

# Developing a Rule of Life: Your Spiritual Discipline

## **Some of the assumptions we begin with include these.**

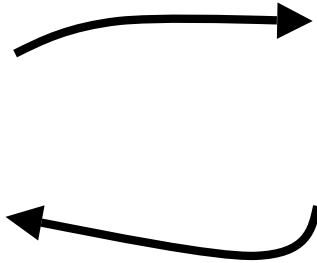
1. We all have a spiritual life.
2. It's a significant act of spiritual growth when we accept responsibility for our spiritual life.
3. A healthy spiritual life assumes engagement rather than escape, an interest in the life of the world instead of spiritual sentimentality or being caught up in illusions.
4. We are seeking a spiritual practice with roots in ancient ways and useful in modern life.
5. We need a spirituality that is both solid and resilient.
6. Our spiritual life serves us best when we understand that it is to evolve over time. What serves us when we are 11 differs from when we are 18 and still again from when we are 35 or 60. A fruitful evolution rises out of forms of spiritual life that are complex, rich and paradoxical. They continue to change as we increase our self-awareness, insight, and in response to changing circumstances.
7. It requires efficiency if it is to serve modern daily life
8. It requires attention and time if it is to serve modern daily life.
9. Our spiritual life and discipline is to be based on an integrated system, a pattern, rather than a series of random practices. We are to live our spiritual life by Rule, not rules.
10. It's possible for the average member to become proficient, competent, in spiritual practices.
11. We must decide to base our spiritual life on persistence, courage, and competence; rather than on feelings, whether we feel like praying or not. A useful and faithful spiritual life requires critical reasoning and intelligence. We need to intentionally turn away from the spiritual fads and fast food.
12. The parish church's primary task is the spiritual formation of its people.

# The Renewal – Apostolate Cycle

The Renewal - Apostolate Cycle is a way of describing a central dynamic of Christian life. The Cycle focuses our attention on the Christian’s movement between being renewed in baptismal identity and purpose and living as instruments of God’s love and grace in daily life. The Cycle is interested in both the individual’s movement and in the ways in which the parish church supports and facilitates that movement.

## RENEWAL

Renewal in baptismal identity and purpose in worship, study and being equipped , for Christian action



## APOSTOLATE

Participation in the work of Christ in service, evangelization and stewardship

In areas of:

- Workplace
- Family & Friends
- Civic Life
- Church

### A Cycle

The cycle is between a conscious and intentional attention to God, prayer life, our relationships, Christian formation **and** a subconscious reliance upon God as members of the Body of Christ, in the workplace, family, civic life and congregational life.

### In that Cycle:

#### We need:

To accept our dependence on God

To accept responsibility for ordering our spiritual life

To accept our interdependence with others in the Church

#### Which is helped by:

Openness to spiritual guidance

Establishing a rule of life

Life in Christian community, a parish church

#### Which the parish helps by:

An emphasis in its life on worship; nothing comes before the Eucharist and Daily Office. Also, more attention to formation and spiritual growth than other programs or ministries.

Offering programs and guidance in creating, experimenting with, and revising a spiritual discipline.

Being a healthy and faithful parish church and by helping people relate to the parish community in ways appropriate to their personality and the parish’s capacities.

# The Renewal – Apostolate Cycle Worksheet

Individuals use the sheet to make their own notes. Then each shares what they feel comfortable sharing with others. Sharing might best be received in silence and with respect.

## Renewal

1. How are you renewed emotionally and physically?

2. How are you renewed spiritually?

3. What role does participation in the parish play in your renewal? How does it help? In what ways has it hindered?

## Apostolate

1. Where is it that you find yourself making a contribution to the welfare of humanity?  
Where are you aware of being an instrument of God's love?

- In my family
- With friends
- In the work I do
- In my relationship with co-workers
- In some volunteer work I do
- In working with a civic group or community organization
- Other?

2. How has being part of the parish helped or hindered this?

## **Change & Experimentation**

1. What do you want to change or experiment with to improve how you live the Renewal-Apostolate Cycle?

2. Is there anything you want to change or experiment with related to receiving spiritual guidance? How?

3. Is there anything you anything you want to change or experiment with in relationship to your participation in the Eucharistic community?

4. Is there anything you want to change or experiment with in a rule of prayer (Eucharist – Office – Personal Devotions)?

# Creating Your Spiritual Discipline Worksheet

## Current Practices

The Anglican tradition assumes that adults are responsible for their own spiritual life; for shaping their own rule of life. This is grounded in the state of being that exists by having been baptized into the Body of Christ. We develop our rule by accepting responsibility and drawing on the resources and tradition of the wider church. So, we take into account the church's threefold rule of prayer and ways in which we may best receive spiritual guidance.

You are invited to make use of these two worksheets in reflecting on your spiritual discipline. This first worksheet is about the ways in which you currently are renewed

## Current Practices

<b>How I am renewed emotionally &amp; physically</b>	
<b>Participation in the Holy Eucharist</b>	
<b>Participation in the Daily Office</b>	
<b>Personal Devotions</b>	
<b>Study of Scripture, spiritual life, theology, etc.</b>	
<b>Being equipped for Christian action</b>	
<b>Other</b>	

# Creating Your Spiritual Discipline Worksheet

## Practices to Explore & Try Out

This second worksheet is to help you in identifying revisions to your practice; ways in which you may want to experiment. Make notes in each area. If possible share what you are thinking with your spiritual director or others whose counsel you value.

## Practices to Explore & Try Out

<b>How I am renewed emotionally &amp; physically</b>	
<b>Participation in the Holy Eucharist</b>	
<b>Participation in the Daily Office</b>	
<b>Personal Devotions</b>	
<b>Study of Scripture, spiritual life, theology, etc.</b>	
<b>Being equipped for Christian action</b>	
<b>Other</b>	

## **Establishing a Rule of Life Christian Life Model**

A rule of life is the means by which an individual Christian establishes an intentional pattern of Christian discipline which can over time, be reflected upon, revised, and deepened. Your rule is an expression of the faith and practice of the whole church in your own life; a discipline freely taken on to give order, support, and direction to your life. It is a means of rooting your life in Christ.

As each of us is unique, so each rule will have a somewhat different shape. However, every rule needs to have as its base and starting point the Anglican tradition's threefold rule of prayer (Holy Eucharist, Daily Office, and Personal Devotions) and expression of the Christian life in worship, doctrine and action. This helps us to give ourselves to an integrated pattern of life that is grounded in the larger Christian experience, rather than to make up our own list of "rules" to follow.

You might use the worksheet once to note what you already are doing. Then a second time to note what you would like to try doing now. Be specific and realistic. Rules change with time and circumstance.

### **A. WORSHIP: *Continue ... in the breaking of the bread and the prayers.***

1. Holy Eucharist – Participation on all Sundays and Major Holy Days
  
2. Daily Office - which Office? When? How? With whom?
  
3. Personal Devotions – Intercession and/or recollection and/or meditation and/or...
  
4. Spiritual Reading
  
5. Other

### **B. DOCTRINE: *Continue in the apostle's teaching and fellowship***

Connecting yourself with what has authority in the Christian Life. Increasing your ability to relate those sources of authority to your decision-making; understanding how to use Scripture – Tradition – Reason as you reflect on your life and as a backdrop in discernment and decision making.

1. Scripture—*lectio divina* and/or study. Consider relating this to use of the Daily Office
  
2. Christian doctrine, church history, ethics

### 3. Other

#### **C. ACTION:** *To represent Christ and his church; to bear witness to him wherever they may be*

Describe your responsibilities and opportunities for service, evangelization and stewardship in the various areas of your life.

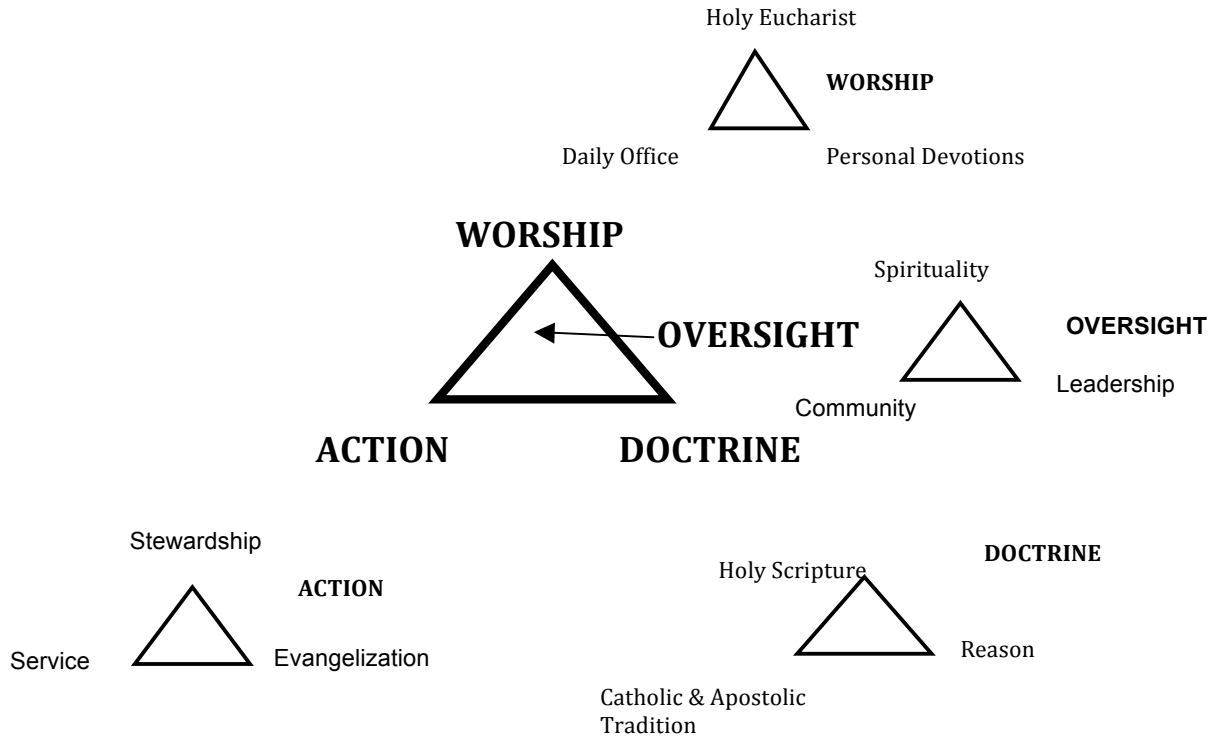
1. Family
2. Friends
3. Work
4. Community – Neighborhood – as a citizen
5. Church
6. Self



# The Christian Life Model

*In a world where carpenters get resurrected, everything is possible.*  
Eleanor in *The Lion in Winter*

## THE CHRISTIAN LIFE MODEL



- Each element is a way in which Christ comes to us and in which we seek Christ. Each is an entry into, and participation in, the unity to which we are called. In them we are called into a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ - the heart of Christ, the mind of Christ, the work of Christ.
- The model can be used by parishes for self assessment, as a framework for planning, as a way to focus the parish on the essentials of the Christian life, and as a resource to individuals in shaping a Rule of Life. Each triangle is a system of mutual influence in which the elements strengthen and impact the other elements.

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### Earlier

Assumptions list – Copyright 2010 Appears in *In Your Holy Spirit: Shaping the Parish Through Spiritual Practices*, Robert A Gallagher, Ascension Press, 2011

Renewal – Apostolate -- Copyright Robert A. Gallagher, 1985, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2005, 2006.

For more on the model see Robert Gallagher's *Fill All Things: The Dynamics of Spirituality in the Parish Church*, Ascension Press, 2008

Worksheets -- Copyright 2001, 2005, 2006

Christian Life Model -- Copyright Robert A. Gallagher, 1985, 2006

For more on the model see Robert Gallagher's *Fill All Things: The Dynamics of Spirituality in the Parish Church*, 2008 and *Power from on High: A Model for Parish Life and Development*, 1982