



being **Benedictine** in the
21st century
spiritual seekers in conversation

“Being Benedictine in the 21st Century: Spiritual Seekers in Conversation”

June 2020 Conference to Explore Living Benedictine Values in Our Evolving World

It is the nature of Benedictine life to listen intently and respond faithfully to the needs of every era, qualities that have enabled the charism to remain relevant for more than 1,500 years. How we respond, then, to the new questions and pressing needs of the 21st century will determine the ongoing relevance of this way of life for today’s seekers.

Societal thinking and attitudes are changing like sand shifting under our feet. We face calls for reform in our church as well as changes within our country’s economic structure, justice system and political discourse. Old ways are being challenged. Likewise, something new is being born. Even as church attendance declines and vocations dwindle, a yearning for lasting gospel values, moral leadership and deeper spiritual insight is evolving.

Our long history as Benedictines, our time-tested wisdom tradition, and our ability to adapt make us uniquely capable of addressing the longing for spiritual connection, community, and ways of living with integrity in an increasingly complex world. Our values of listening, community and consensus building, hospitality, humility, prayer and good work provide an antidote for these troubled times.

“Being Benedictine in the 21st Century: Spiritual Seekers in Conversation,” planned for June 26-28, 2020 in Atchison, KS, marks a first-ever gathering of professed Benedictines, Oblates, staff, volunteers, friends and benefactors of Benedictine ministries and monasteries, and any seeker who has read *The Rule of St. Benedict* and experienced a conversion of heart. We will hear from speakers including Benedictine Sister Joan Chittister, one of our visionary spiritual voices, and Oblate authors Kathleen Norris and Judith Valente and engage in facilitated conversation and idea generation. We will put special emphasis on inviting the participation of Millennials, people in their twenties and thirties who often eschew formal religion but still seek an authentic experience of faith in action.

This conference will not dwell so much on exploring *what is* but rather it will focus on, *What are the important questions we haven’t yet asked?* Through listening and dialogue informed by Benedictine values, the teachings of Vatican II, and inclusive theologies—inclusive of women, the environment, the oppressed, the refugee—our goal is to come away from this conference with a new roadmap for spreading the light of Benedictine spirituality well into the 21st century.

For more information, www.beingbenedictine.org

Or contact conference co-chairs,

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