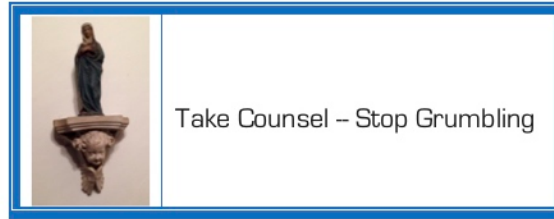


Holy Obedience

A reflection



A reflection by Bishop Scott Benhase, OA

Saint Benedict understood how central community was to obedience. It is our communion with one another that creates the context for holy obedience. In communion, listening, and a discernment, we seek God's will. In communion, hope, and decision we seek to obey and act. We need an obedience that is not grudgingly given, that does not foster, as Saint Benedict wrote, "a grumbling in our hearts," but rather an obedience that intentionally places us vulnerably open to the communion of saints. (p.76)

Parish life can be hectic at times. The urgent can mask the important. The problem in front of us at a certain moment can block the view of the larger vision to which God may well be calling. Obedience then serves as a great gift. It slows us down because it requires listening on so many levels: to scripture, to our prayers, and to the words of our neighbors in the church. We will often have to insist upon such obedience, because we serve a culturally infected Church, one that so often acts without listening to the many voices she needs to hear. Obedience insists that we first listen to God's voice and its different forms with one another, then humbly act, and then reflect critically on our actions. In our quick fix-just-do-it-winning-is-everything culture taking the needed time to be obedient is one of the greatest challenges of parish leadership. Yet, it is also one of the greatest gifts, if we accept it. (p. 82)

The threefold process of holy obedience – is listening to God in the Scriptures, and the prayers of the church, and in the voices of those around us. (p.88)

Bishop Scott Anson Benhase, OA

Done and Left Undone: Grace in the Meantime of Ministry, Church Publishing, 2018