

MONK

“Penitence is in the heart, not in words”

-Brother Cadfael, Saint Peter’s Fair



Skills

Animal Husbandry, Farming, Herbalism, History (Church), Latin, Meditation, Reading (if ordained), or Laborer, Scrounging, Theology

Trappings

Monk’s robes, a cilice (hairshirt), prayer beads.

Suggested Proficiencies

Domestic, Knowledge, Medicine

DESCRIPTION

A monk was a member of the clergy, taking vows of poverty, chastity, piety, and obedience. Unlike a priest or a friar, a monk lived in

a cloistered society known as a monastery, governed by strict rules and rigid discipline. Monasteries were often found in more secluded locations, allowing the brothers a lifestyle without worldly pursuits and temptations.

The life of a monk consisted of praying seven times a day, and chores. Lay members of the order (ordained monks) and any monks knowing how to read and write would copy and illuminate manuscripts; usually bibles and books of prayer, but also books about history and contemporary events. Brothers would perform chores around the monastery, including farming, gardening, and tending livestock.

Larger communities of monks (usually 12 or more) would often live in abbeys. An abbey was governed by an Abbot and was usually fortified, and could be located within a town or near a village. Monks of an abbey often had closer contact with the local population than the monks living in the more out of the way monasteries.

Women in the middle ages could become nuns (the female equivalent of a monk), living in nunneries, or an abbey for nuns lead by an Abbess. Their lifestyles were fairly similar, however as women, they could not become lay members, and were often visited by an ordained monk or priest to receive the sacraments.

CONCEPTS

*After seeing the horrors of war and the evils of men, you felt the need to pursue a more humble life, and joined a monastery. While enjoying your secluded lifestyle, at times you cannot help but question whether you would better serve God by doing more for the community, rather than retreating from it.