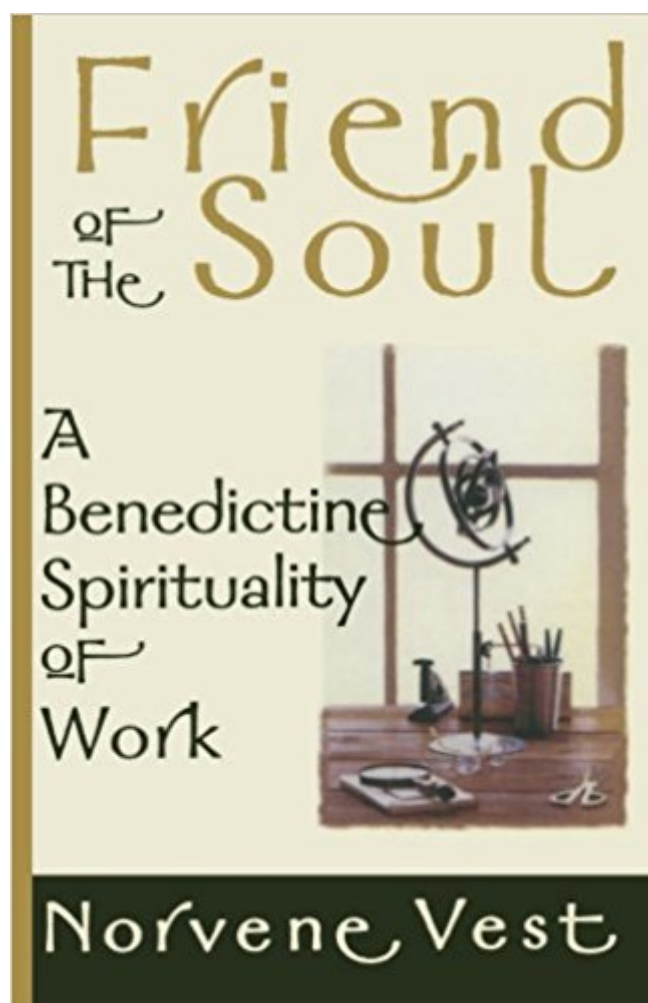


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Friend Of The Soul: A Benedictine Spirituality Of Work



Synopsis

In this second book in her series on Benedictine spirituality, Norvene Vest brings the insights of Benedict's Rule to the world of work. A gifted interpreter of Benedict's wisdom, Vest examines with empathy and clarity the plight of men and women who wish for their work to be life-giving, a service to others, and the place where they can experience the presence of God. Vest brings Benedict's perspective to three areas of work discontent today: the stress of performance, overproduction, and acquisitiveness. To these she opposes three Benedictine principles: vocation, or being called to what we do; stewardship, or taking care of what we are given; and obedience, or serving one another. Her emphasis is on the words of Benedict's primary text and its application for people today. Each chapter concludes with extensive spiritual exercises and food for thought.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Norvene Vest . . . views work as a holy endeavor—*as* vocation, stewardship, and obedience. The spiritual understanding of work, which has been operative in Benedictine monasteries around the world, sees our labor as an expression of our God-given gifts and talents. It contributes to the upbuilding of community, and it incarnates the process of serving others. Vest challenges us to unite work and prayer and, by so doing, to extend the kingdom of God. (Frederic A. Brussat The Cultural Information Service) Like Benedict, Vest applies Scripture to a workplace that little resembles biblical settings. Far from prescribing a motivational bromide to the dispirited worker, the author develops a plausible approach to sanctifying workplace relationships, tools and tasks. (Cathedral Age) Given

the raised profile and significance of work among those who have jobs and the increasing number of people who are prevented from gaining employment owing to structural changes in the labor market, the Church must direct its energies to developing a holistic theology of work and employment. Norvene Vest has given us a valuable building block. *Friend of the Soul* is recommended reading. (St. Mark's Review) *Friend of the Soul* brings a book-length treatment to the popular examination of what it means to "work and pray. . . ." There is clearly a theology under the practice and Norvene has brought her usual thoughtful and practical eye to this. (The American Monastic Newsletter) A well-known interpreter of the Benedictine way, Oblate Norvene Vest articulates with empathy and clarity the anguish of those who desire their work to be life-giving and meaningful. . . . By focusing on these timeless Benedictine principles of vocation, stewardship, and obedience, she gives the working reader a sense of inner stability in an increasingly chaotic workplace, and a higher vision, a place to stand from which to take risks and offer hope to the walking wounded of today's marketplace. (Benedictines)

NORVENE VEST is the author of *Preferring Christ*, *Bible Reading for Spiritual Growth*, and *No Moment Too Small: Rhythms of Silence, Prayer, and Holy Reading*. An oblate of a Benedictine abbey in Valyermo, California, she leads workshops and retreats on Benedictine spirituality in the United States and Britain. Every summer she and her husband lead a Benedictine Fortnight in England and Wales. For more information, please see her website, www.composury.com.

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