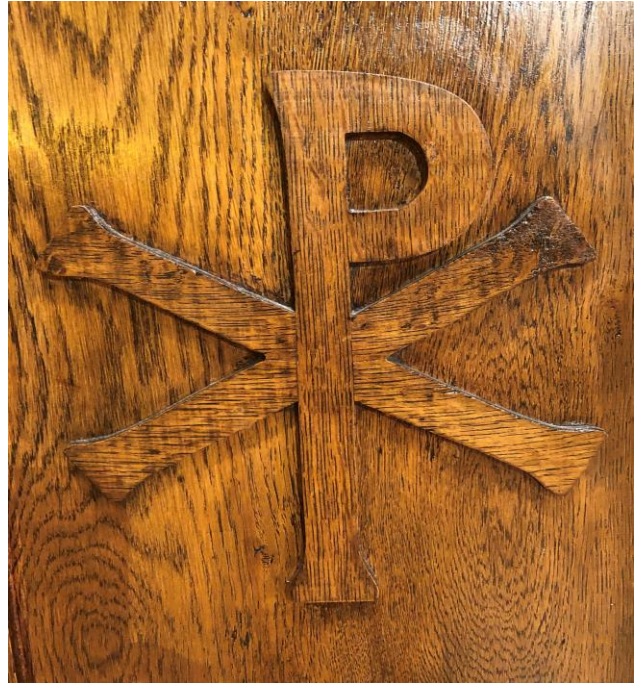




# Benedictine Bits

## Peace



A word often associated with the Benedictines is the Latin term, *pax*, meaning peace. Medieval monasteries would even carve the phrase *Pax Intranitibus* over their doorway stating, “peace to those who enter here.” In the prologue of the *Rule*, St. Benedict states that we are “to strive for peace on all levels: with self, others, and God.” Peace is something that requires constant effort and is acquired over time. Living in a state of peace, with oneself and with others, is a gift from God. It is a gift that we as individuals, can also give to others. Choosing to extend empathy and kindness to one’s neighbor is a mindful choice in the pursuit of peace. With each small act of peace, we can overcome the conflict that rages within us and among us. Sister Joan Chittister explains that “Benedictine peace, however, is not simply the absence of war. It is a lifestyle that makes war unacceptable and violence unnecessary. It is not a lifestyle dominated by control and a plethora of rules. It is a lifestyle that foregoes violence on every level, for any reason.”