Learning to Live!
(cf RB Prol 20)

Stability and Hospitality
- An Invitation -

BENET 2026

World Meeting of Benedictine Educators

Sr. Manuela Scheiba OSB

Abbey St. Gertrud, Alexanderdorf (Germany)

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Introduction: A Fleeting Moment in which Strangers Become Friends

Alexander von Reiswitz (*1965)

Catching Strangers











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Experiencing a Counter-Culture

Benedictine Schools - Learning for Living













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Exterior Stability

RB 66
The Porter















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Inner Stability

RB 53 - Hospitality







The Oratory of the Monastery









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Hospitality
Communication and Interaction

RB 66
The Porter















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Hospitality
The Service of Listening

DIETRICH BONHOEFFER (1906-1945)
Life Together



The first service that one owes to others in the fellowship consists in listening to them. Just as love to God begins with listening to His Word, so the beginning of love for the brethren is learning to"listen"to"them9'w..y" listening can be a greater service than speaking.

“ he first service that one owes to others in the fellowship consists in listening to them. Just as love to God begins with listening to His Word, so the beginning of love for the brethren is learning to listen to them. It is n od’s love for us that He not only gives us His Word but also lends us His ear. So, it is His work that we do for our brother when we learn to listen to him. Christians, especially ministers, so often think they must always contribute something when they are in the company of others, that this is the one service they have to render. They forget that listening can be a greater service than speaking.

Many people are looking for an ear that will listen. They do not find it among Christians, because these Christians are talking where they should be listening. But he who can no longer listen to his brother will soon be no longer listening to God either; he will be doing nothing but prattle in the presence of God too.
This is the beginning of the death of the spiritual life, and in the end, there is nothing left but spiritual chatter and clerical condescension arrayed in pious words. One who cannot listen long and patiently will presently be talking beside the point and be never really speaking to others, albeit he be not conscious of it. Anyone who thinks that his time is too valuable to spend keeping quiet will eventually have no time for God and his brother, but only for himself and for his own follies” (Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*)

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Hospitality

Seeing Oneself Through the Eyes of Others

Taking in a Guest - Taking a Photograph



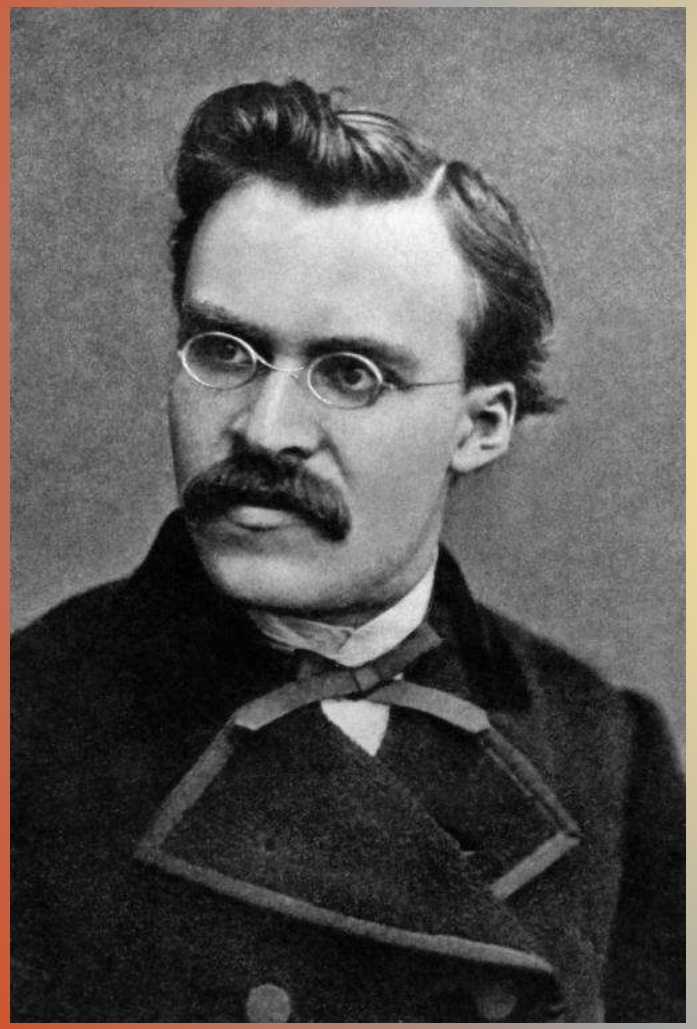


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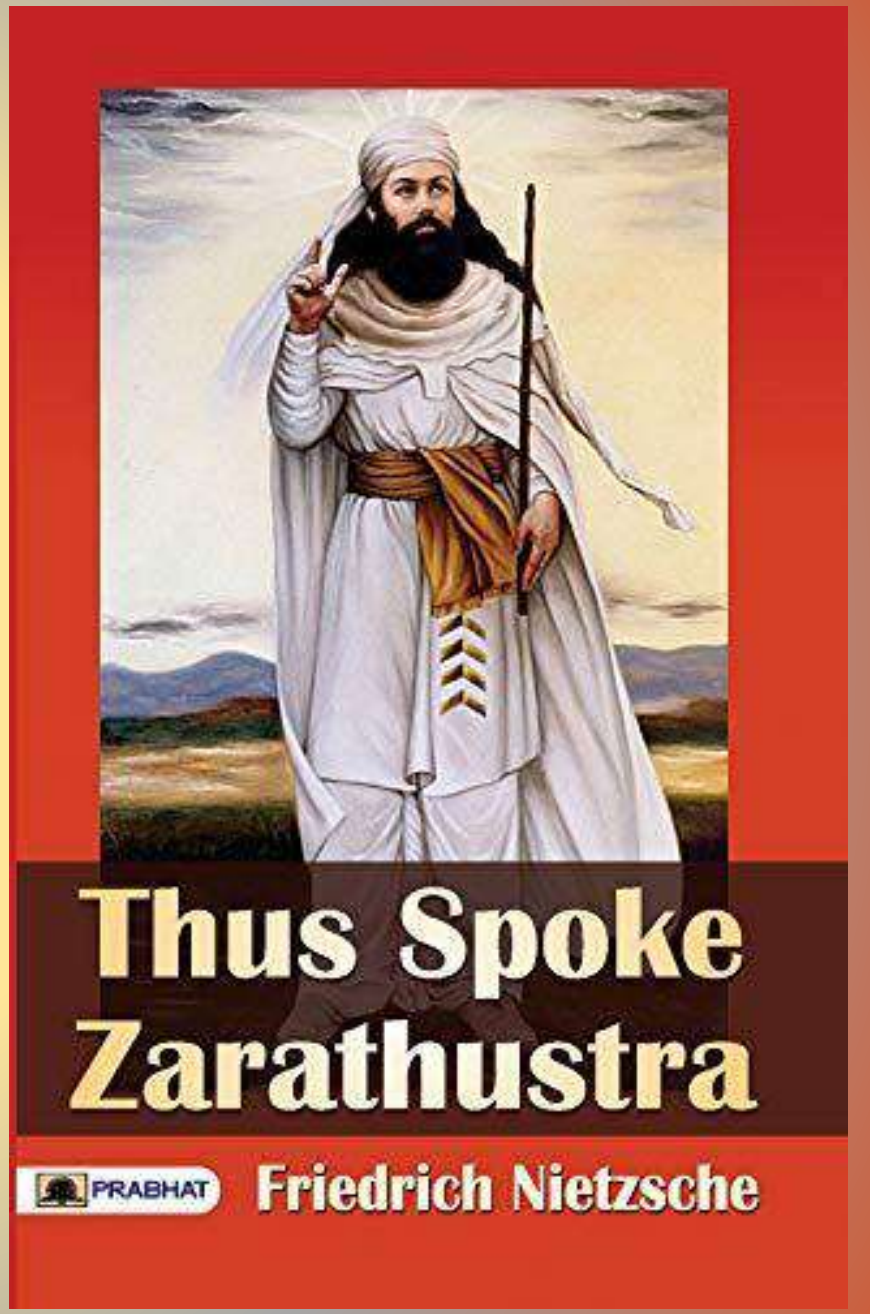
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Hospitality
Giving and Taking

Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900)



"I don't *give* them anything. Rather, *take* something from them. That is what will be good for them."



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Hospitality

To Carry (Away) Burdens

"barak" "ברך") – to bless











[…] God is a God who *bears*.

The Son of God bore our flesh, he bore the cross, he bore our sins, thus making atonement for us.

In the same way his followers are also called upon to bear,

and that is precisely what it means to be a Christian.

D. Bonhoeffer,

The Cost of Discipleshift



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Conclusion

convivere - To Live With – To Feast With



Convivium – An Invitation

[…] the law of Christ is a law of bearing. Bearing means forbearing and sustaining. The brother is a burden to the Christian, precisely because he is a Christian. For the pagan the other person never becomes a burden at all. He simply sidesteps every burden that others may impose upon him. The Christian, however, must bear the burden of a brother. He must suffer and endure the brother. It is only when he is a burden that another person is really a brother and not merely an object to be manipulated. […] The Bible speaks with remarkable frequency of “”e“ring.” It is capable of expressing the whole work of Jesus Christ in this one word. “ourely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows … the chastisement of our peace was upon him” (Isa. 53:4-5). Therefore, the Bible can also characterize the whole life of the Christian as bearing the Cross. It is the fellowship of the Cross to experience the burden of the other. If one does not experience it, the fellowship he belongs to is not Christian. If any member refuses to bear that burden, he denies the law of Christ.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*