



## Supporting one another

### *Benedictine Rhythms: Listen-Take Counsel*

### Parish Development Clinic

One of the things you can do to get the most out of this Clinic is support one another with ideas and critique. Our hope is that by the time you have completed the novitiate you have bonded with each other, not just in that vague cultural social manner, but in ways that express the Order's Promise and Charism.

#### *The Promise*

To seek the presence of Jesus Christ in the people, things and circumstances of life through stability, obedience and conversion of life.

#### *Our Charism*

The development of parish churches grounded in Anglican pastoral and ascetical theology, especially Benedictine spirituality. We also draw on the fields of organization development and organizational psychology. Our charism under-girds our community's life of liturgical worship, the spiritual dynamics of the Promise, and our mutual friendship.

Some of that gets built into the rhythms of the Order's life – we have an email conversation about a book, we have done common projects (daily office) and The Invitations (Take Counsel - Stop Grumbling); and now the Clinics. Some of the fruition of such activities comes within the event itself. A richer fruition would be for you to develop the habit of seeking counsel from one another about how to better do the work you have been called to. Maybe by the time you've been at this a few years you'll discover who among your brothers and sisters is most helpful; whose temperament best balances and expands your gifts. To discover that you'll need to ask for and offer support now.

As you plan the advance work you may be tempted to see it as a test of how smart you are. Or you may find yourself falling back upon one of us because we have more training and experience in some aspects of charism. Or you may rest in the parish priest's lone ranger approach, occasionally complain about the lack of a deeper collegiality, and avoid taking the steps that would actualize real mutuality in the world as it is.

We suggest that you begin a new practice now – ask for the ideas and critique of one another; respond when asked. Focus on the work needed at the front end of things. It's okay to share longer piece but unfair to assume others will always be able to respond.

Here's a starting place; something right at the core – How do you intend explain this to the parish? What are your three sentences that make the point of what this is about? Share it. Wait for others to share theirs. Respond to one another.

Here's something that would take a bit more work – Consider offering at least three sermons before Christmas that explicitly touch upon "Take Counsel - Stop Grumbling." Which propers most lend themselves to that? What initial thoughts come to mind for each of those Sundays? If you decide to do something along those lines you'd be wise to spend a few hours in the coming days looking over the propers and making this initial notes. Then share that with one another.

That kind of sharing and responding is most useful at the front end of things – before you implement things in the parish. Quality work begins there.

What do you think? Are you willing to work at that?