



Smaragdus of Saint-Mihiel: The Crown of Monks (Cistercian Studies)

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Smaragdus was a monk and abbot of considerable standing in the early ninth century church. His *Diadema Monachorum* (*The Crown of Monks*), together with a later commentary on the Rule of Saint Benedict, established him as one of the most significant interpreters of Benedict's Rule in his day and for succeeding generations.

Smaragdus intended *The Crown of Monks* as a daily resource for monastic communities, to be read at the evening chapter. He sought to arouse well-established monks "to a keener and loftier yearning for the heavenly country" and "to strengthen and instill fear" in weaker monks.

In this gathering of excerpts from various respected sources, a genre known as the *florilegium*, Smaragdus addresses a wide variety of topics perennially significant to monks. It offers rich material for *lectio* and meditation, forming monastic minds and hearts for facing whatever challenges come their way, linking them with the formative years of the monastic tradition, and pointing them to the final goal: the kingdom of heaven.

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