



The Monastic Rule of Iosif Volotsky

By DAVID M. GOLDFRANK, ED.

Cistercian Abbey of Spencer Inc January 1994, 1994. Paper Back. Book Condition: New. Iosif (better known as Joseph of Volokolamsk) was the leading spokesman for the "possessors," those who held that the monastic estate should work closely with the civil authority, as the kingdom of Muscovy took shape at the turn of the sixteenth century. He opposed the position of Nil Sorsky, leader of the "non-possessors," who held closer to what we would call today, "separation of church and state," and who taught that monastic institutions should not be landholders. (Interestingly, both Joseph and Nil Sorsky were canonized). It's easy to guess which saint is more popular in our egalitarian and secular society, but Iosif was the popular champion in his own time, and his Rule an extremely influential document in the universe of Russian Orthodox monasticism. It sifted and synthesized many earlier rules -- St. John Cassian's, St. Basil's, Dorotheus of Gaza's, St. Gregory the Great's -- thus becoming a landmark of monastic legislation. This edition not only translates, but provides extensive historical background for this Rule.

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