

Rule of Life

Order of the Most Holy Mary Theotokos

“Benedictines of Mary, Old Catholic Marianists”

(An Invitation to a Well-Ordered Way of Life)

What is a Rule of Life?

A Rule of life is absolutely essential to any monastic life. It says ‘this is who we are, this is our story’; and it reminds us of those things God has put on our hearts, calling us back to our foundations. The idea of a Rule of Life developed in Christian monastic communities, and indeed, monasteries and convents today still function under a Rule, the best-known of which is that of St. Benedict, dating from the 6th century. Monastic stability is based on accountability to the Rule of life; it serves as a framework for freedom – not as a set of rules that restrict or deny life, but as a way of living out our vocation alone and together. It is rooted in Scripture, pointing always to Christ; and, in the words of St. Benedict, it is ‘simply a handbook to make the very radical demands of the gospel a practical reality in daily life.’

History

In the developing history of monasticism each community or monastic order has had its own particular areas of strength, calling, and emphasis. One may be contemplative; another may have at its heart a calling to serve the poor; another the carrying of the Gospel to people of different languages or culture-groups; another may have its strengths in spiritual direction, education, or discipleship. Their Rule will reflect this emphasis and provide a basic ground in the common calling of everyone identified as part of the community. When it became time to formulate our Community Rule we tried to discern what the vows should be which would reflect the character and spirituality of the Community as it had already developed. It was as a result of this reflection that being people of faith, followers of Mary, people of community, discipleship of equals, and leaders in mission were to be embraced as the distinctive charisms of our Community.

Dear friends, dear Order of the Most Holy Mary Theotokos members, always grow in your love for Christ, your apostolic drive, and the practice

of charity, which is your charism....the charism of the Order. The Church needs these traits.

The history of the Order of the Most Holy Mary Theotokos is one of responding to a call we believe to be from God: a call to risky living, exploring ‘a new monasticism’ and our Rule developed out of this life already being lived. In effect it was a written response to the many people who were asking what was central to our hopes and dreams, and what were the values and emphases that reflected the character and ethos of our way for living. By a process of trial and error we found we were learning to live the questions as well as ask them: How then shall we live? Who is it that you seek? How shall we sing the Lord’s song in a strange land? Living these questions, rather than providing pat answers that effectively ended the quest, actually became lifeblood for the Community. We discovered the reality of Rowan Williams’ statement that ‘Christ indeed answers our questions; but he also questions our answers.’

This is really important to understand: our Rule is our response to these questions. It is not an answer, only a response: an exploration of a way for living rooted in liberty rather than legalism or license.

For us, the life came before the Rule. We were living, hoping and dreaming these things before they were ever written down. So, we must focus not on the Rule, but on the things God has put on our heart. The Rule serves to remind us of these things, serves as a check, and calls us back to see if our dreams are still there. ‘It has more to do with a spiritual vision of community life, with roots continually to be rediscovered, than with a legislation document’ as The Taizé Story says in discussing their own community Rule.

A Rule then is a means whereby, under God, we take responsibility for the pattern of our spiritual lives. It is a ‘measure’ rather than a ‘law’. The word ‘rule’ has bad connotations for many, implying restrictions, limitations, and legalistic attitudes. But a Rule is essentially about freedom. It helps us to stay centered, bringing perspective and clarity to the way of life to which God has called us. The word derives from the Latin ‘regula’ which means ‘rhythm, regularity of pattern, a recognizable standard’ for the conduct of life. We do not want to be legalistic. A Rule is an orderly way of existence but we embrace it as a way of life not as keeping a list of rules. It is a means

to an end – and the end is that we might seek God with authenticity and live more effectively for Him.

Being bound to a Rule of life could be very restricting, but it is a voluntary and purposeful restriction. It excludes other possibilities in order to be focused on what is chosen. There are new and demanding priorities, but there is also much joy.

The word for Rule has a double root-meaning; one is that of a ‘signpost’ which has a purpose of pointing away from itself so as to inform the traveler that they are going in the right direction on their journey. It would be foolish to claim we have arrived if we are only at the signpost! We don’t stop at the Rule and venerate it. The other root-meaning is that of ‘a banister railing’ which is something that gives support as you move forward, climbing or descending on your journey.

St. Benedict

St. Benedict (480 – 547 AD), the Father of Western monasticism, lived at a time of tremendous social upheaval and cultural change. Wanting to insure a way of life which was both stable and flexible, he wrote his Rule for monasteries. Borrowing heavily from previous monastic sources, he crafted a Rule which was distinguished by a high degree of balance and sanity. Benedict himself says that in drawing up his rule, he hoped “to set down nothing harsh, nothing burdensome.”

Rather, outlining a day divided between prayer, work, study, and sleep, and in tune with the seasons, both ecclesiastical and natural, he hoped to provide a model of Christian living. Like the good abbot, Benedict desired to: “so arrange everything that the strong have something to strive for and the weak nothing to run from.” It was the eminent practicality and good sense of this Rule which led to its ultimately being adopted as the normative guide to Western monastic life.

The “Benedictines of Mary, Old Catholic Marianists” Celebrate St. Benedict

Few saints have left such a palpable impact on the world as St. Benedict, the monk whose Rule set a standard for the Western monastic tradition. His balance of work and prayer, his validation of community life, and his regulation of monastic discipline set the pattern for religious life for centuries.

We celebrate him as their Patriarch – Patriarch of Western Monasticism. In his Holy Rule, he begins by saying:

"Listen, O my son, to the precepts of thy master, and incline the ear of thy heart, and cheerfully receive and faithfully execute the admonitions of thy loving Father, that by the toil of obedience thou mayest return to Him from whom by the sloth of disobedience thou hast gone away.

To thee, therefore, my speech is now directed, who, giving up thine own will, takest up the strong and most excellent arms of obedience, to do battle for Christ the Lord, the true King.

In the first place, beg of Him by most earnest prayer, that He perfect whatever good thou dost begin, in order that He who hath been pleased to count us in the number of His children, need never be grieved at our evil deeds. For we ought at all times so to serve Him with the good things which He hath given us, that He may not, like an angry father, disinherit his children, nor, like a dread lord, enraged at our evil deeds, hand us over to everlasting punishment as most wicked servants, who would not follow Him to glory."

We are . . .

An Old Catholic Benedictine Community of Men and Women dedicated to promoting devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, under her special Orthodox Church title, the Theotokos. Theotokos in Greek means "God-bearer". We honor Mary under that title and seek to live her example of the openness to the will of Almighty God and the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Rule

Professed Members

First Order Monks (Ascetics) of the Order of the Most Holy Mary Theotokos

Principles

Professed members of the Order of the Most Holy Mary Theotokos intend to love and serve God through a relationship with Jesus Christ and the Blessed Virgin Mary, adapting to their lives the Benedictine principles to which we base our common life.

- Grounded in obedience, we will listen for the voice of God speaking to us in Sacred Scripture and the traditions of the Church, in our daily circumstances and relationships, in the words of other people and in our own hearts. And hearing, we will try to translate God's word into action.
- Centering our lives in stability, we will be steady and regular in our prayer life and in the obligations of family, work, and community.
- Seeking conversion of life, we will reflect on our own lives in regular self-examination, believing that what God wants of us, as of every human being, is growth toward the fullness of the Image in which we are made. We will strive to be open to the changes required by and for that growth.

Values

As professed members of the Order of the Most Holy Mary Theotokos, we are committed to centering our lives in the basic values of Benedictine spirituality. Among these are:

- *Community.* This is not only a primary Benedictine value, but also an essential Christian virtue and a basic human need. As Religious, we will work to build, nurture and heal community in all the environments we are a part of. Since we are all part of Christ's body, our Order, parish, or local church is an important community for each of us, demanding our care and our love. It needs to be a living presence in our lives. We will seek to support each other's lives to the best of our abilities.
- *Hospitality.* We take seriously Benedict's instruction to welcome all guests and receive them as Christ. As Benedictines, we are called to consider all whom we meet as guests whom God has sent to us, remembering that it is particularly in the stranger that Christ is to be encountered.
- *Humility.* Benedict reminds us continually that humility is foundational to Christian living. Humility is not self-denigration; it is honest appraisal. We have gifts and deficiencies, as does everyone else. We start from there, remembering that God loves each of us with

a unique but equal love. It is that love which is the measure of our worth.

- *Balance.* Our ordinary life is our spiritual life. We plan for a balance between prayer, work, study, and recreation, keeping an inner balance even in the face of life's contradictions and complications.
- *Mindfulness.* Since all life is holy, we don't want to let it pass by unnoticed. We give our attention as fully as we can to what we are doing at the moment and to what is going on around us. Being present here and now helps us to be mindful of the continuing presence of God.

Disciplines

Each professed member of the Order of the Most Holy Mary Theotokos will work out a personal plan that fits the day-to-day world of home and workplace where we are called to live out our vocation. In constructing our plan, we try to be specific about what we actually intend to do in each of the core disciplines that support the principles and values we try to live by. See Appendix (Personal Plan)

- *Holy Eucharist.* We participate in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist every Sunday and on principal feasts and holy days if it is available. Some may find that they also are fed by weekday celebrations. Priests are "earnestly" urged to celebrate mass frequently, even daily. But this is a "recommendation," and there is no mandate to do so.
- *Daily Office.* For Benedict, the Daily Office is the work of God. It roots our life in the Psalms and Scripture and helps us live into the seasons of the church. The recitation of the Daily Office marks the holiness of our days and teaches us to live with right faith, certain hope, and perfect charity. Members may use one or more of the Daily Offices from the Roman or Anglican Liturgy of the Hours, the Benedictine Daily Prayer (A Short Breviary), the Monastic Diurnal, the Magnificat, the Book of Common Prayer, or some other collection for daily worship. Or they may pray shorter offices or adopt some alternative form of regular reading of the Psalms and Scripture. Consistency is key. The Daily Office may provide the framework for personal prayer and self-examination.

- *Personal Prayer.* Finding time each day to spend alone with God in silence is central to our spiritual life. Our part is to be there, offering the time and listening with the ear of our heart for the Holy Spirit's leading. God may draw us to penitence, thanksgiving, intercession, meditation, adoration, or other form of prayer, expressed either in words or in the inner silence of the heart. Lectio Divina, the monastic tradition of slow and prayerful reading and pondering of Sacred Scripture or other holy texts to feed the heart as well as the mind, is especially to be recommended as an appropriate form of personal prayer.
- *Self-examination.* Regular self-examination, confession, and reconciliation are central to a loving relationship with God and our neighbors. This may include, but is not limited to, the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- *Study.* An inquiring and enlightened heart and mind are fundamental to the transformation of our lives and the widening our horizons. All study, whether explicitly religious or not, can enrich our prayer.
- *Stewardship.* We are called as Christians to appreciate and to use the gifts God provides us, but at the same time to nurture a certain degree of inner freedom with regard to them. We are called to be in the world, but not of the world. We are to be faithful stewards of our bodies, our hearts, our minds, our goods, and our natural environment in gratitude to God and to God's glory.
- *Mission.* Jesus modeled for us a life of compassion where the call to love our neighbors is to be understood as a call to love and serve others, especially the poor and the afflicted.

Spiritual Tools

The following are traditional aids offered to us so that as we progress in this way of life and in faith, we can run on the path of God's commandments, our hearts overflowing with the inexpressible delight of love.

- A spiritual director or spiritual friend can assist in keeping us on the narrow way, challenging us when we attempt to domesticate God.

- A spiritual journal can mark our course and help us to see our way more clearly.
- Participation in a small faith sharing group can serve to support us and hold us accountable.

Requirements

- **Rule of Life.** As indicated above, each professed member of the Order must develop a personal plan which incorporates and expresses the principles, values and disciplines outlined. This can best be done in consultation with a pastor, spiritual director, or trusted friend, so that we might avoid, on the one hand, the danger of being unrealistic or overly scrupulous and, on the other hand, the danger of shrinking back from the challenge of Christian growth. This plan may be revised as necessary. See Appendix (Personal Plan)
- **Annual Report.** Each professed member will report annually, in writing, to the Presiding Archbishop-Abbot/Abbess upon the anniversary of their birth. The report will include a summary of his or her activities, ministry, or other work on behalf of the Order or toward the further growth of God’s Kingdom or service to mankind. Members are encouraged to keep a “spiritual diary” that may become a part of that report as well as a means to assist them on their journey. To be submitted with the annual report is payment of O.S.S.T. annual membership dues/tithe of \$100.
- **Annual Synod/Retreat.** All professed members of the Order are expected to attend an annual synod/retreat of the Order at least once every three (3) years, to be held at a set time and place. Members should notify the Presiding Archbishop-Abbot/Abbess in writing immediately of any circumstance that will prevent their attendance. Members who fail to attend more than one Synod in a three-year period without just cause may be subject to sanction. (Chapter meetings, professions of vows, ordinations, and other significant events in the Order should, whenever possible, be conducted at the annual synod/retreat.)
- **Support of the Order.** In thanksgiving for the infinite gift, offered to us by Jesus in the name of his Mother, each professed member will in turn support the Order with regular prayer, financial contributions,

and whatever other support they can. As Marianists, we dedicate our lives to Mary. We are honored to follow her example of humble service and faithful discipleship in every aspect of our life. The philosophy of the Order of the Most Holy Mary Theotokos is to let our members share in the cost of doing things; processing applications, printing and mailing of certificates, paying legal fees, renting web space, meeting expenses, etc. Professed members are therefore asked to consider what they can do to cover these costs. The annual dues/tithe is \$100 (To be submitted with the annual report). Some members may not be able to contribute much because of their circumstances, and others may be able to contribute more. No one is pressured to contribute funds, and everyone's contributions are held in the strictest confidence. However, professed members are expected to grow into the discipline of tithing, knowing that it costs money to maintain this Order and that everyone should share in those costs that further the love and compassion of Christ. Members are responsible for their own books, travel, and communication expenses.

- **Participation.** Every professed member of the community needs to be an active participant. This means that each member is actively pursuing a personal relationship with Christ and is on a path of spiritual renewal. This journey is different for each person, but it always leads to the same thing – total emptying of oneself and unifying with God.
- **Spiritual Advisor.** Professed members are encouraged to find for themselves a trusted person (either from within or outside the Order) to serve as their spiritual advisor to help hold them accountable and to lift them up in their faith walk.
- **Maintaining contact.** Professed members are strongly encouraged to be in regular contact with each other. This is a unique challenge of a dispersed community. We do this through email, teleconference calls, cell phones, text messaging, regional and national meetings (Convocations/Synods/Retreats). The interaction between the people must be relationship-oriented, and not just task-oriented. It is a proper blend of both.

Though we be divided in our dwelling, yet do we abide bound and inseparable in spirit and faith and loving-kindness.

- Sanctions. Professed members who have been deemed to be inactive in the Order may be sanctioned by removal, suspension, or other means of discipline. Likewise, members who are determined to have failed to maintain good moral and spiritual character or have caused the Order to be seen in a negative light, or damaged the Order's reputation, are also subject to sanction.

Monastic Vows

The primary function of the religious consecration of vows is to provide the religious with a life orientation structured toward personal sanctification on the one hand and the salvation of souls on the other. The religious Brother or Sister serves as a reminder of the ultimate importance of God in everyone's life. It is as the late Pope John Paul II said, "By seeking and following Christ, particularly in chastity, poverty, and obedience, you give the world a concrete testimony of the primacy of spiritual life."

The Order of the Most Holy Mary Theotokos strives to discern and respond to the needs of the Church today. As a consequence of our profession of vows, we enter a new family, our religious community. In this religious community, we assume new relationships and responsibilities toward God, our Brothers and Sisters in community, and the People of God. By our profession in the "Benedictines of Mary, Old Catholic Marianists", we commit ourselves to grow in holiness and to bring all to Christ.

Our vocation is an infinite gift, offered to us by Jesus in the name of his Mother. As Benedictines of Mary, we dedicate our lives to Mary. We are honored to follow her example of humble service and faithful discipleship in every aspect of our life.

*"When he is to be received, he comes before the whole community in the oratory and promises stability, fidelity to monastic life, and obedience. This is done in the presence of God and his saints."
–Rule of St. Benedict 58:17-18a*

The Vows of an O.S.S.T. Benedictine Monk

The monastic vows set forth by St. Benedict in his Rule are unique to the modern Church. Many believe that all religious and consecrated persons take the Evangelical Counsels: poverty, chastity, and obedience, but these are more recent expressions of the radical call that Christ challenges his disciples to follow in the Gospel. The vows of an O.S.S.T. Benedictine monk

most definitely include the Evangelical Counsels but take on a rich and beautiful expression in Benedict's Rule and the way of life it has inspired. St. Benedict taught the simple virtues of hospitality, respect, simplicity, and holiness. His rules for a good and balanced life are contained in the three vows that Benedictine monks take: obedience, stability, and conversion. For the glory of the Most Holy Trinity, the honor of Mary, and to follow Christ more closely in His saving mission, O.S.S.T. Benedictine Monks promise to God, and vow to observe:

- **Obedience**

Obedience means "to listen intently," and this vow is undertaken in a spirit of faith and love in following Christ who was obedient to the will of the Father. It requires that a monk listens intently to the voice of God as it is manifested in the Sacred Scriptures and the teachings of his/her superiors.

Monastic obedience is the relationship between a monk and the monastic leader, which extends to a connection of the entire monastic community in mutual obedience. The object of monastic obedience is the seeking of God. The monastic leader is a "director of souls," not a manager or boss. The role of the superior's commands is to help the monk's search for God.

The word "obedience" comes from the Latin root word audire, which means "to hear." Contrary to our society's promotion of anything goes and seeking our own pleasure, biblical obedience focuses on listening to the call of God by responding to the needs of others and our world. How that call is lived out may change over the course of our lives, but we must always focus on that call and not be continually diverted by other voices clamoring to be heard.

Isaiah 48:6b-7 says, "From this time forward I make you hear new things, hidden things that you have not known. They are created now, not long ago; before today you have never heard of them, so that you could not say, 'I already knew them.'" Obedience is a continuous process of listening to the new things God reveals to us every day, responding with faith and action to that which beckons us and saying "no" to that which does not further our call.

- **Stability**

This vow binds the monk in both body and spirit to the community of his or her profession for the rest of his or her life, where he or she serves under both a Rule and an Abbot.

Monks in the Benedictine tradition make a commitment to live their entire lives in the monastery they join. But this vow of stability extends beyond stability of place to stability of community and stability of heart. By committing to community, just as with marriage vows, monks promise to work through issues and improve relationships rather than simply run away.

Stability is an antidote to the restlessness of much of our world today, where we love to escape by avoiding problems. If our jobs, family bonds, and friendships don't satisfy, we pick up and move somewhere else or find new relationships. Stability is a vow to pay attention to the movement of God in every moment and not always be seeking more excitement, more stimulation, more toys. Stability counters the unceasing search for the new and extravagant.

Stability of heart is perhaps the greatest challenge of monastic wisdom today. What our world needs more than anything else is disciples of Jesus Christ who display stability of mercy, stability of justice, stability of grace, stability of forgiveness, and stability of reconciliation. The world needs to know that Christians will live out what they say and will practice what they preach. Stability is a vow to be consistent in our commitments and in our desire to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God.

- **Conversion (Conversatio Morum or “Fidelity to the monastic way of life”)**

Conversion encompasses all aspects of the total self-offering of the monk to God. Under this vow are included the evangelical counsels: poverty and chastity, embracing both for the sake of the kingdom.

Since they live independently they must, of necessity, own some property individually. Married members are required to consider their marriage vows and their families when living within the vow of poverty. Whether married or single, all members must strive to live simply, realizing that what they have is from God and that

ownership of these things is merely temporal. Members make a commitment to use their possessions in the service of God by donating a portion of their labor to the Church and the Order.

Married members must be faithful to their marriage vows. Unmarried members must live completely celibate lives. All must keep themselves pure in body and mind, according to their state in life, as well as being modest, self-disciplined, and free from all excesses in order to be free to love others as commanded by our Lord Jesus Christ.

At first glance conversion may seem to contradict stability. Conversion is a dynamic vow that encourages us to be continuous learners, always seeking new ways to grow in our faith and practice. Conversion implies transformation, as we become aware of our deepest longings and risk change of heart, mind, and life.

Many Christians groups use “conversion” to explain how a person comes to faith. Often, they experience a surprising and even spectacular change of heart where Jesus suddenly becomes real in their life, and they go from having no religion to claiming a personal relationship with Christ. People who are converted in this way can remember the day and hour of their religious experience and cannot understand the long, slow work of God in the lives of other disciples who were brought up in the faith since childhood. Not everyone is “born again” in the twinkling of an eye. Nor is faith always the result of a long process of cultivation.

In the Benedictine sense every person who seeks conversion is always looking for a new way to see life. Every day becomes an opportunity for transformation. Conversion is not a one-time experience but a continuous process of death and rebirth. It’s a way of looking at life that is creative, optimistic, positive, and open.

Conversion sees possibilities, not problems. It gives people the benefit of the doubt, always seeking to convert the difficulties of life into opportunities for growth. The person who vows to follow conversion of life wants to transform the whole world from death and despair to new life and hope. He or she is not dogmatic but is always seeking and open to the movement of the Holy Spirit.

Each one of these vows – obedience, stability and conversion, is counter-cultural and challenges the status quo as well as the way we often go about our lives. Every day is filled with profound experiences when we practice these three disciplines.

Monastic Vows vs. Religious Vows

Why are the monastic vows different than the traditional religious vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience?

At solemn vows a monk professes the following vow formula: “I promise stability in this community, conversion according to a monastic way of life, and obedience.” These vows are different from the formula for many other religious priests, brothers, and sisters, which are made up of the familiar triad: poverty, chastity, and obedience. The latter three are often referred to as the evangelical counsels, and while widespread among religious today, they are a more recent (so to speak) development than St. Benedict’s formulation of the monk’s promise in his Rule for Monks. Benedict, writing in the sixth century, had his monks promise, in Latin, stability, fidelity to a monastic manner of life, and obedience. The “fidelity to a monastic manner of life” translates the key Benedictine phrase in the vow formula, *conversatio morum*. The current translation, professed by all monks of our Order, uses the word “conversion” instead of “fidelity,” so as to echo a centuries-long tradition where the original Latin word was believed to be *conversio* rather than *conversatio*. (*Conversatio* means in this context monastic manner of life.)

The evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity, and obedience are a later formulation (fourteenth century), albeit rooted in the Gospels. The Franciscans are responsible for this formulation, presumably inspired by St. Francis’s keen attention to the virtue of poverty. St. Thomas Aquinas, a Dominican saint, also contributed greatly in his writings to the exposition of these three counsels.

Non-Professed Members

Third Order Secular (Associates) of the Order of the Most Holy Mary Theotokos

Associates

As early as 2009, the fledgling Order of the Most Holy Mary Theotokos instituted its first associate group of laity who were known as Companions.

Today this group is known simply as Associates. In thanksgiving for the support the Monks offer in open-hearted hospitality, in prayer, and in their examples of intentional living, each Associate will in turn commit to:

- Participate in some way with the life, work, and vision of the Order.
- Enrich their Christian way of life by living in alignment with Benedictine spirituality.
- Observe Sundays and Holy Days.
- Receive Holy Communion, when offered.
- Read Holy Scripture daily.
- Set aside a specific time each day for prayer and meditation.
- Support the Order with regular prayer and, if possible, financial contributions, and whatever other support they can.

Appendix (Personal Plan)

The O.S.S.T. Rule of Life is well established, but we ask our professed members to go one step further by developing a personal plan in consultation with a community member or spiritual director. The process of tailoring this plan to fit specific circumstances is consistent with the practical wisdom of Benedictine life. We also believe that engaging in this process supports spiritual growth. The personal plan, which supplements or augments the Rule of Life is a holistic description of the Spirit-empowered rhythms and relationships that create, redeem, sustain, and transform the life God invites us to humbly fulfill for the glory of Christ our Lord.

Some things to consider in crafting and creating your own personal plan: My Roles, My Gifts, My Desires, My Vision, My Mission. This list may be used as a place to collect all of your thoughts, but don't feel the need to fill in every space! May this be a life-giving and enriching process for you!

Our members come from a wide variety of religious backgrounds including Roman Catholic, Old Catholic, Independent Catholic, Celtic Catholic,

Orthodox, Anglican, as well as other Christian denominations. The Order of the Most Holy Mary Theotokos is a community of believers on a journey to seek spiritual growth and our place in the life of the Church. While our chrism is clearly Marian in nature, totally consecrated to Jesus through Mary, we have chosen to adopt and live by a common Benedictine Rule.

The differences between religious orders are fewer than one might initially expect. We all bear common features that are the hallmark of religious life. By following the O.S.S.T. Rule of Life, our professed members cultivate a more ordered spiritual life committed to anchoring daily life in the basic values of Benedictine spirituality: Community, Hospitality, Balance, and Mindfulness. However, for those interested in developing a personal plan that also incorporates, and is enriched by, some of the traditions of the many other religious orders in existence today (i.e., Cistercians, Trappists, Carthusians, Carmelites, Poor Clares, Franciscans, Augustinians, Dominicans, Jesuits, Missionaries of Charity, Sisters of Life, Marians of the Immaculate Conception, etc.); they are certainly free to do so.

The Order of the Most Holy Mary Theotokos is a trailblazer, establishing a new spirituality to meet the needs of men and women of the 21st Century.