Monks are called to the "contemplative" life. The word means to cut out a space for divination. The monk creates an inner temple, a space in mind, imagination, and heart where he can observe the signs of divine providence.

The work of the spiritual life includes the building of these inner temples and the creation of temenos—space set apart for sacred use. As this work progresses, everything acquires its temenos. As Emerson said, everything becomes a sign.

Contemplation, the primary work of the monk, achieves the necessary emptiness in every thing, every moment, and every event. These empty spaces, simply marked out as sacred, invite the soul to participate and provide places for its dwelling.