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### Saint Benedict and Taylor's Life Together Covenant

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# Saint Benedict and Taylor's *Life Together Covenant*

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Taylor University



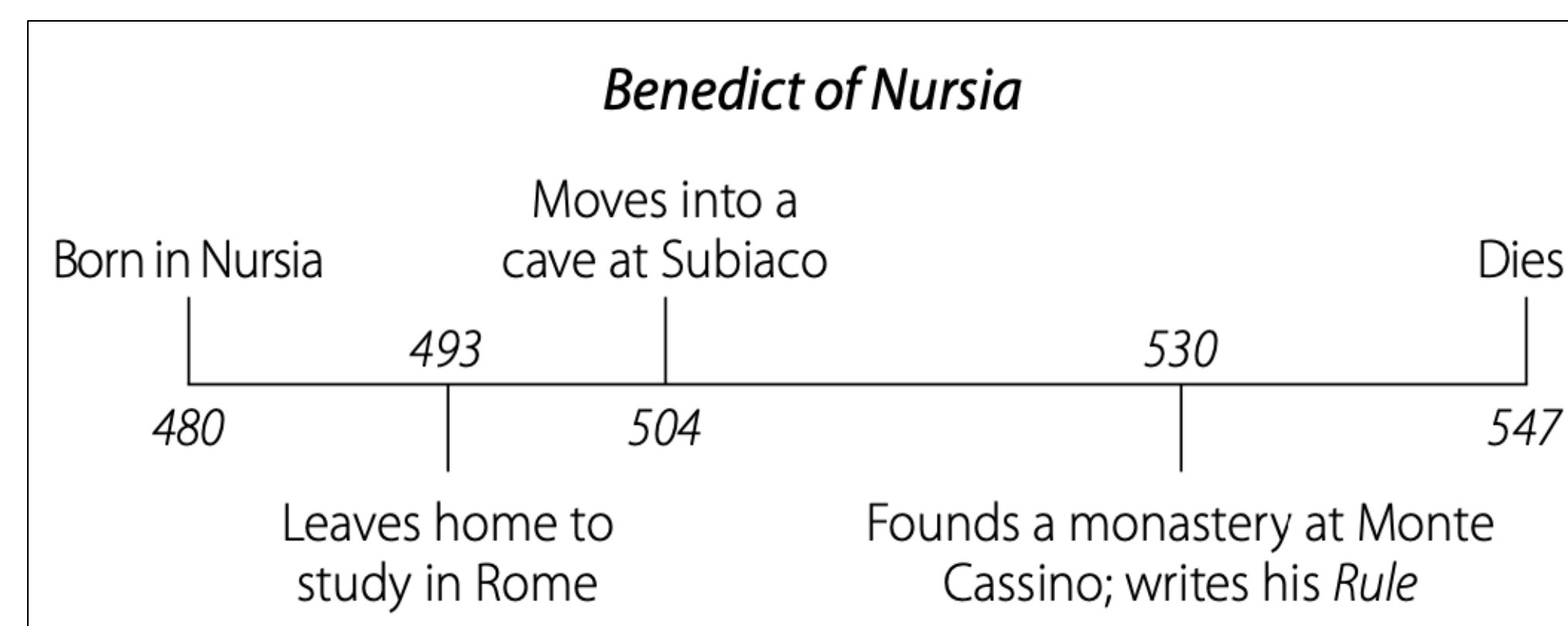
## BACKGROUND

### The Life of St. Benedict

- Born in Nursia (central Italy)
- Dropped out of school in Rome due to frustration with his classmates' sinfulness
- Became a monk so he could live a holy life, and others took notice, asking Benedict to lead them as an Abbot
- Moved south to start his own monastery
- Wrote his influential Rule of Life to outline Christian discipleship in a monastic context and significantly shaped Western Christianity

### Influence of Benedict's Rule of Life

- His Rule is concerned with pointing monks to the service of the Triune God.
- His Rule is concerned with administrative and spiritual functions
- Benedict's *Rule* was influential on Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who wrote *Life Together*, a text of central influence on Taylor's own *Life Together Covenant*.



Timeline from Peters' *Becoming a Community of Disciples*

## PURPOSE & RESEARCH QUESTIONS

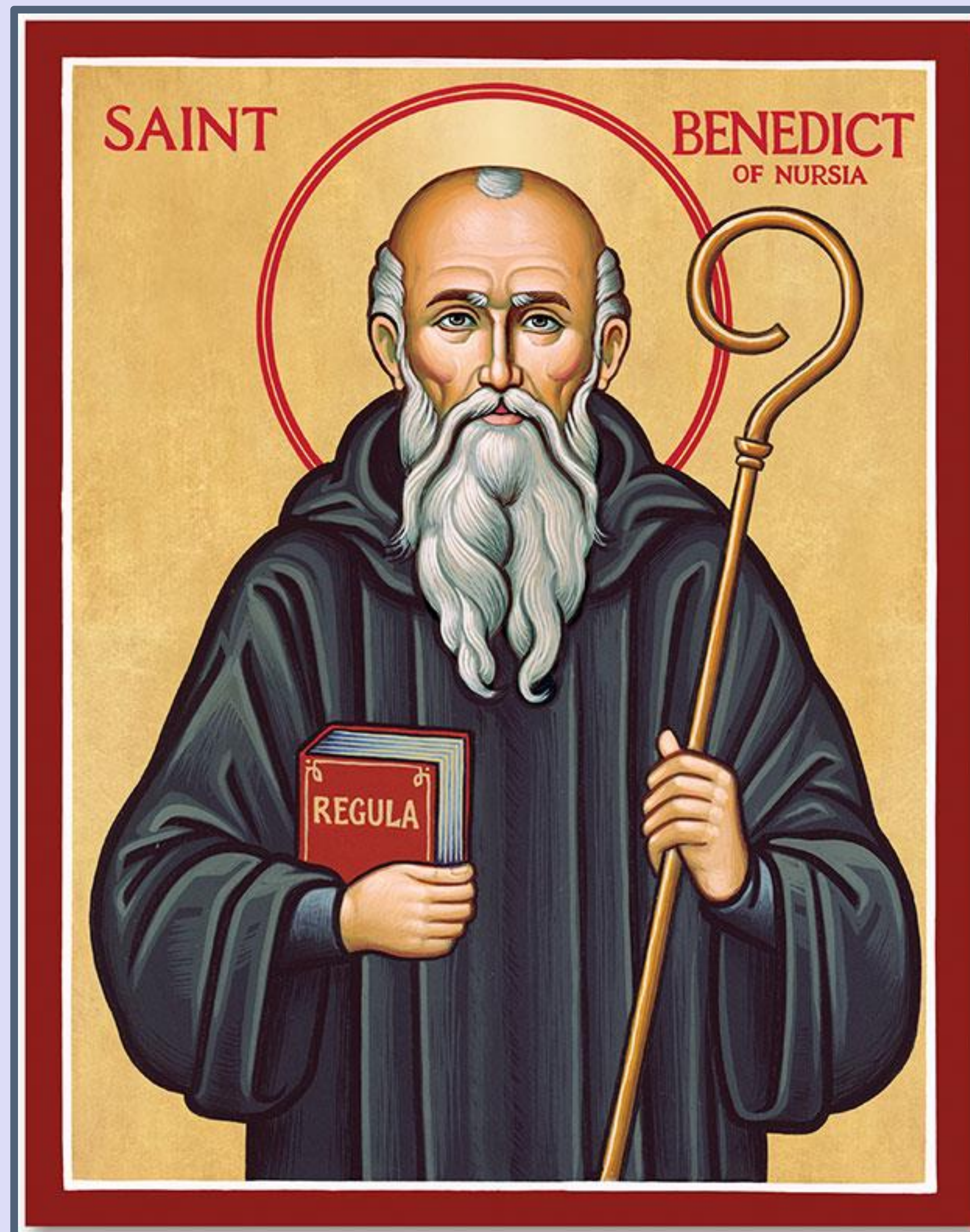
The purpose of this research is to answer the following questions: What are the similarities between Benedict's *Rule* and Taylor University's *Life Together Covenant*? What can the Taylor campus learn from Benedict's *Rule* concerning life as a spiritual community?

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

First, both Benedict's *Rule of Life* and Taylor University's *Life Together Covenant* were read, as well as secondary sources. The two primary sources were then compared in order to find similarities and differences. Finally, highlights from Benedict's *Rule* were explored as a resource for deepening Taylor University's understanding of its own *Life Together Covenant*.

## QUOTE

"We have therefore, to establish a school of the Lord's service.... Truly as we advance in this way of life and faith, our hearts open wide, and we run with unspeakable sweetness of love on the path of God's commandments (Ps 119:32). So that, never departing from his guidance, but persevering in his teaching (Acts 2:42) in the monastery until death, (Phil 2:8) we may by patience participate in the passion of Christ; that we may deserve also to be partakers of his kingdom. Amen (cf. 1 Pet 4:13; Rom 8:17)." – Prologue to Benedict's *Rule*



## RESULTS

Benedict's <i>Rule of Life</i>	Taylor University's <i>LTC</i>
Tools of God's good works (Chapter 4)	Commitment to a community lifestyle consistent with Colossians 3:12-17
Frequent time set aside for hearing God's Word and worshipping (Chapters 8-19)	Expectation for chapel attendance
Special services on Sunday (Chapters 11-12)	Setting aside the Lord's Day for Sabbath and encouragement to participate in a local church
Reverence in prayer and centrality of prayer to monastic life (Chapter 20)	Chapel time set aside for prayer and dedicated prayer space on campus
Commitment to community discipline and expectations (Chapters 23-30)	Responsibilities for individual attitudes and behavior

## CONCLUSIONS

- Benedict's *Rule of Life* and Taylor's *Life Together Covenant* share many similarities
- However, there is much the Taylor community can learn from Benedict's *Rule*:
  - We could begin to believe that our LTC is has a greater purpose, mainly to form a school for the Lord's service
  - We could make prayer central to every activity on campus
  - We could hold one another accountable to maintaining the Lord's Day as holy and set apart

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