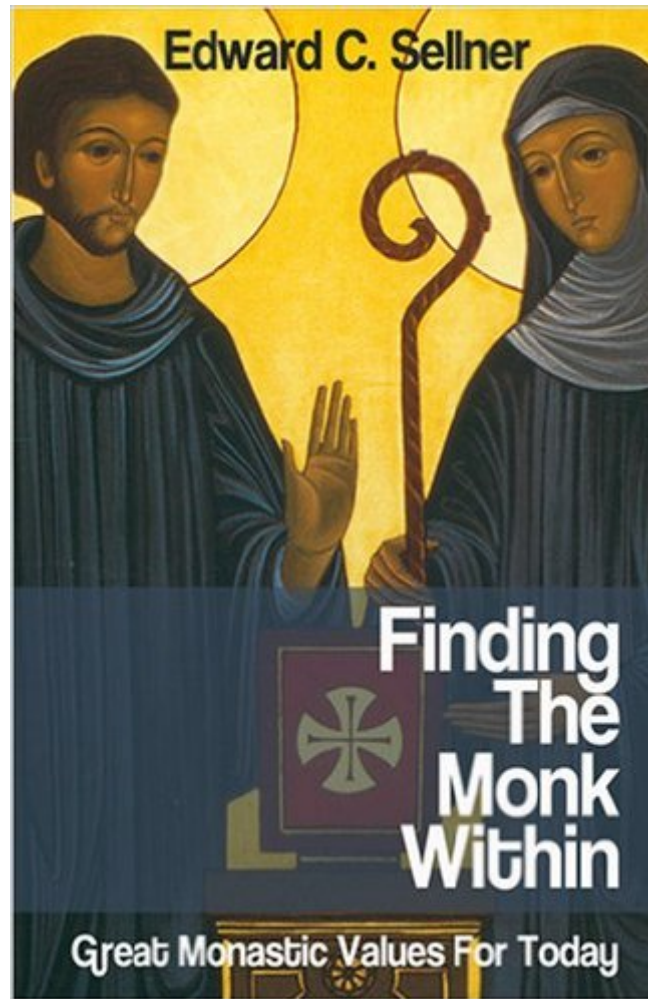


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Finding The Monk Within: Great Monastic Values For Today



Synopsis

Finding the Monk Within is written with the conviction that lying deep within every person and underlying much of contemporary western and eastern cultures is an ancient memory, a vital archetypal energy related to monasticism and its spirituality. This book recovers that monastic memory, the living presence of the past, for those who desire to name and incorporate monastic values: values of solitude and silence, faith and compassion, friendship and mentoring, contemplation and leadership itself. The author examines the social and religious dimensions in the fourth century that gave rise to monasticism, then looks at Christian leaders from late antiquity to the medieval period associated with monasticism in both East and West who have much to teach about monastic values and their relevance for today, among them Antony, the "first monk," Augustine and Jerome, John Cassian, Brigit of Kildare and early Celtic monasticism, Gregory the Great, Benedict and Scholastica and, finally, Bernard of Clairvaux. "By studying the history of monasticism and its great heroes we come to realize that, for the Christian, much of what we call 'monastic' is purely and simply what being a follower of Christ is all about, and that being a monk, whether inside monastic enclosures or outside 'in the world,' is simply becoming the sort of person everyone ought to be, a person who unites action and contemplation in the care of souls," writes the author. By becoming familiar with the stories and thought of these inspirational figures, readers will be inspired to incorporate monastic perspectives and values into their own lives.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Ed Sellner is a popular writer on Celtic Christianity and spirituality. His many books are thoroughly researched, a joy to read, and wonderfully presented. "Finding the Monk Within", was published in 2008, and like Mr. Sellner's other books, it does not disappoint. "Finding the Monk Within" demonstrates the enduring value of monasticism and how the monastic model can bring needed life and deep change to the Christian community. The book examines how "monastic values" have helped shape many of the great church leaders, movements in the history of the church, and can shape the reader as well. Sellner argues that we live in a culture which works against silence, reflection, and inner wisdom. The endless cultural stress on shopping and consumerism, mask a deep loneliness and emptiness. Monasticism, and specifically, many monastic practices, can help one to develop a rich spiritual inner life. However, one does not have to join a monastery to learn these principles. Instead, all we have to do is look to the past where certain monastic figures had a different approach to life, a different perspective, and a different set of values from mainstream culture. In this way, the saints of old can be important role models for us today. Sellner offers an impressive lineup of personalities who can teach us great monastic values. Athanasius teaches the values of sharing stories, and that one does not have to be a monk to live a significant life. Antony of Egypt emphasises the value of silence and solitude, and how these can foster discernment. Hilary of Portiers and Martin of Tours remind us of the value of faith, and its communal dimension. Augustine and Monica teach us of the importance of friendship, and that God can reveal Himself in our passions.

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