastery.



Alleluia