

THE TRINITY MISSION • RULE OF LIFE

# THE WAY OF CHRIST

THE SIMPLE WAY • THE ANCIENT WAY  
THE NARROW WAY

*AN INTERPRETATION OF THE RULE OF ST. BENEDICT  
FOR PEOPLE WITH JOBS AND FAMILIES IN THE MODERN  
WORLD*

## PROLOGUE

Listen carefully, my brothers and sisters, to the teaching of those who have come before us and attend with the ear of your heart. Herein is a design for life, born in love; welcome it, and faithfully put it into practice. It is a Rule of living gathered from the long obedience of men and women who preferred nothing to our Lord Jesus Christ, seeking first His kingdom and its righteousness. If you are willing, then give up your own way, as they did, for a way that is sure and good and tested by time.

Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your heart as in the time of rebellion. But rather, come and listen, and learn the fear of the Lord our God, the only and one God, the God in whom we live and move and have our being as servants of Jesus, the Savior and Restorer of all things; the God whose Holy Spirit scatters us throughout the nations to glorify Him and to eternally enjoy the riches of His kingdom as we proclaim that Jesus is this God and we worship Him in spirit and in truth.

You who find yourself to be an alien and stranger in this world; you who will fulfill your calling in seeking first the

kingdom of Christ and revealing the right order of things according to its truth and, wishing to be true to this calling, you desire to order and cultivate your life in a manner that is trustworthy and consistent with the faith and practice of the followers of Christ throughout history and around the world so that the Spirit of Christ may work through you as He forms His people to be a display of His splendor, a blessing for all the earth; come now, let us taste and see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.

By this Rule, let us establish a school for the Lord's service; setting down nothing harsh or burdensome, but only those things that make us more into the likeness of Christ; a contemplative, missionary, creative people; a people of prayer and Holy Scripture; laborers for the Lord, caretakers of His creation, participants in His work of reconciling all things to Himself in our Lord Jesus Christ; a people inspired, compelled, enabled, and directed by the Holy Spirit of Christ; a people who desire that in all things, thought, word, and deed, and that in all parts of the culture and the creation we might bring glory to the Name of Christ giving thanks to the Father through Him. For this purpose, we commonly design our lives, each according to his particular gifts and station of life, that we may be available and faithful to the Holy Spirit's guidance and creativity.

The way that we describe here is a way that is good, trustworthy, and a historical way of being a Christian; a way that exemplifies the faith once delivered to the saints. It is a way that is rooted in the Rule of Benedict as it has developed in the Anglican prayer-book tradition.

But let us maintain all humility in this endeavor, recognizing

that this is not the only good way of following Christ. Each of us must be fully convinced in our own mind so that as we live, we live to the Lord, and when we die, we die to the Lord, for we are the Lord's.

Finally, let us rebuke every hint that we preach ourselves or this design for living, for our message is that Jesus Christ is Lord and we are His servants. Rather, all who follow this way must seek to have the mind of John the Baptist who found his joy made complete in the incarnation of Christ when he stated, "He must become greater; I must become less."

### THE GOOD WAY

There are various ways of following Christ, some are better than others. First, there are those Christians who constrain their beliefs by the consensus of the Church's teaching through two-thousand years; who order their lives as the followers of Christ have done since the days of the Apostles; who worship in spirit and in truth as the Church has done since Pentecost, in short, those who align themselves with the Great Tradition of Christian belief and practice.

Secondly, there are those Christians who mistakenly believe that the teaching or practice they have personally experienced in their short and geographically limited lives is in fact the Great Tradition of two-thousand years. These believers are to be commended for looking outside of themselves to learn the faith and for their willingness to receive a faith delivered to them by their elders. But sadly, their experience may be only of a tradition that is merely five, fifty, or five hundred years old and not the faith as it

was handed down from the time of the Apostles. For these brothers and sisters, much of what we are about to say may likely be foreign or confusing.

Third, are those Christians who ignore or even demonize the treasury of thought and the unbroken chain of practices delivered to us through the two-thousand years of men and women around the world who have followed Jesus as their Lord. Like a child lost in the woods, these Christians must rediscover in every generation and for each individual what life in Christ should look like. They become their own personal Pope and are ironically dumbfounded when their converts reject their own teaching. They do not look for an authority greater than their own personal opinion. For them, we have nothing to offer.

Fourth and finally, are those who do not actually follow Christ at all but only apply His Name to themselves and their thinking while knowing nothing of Him in prayer and the Scriptures; those who do not have the integrity of the rich young ruler to simply walk away; who are unwilling to be like Peter and the Apostles and leave everything and follow Him.

Let us proceed to draw up a plan for the first kind, those who ask for the ancient paths, who look for the good way. It is for such as these that we embark on **our singular goal: to describe clearly a way of following Christ that is consistent with Christian practice throughout history and around the world and that is achievable in our own day by men and women with jobs, families, and other day-to-day obligations.**

It is important to remember that this is not a righteous requirement but simply an authentically Christian way of

living. Some may adhere to this Rule more closely and some more loosely. As beginners, we should not expect to attain to the whole life of this Rule in a short time. It is a journey that will ever call us further up and further in.

## BEGINNING THE JOURNEY

In calling this design for our life a “Rule,” we mean only that it is a good and right way by which we wish to order our lives. It is a well thought out, general description of how we want to live our life to the glory of Jesus Christ. It is a tool by which we might measure our progress; a goal which we aim to achieve. The point of the Rule is to chart a course onward and upward into the knowledge and experience of God’s grace, to describe what we want our life to look like and to describe it realistically, so that we might begin to attain to it.

As infants, we are carried along by a mother or father or someone else who loves us and is able to care for us. Those of us who are healthy then proceed to crawl, to walk, to run and dance and to carry children in our own arms. Should a gradual development with the help of others not be the same in our life in Christ?

This is a Rule for beginners in the life of prayer, which we will find on the last day that we all are. Be neither too gentle nor too harsh with yourself as you proceed. Find for yourself a mother or father who has walked in this way longer than you have; someone who can encourage you and caution you so that you may not fall into slothfulness nor faint from the exhaustion of too great a zeal.

Remembering that this is a long journey, take one step today

and one step only. Take another step tomorrow. When you have taken a step without Christ, stop and turn around. When you fall, look for the Lord and get back up. If you cannot, then simply call on the Lord and wait. In everything, pray before beginning, pray while doing, pray when done.

Let us proceed now to describe what this life in Christ shall look like.

### TIMES OF PRAYER

From ancient times, God's people have had a practice of setting apart certain times of the day for formal prayer and meditation in God's word. It is desirable that we should maintain this habit in our own lives, setting apart a specific time in the morning and in the evening when we join spiritually with the whole of Christ's body in offering some form of the prayers of the Church commonly known as the Daily Office or the Liturgy of the Hours.

In addition to these times of Morning and Evening prayer, we shall have other moments throughout the day at which we turn our thoughts formally to the Lord.

Each household and individual will have to determine what is proper and attainable in their situation provided that in all cases our prayer should be done in a way that shows reverence and intention but that is natural to the setting. Our private (individual) prayers, including the reading of Holy Scripture, should be spoken aloud even if only a whisper.

Following, we shall provide some guidelines for developing an order of prayer in our lives.

## MORNING PRAYER

Morning Prayer should be prayed ideally within an hour of waking. Any Benedictine, Anglican, or similar structure may be used provided that the full and regular form include at least one psalm, at least one other selection of Holy Scripture, the Lord's prayer, and intercessions for the whole Church, the ministers of the Church, the government of the local nation, and the poor and other vulnerable in the local community.

In many households, Morning Prayer will only be said privately (individually). But where the parent(s) or the household prefers, it is good to say it corporately (gathered together) as well. Where Morning Prayer is said both privately and corporately, a shorter form may be used for one of the times of prayer.

The regular practice of Morning Prayer should be considered a foundational habit of the daily life of people who follow this Rule.

## EVENING PRAYER

An intentional moment of Evening Prayer is a second foundational prayer habit.

Evening Prayer is to be prayed at some time after the majority of the day's work (minus perhaps some household chores) has been completed. In some households this may be just before supper, just after supper, or some time before bed. The form of the Evening Prayer office or the form of Compline may be used. At a minimum, Evening Prayer

should consist of the Lord's prayer followed by thanksgivings and other petitions.

### FAMILY PRAYER

Members of a family living in the same household should gather together every day for at least Morning or Evening Prayer if not both. In families with full activity schedules, life should be ordered so that the daily time of family prayer is the norm (four times a week or more) even if it does not occur every day.

The structure of family prayer time naturally will evolve as family size and age of children change. Parents will benefit from our resource *Getting Started with the Daily Office in the Household*.

### MID-DAY PRAYER AND COMPLINE

As each person's life situation allows, there is a much benefit to having an extended moment of prayer at mid-day and at bedtime as well. When circumstances allow, you may wish to make use of the full form of these services found in our community's daily prayer book or in many other Benedictine or Anglican resources. At other times, a brief recollection may be used. Examples of a brief recollection are provided in our resource *Getting Started with the Daily Office in the Household*.

## MEALTIME PRAYER

A prayer at mealtime shall not be neglected. It is recommended that at meals, everyone at the table shall be invited to join in the response from Psalm 145 below and then the head of the household or some other person appointed shall say either the long or short form of the following grace (or some other way of making the same acknowledgements). We use the “†” symbol to mark where it is customary to make the sign of the Cross.

### *Everyone (Psalm 145:15-16)*

The eyes of all look to you,  
and you give them their food in due season.  
You open your hand  
and satisfy the desire of every living thing.

### *Leader (short form)*

Blessed be your Name, O Lord, for the earth is yours  
and all that it brings forth and you have given to us  
abundantly; make us to be truly grateful for these gifts  
we have received, and ever mindful of the needs of  
others, through † Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### *Leader (long form)*

Blessed are you O Lord our God, Creator, and King, for  
the earth is yours and all that it brings forth and you  
have given to us abundantly; we thank you for (*this  
food, family, friends, etc.*); make us to be truly grateful  
for these gifts we have received, and ever mindful of the  
needs of others, in the Name of the † Father, and of the  
Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

## PRAYER AT OTHER TIMES

Toward the goal of training ourselves to pray without ceasing, we have found it beneficial to have a thought from Holy Scripture as a prayer to be used at anticipated regular moments of the day. Some examples follow, other may be drawn from various prayer books and similar resources.

### *Upon Rising from Bed (Psalm 25:1-2)*

† To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul. O my God, in you I trust. Glory be to the ...

### *When Leaving the House (Psalm 121)*

† May the LORD watch over my (our) going out and my (our) coming in from this time forth, and forevermore. Glory be to the ...

### *Bedtime Prayers (Psalm 4 & Compline)*

I will lay me down and sleep in peace; for you alone, O LORD, make me to dwell in safety. Amen. †

*then*

Guide us waking, O Lord, and guard us sleeping, that awake we may watch with Christ, and asleep we may rest in peace. Amen. †

*then*

The Almighty and Merciful Lord grant us a quiet night, and at the last a perfect end; and the blessing of God Almighty, † the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon us and remain with us this night, and for evermore. Amen.

*Bedtime Prayer for Children - The following may be added before or in place of the "I will lay me down" prayer from Psalm 4 in the above Bedtime Prayers*

Now I lay me down to sleep. I pray the Lord my soul to keep. Your love be with me through the night and wake me with the morning light. Amen. †

*A Prayer for Any Time, Day or Night, Commonly Known as The Jesus Prayer*

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

## HEARING THE WORD OF GOD

Everyone shall find achievable ways of hearing the word of God daily by reading, listening, or both. Also, we shall each establish a plan for hearing the greater part of Holy Scripture on a regular basis in our life. If not using a suitable daily lectionary (reading plan) for Morning and/or Evening Prayer, then a plan should be created that achieves at least the following:

- The whole New Testament, Psalms, and Proverbs – at least yearly
- Genesis, Exodus, Deuteronomy, Isaiah, and Jeremiah – at least every two years
- The remainder of Scripture – as often as is possible in your life

In addition to this, it is good to always have a short passage of Holy Scripture that we are working to commit to memory.

## WEEKLY WORSHIP AND HOLY COMMUNION

To be a eucharistic people, that is, a grateful and joyful people, is to receive all things as a gift from God and to offer them back to God with thanksgiving. The central and initial place that we do that is in participating in the Son of God's offering of Himself for the life of the world by receiving Him in the bread and wine of Holy Communion. This has always been the primary distinguishing element of Christian worship.

Everyone shall participate in some form of weekly gathered worship, preferably on the Lord's Day, as that has been the regular day of Christian worship throughout history. We understand that many local Christian communities do not hold the historical and sacramental understanding of Holy Communion – that means, at least, that we, by participating in Christ's perfect offering of Himself, are offering all of ourselves to God and receiving back from Him the lifegiving body and blood of Christ in the consecrated bread and wine.

In those places where the regular, weekly worship service does not express the historical, sacramental understanding of Holy Communion, you shall seek to find for yourself (and your family) a church body where you can receive the Eucharist as frequently as possible – ideally, once a month at minimum. A traveling distance of one hour shall not be considered too far to achieve this.

## CATHOLIC APOSTOLIC TEACHING

When we say “catholic apostolic teaching” we mean that which is consistent with Holy Scripture as it has been

understood in the Church throughout history and around the world. A teaching or practice that was or has been done only for a season or only in some part of the world is not “catholic.” Likewise, a thought or practice, no matter how widely it has been accepted, that is not consistent with the plain teaching of Holy Scripture is not “apostolic.”

We shall endeavor, each as befits their ability, to seek out catholic apostolic teachers from whom we may learn. Hopefully, this will come from the pulpit of our own parish. But in addition to this, or where this option does not exist locally, it may come from the reading of the writings of the early church or the reading or listening to podcasts of modern day catholic apostolic teachers.

Let us stand apart from new expressions, or new understandings, or re-imaginings of the Christian faith or of Jesus Christ our Lord and instead seek out the faith once delivered to the saints.

## FASTING

Fasting is a gift from the Lord and a tool for building spiritual strength. It is not a legal requirement. However, our Lord did assume his disciples would fast when he gave them instructions on how to fast by saying, “*when* you fast.”

Being careful not to establish a “law” of fasting or a cause for spiritual elitism, we shall now proceed to outline a fasting practice that is consistent with the practice of the earliest days of the Church. Each person shall prayerfully apply this practice to their own life making necessary adjustments and accommodations in accordance with their own situation and

personal health.

Depending on the context and the length of the fast, a fast will generally consist of either eating nothing at all or of abstaining from meat, sweets, alcohol (except in the Holy Communion), and savory foods. For those who, for health or other reasons, are unable to fast from all food, it is perfectly acceptable to determine a “full fast” of a simple diet that maintains both the spirit of a fast and personal safety. Furthermore, the sick, the very young, and the very old have generally been exempt from fasting practices.

The oldest weekly fasting practice of the Church, and the one we recommend, is to fast on all Wednesdays and Fridays of the year except during Christmastide and Eastertide. Over time, in the West, this became a Friday-only fast and then a Fridays-in-Lent-only fast. But we recommend a return to the old way.

During a Wednesday and Friday fast, it is suggested that nothing shall be eaten at all (a full fast) until at least after the noonday hour. It may be noted that in the past, this fast would generally last until the 9<sup>th</sup> hour of the day, 3:00pm. If family or business obligations do not allow for a full fast, perhaps abstaining from particular foods or some other equivalent practice can be attempted with the goal of maintaining the spirit of a fast on these days.

The other Holy Day fasts we recommend are as follows:

On Ash Wednesday: a full fast until after sunset (though we may receive Holy Communion).

From sunset on Palm Sunday until after the Easter Vigil: a

fast from all meat, sweets, alcohol (except for Holy Communion), and savory foods.

On Good Friday: a full fast until after sunset (we may receive Holy Communion).

On Holy Saturday: a full fast until the Easter Vigil.

Also, it is customary to make some sort of intention during the whole of Lent. Likewise, there are other times throughout the year and in the life of a Christian when it may be appropriate to fast. Local custom and the guidance of a spiritual mother or father should be sought out in determining other times of fasting.

## CONFESSION AND RECONCILIATION

In addition to the daily habit of self-examination and confession in the Offices and the weekly practice of confession at the Eucharist, no less than once a year, we shall each extensively examine ourselves and our lives and make a private confession to another person, ideally a priest/presbyter. For help with this, see our resource, *Making a Good Confession*.

## CULTIVATING STILLNESS

Beginning from our own personal disposition and not from another, we shall each work to cultivate stillness in our life that we may become increasingly capable of hearing the voice of the Lord. The initial steps of this are achieved by

setting a regular time during which we eliminate all electrical devices and appliances and either sit or walk at a pace far slower than our usual pace.

## THE BOUNDARIES OF OUR FAITH

As has been said about the Anglican tradition in general, we who follow this Rule claim to have “no peculiar thought, practice, creed or confession of our own but only the Catholic Faith of the ancient Catholic Church, as preserved in the Catholic Creeds and maintained in the Catholic and Apostolic constitution of Christ’s Church from the beginning. We may licitly teach as necessary for salvation nothing but what is read in the Holy Scriptures as God’s Word written or may be proved thereby. We therefore embrace and affirm such teachings of the ancient Fathers and Councils of the Church as are agreeable to the Scriptures, and thus to be counted apostolic. The Church has no authority to innovate: it is obliged continually, and particularly in times of renewal or reformation, to return to ‘the faith once delivered to the saints.’” (*Archbishop Geoffrey Fisher speaking about the Anglican Communion*)

To the above, we make the following clarifications:

We confess the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments to be the inspired Word of God, containing all things necessary for salvation, and to be the final authority and unchangeable standard for Christian faith and life.

We confess Baptism and the Supper of the Lord to be Sacraments ordained by Christ Himself in the Gospel, and thus to be ministered with un failing use of His words of

institution and of the elements ordained by Him.

We confess the godly historic Episcopate (Bishops) as an inherent part of the apostolic faith and practice, and therefore as integral to the fullness and unity of the Body of Christ.

We confess as proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture the historic faith of the undivided church as declared in the Symbol of Faith, also called the Nicene Creed, which follows:

We believe in one God,  
the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is, visible and invisible.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only-begotten Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father;  
through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,  
was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,  
and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the  
Scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the

dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father,  
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and  
glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.  
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.  
We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

In those things which are not clear from Holy Scripture in their canonical sense, we will seek out the teaching and practice of the Church, East and West, throughout history, and where we find greater consensus, we will hold more firmly and where we find great variability, we will allow the same.

### THE KIND OF PEOPLE WE ARE TO BE

It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Let us stand firm so that we are not burdened once again by a yoke of slavery. Let us live by the Spirit as we grow in grace as Christ's disciples. Our lives then should be marked by the cultivation of the following:

To love the Lord God with all of our heart, mind, soul  
and strength  
To love our neighbor as our self  
Not to do to another that which we would not do to our  
selves

To honor all people equally  
To consider others as more important than our selves  
To deny one's self that we may live to follow Christ  
To relieve the poor and oppressed  
To visit the sick  
To show compassion on those in prison  
To offer help in time of need  
To console the sorrowful  
To be utterly aware of the needs of outsiders and to love  
    them well and appropriately  
To offer Godly hospitality  
To prefer nothing to the love of Christ  
Not to give way to anger  
Not to foster a desire for revenge  
Not to entertain deceit in the heart  
To do no evil by action or inaction  
To be a person of integrity  
To do no injury and to bear patiently injury done to us  
To love our enemies  
To pray for our enemies  
To actively pursue goodness and good works  
Not to be proud but  
To acknowledge the presence of one's gifts and  
To glorify God by recognizing them truly as gifts  
Not to be given to drunkenness  
Not to be lazy  
Not to be a murmurer or gossip  
To always trust in God  
To exemplify freedom and abundant life in Christ  
To guard against wicked or malicious speaking  
To apply ourselves often to prayer  
To be exemplary in all relationships  
To work restoratively  
To be cultivators

To be stewards after God's own heart  
To pursue excellence in all things  
To be sexually pure  
To honor the aged  
To love and respect the younger  
To seek peace  
To glorify God in thought, word and deed

## A MISSIONARY PEOPLE

The life of the true contemplative is not only the hearing and reflecting on Holy Scripture but includes the living of it, embodying the word of God in the world. It is an incarnational life; one in which the word of Christ dwells richly in and among His people, to be witnessed and to bring glory to the Father.

God, through Christ, has gathered us and made us His people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, that we may declare His praises and be a display of His glory. He has sent us into the world to make for Him disciples of all nations and to preach this good news to all creation. Therefore, since Christ is in us, guiding us and empowering us, let us also follow His example and move out to be His real and actual presence in the world.

We shall live intentionally: in our work, our recreation, our rest, our time, our talents, our finances, and our relationships. We shall take captive every thought, every plan, every word, every action to make it obedient to Christ. Let us order our lives that He may serve the world through us and that we may understand more deeply that whenever we serve, it is Him whom we are serving.

Furthermore, we should always keep in mind that though He will equip us with everything good for doing His will and though He work in us what is pleasing to Him, the work and the glory are His. For everything under heaven belongs to God and there is no good we can do that the doing of which is not also a gift from God.

### ALMSDEEDS

We shall, each one, continually strive more and more to do, to work for, and to act for justice; to love mercy and kindness; and to walk more humbly with the Lord our God. We are to be marked by our service to and walking with the poor, the parentless, the elderly, the immigrant, the homeless, the sick in body and mind, the lonely, the imprisoned, and the persecuted. It is the responsibility of each one individually to find ways for themselves to participate regularly and helpfully in such work in their local area.

### HOSPITALITY

The Scriptures reveal that some of those who cross our paths are in fact angels. St. Benedict encourages us to treat every person who comes into our life as if he or she was Jesus Christ himself. We too shall be a people of great hospitality, first making Christ welcome in our home and then welcoming all others as we have welcomed Christ. For whoever does not love his neighbor whom he sees, cannot love God whom he has not seen.

## HOME LIFE

Our private lives shall be ordered and lived as a people aware that we live in the sight of God. The question “is this good, profitable, and/or pleasing to the Lord” is a helpful tool of discernment for evaluating the way we treat the members of our household; the books, magazines, movies, and other media we consume; the way we order our finances; and the way we spend our “free time.”

## GENEROSITY

We shall be a people of abundant generosity. Giving with a cheerful heart and in such a way that our left hand does not know what our right hand is doing. In modern terms that will mean, at least, that not all of our giving is accounted for on tax returns.

Economic disparity shall grieve us and we shall eschew every notion that any economic advantage we have or may gain over another is due to our own work or ingenuity remembering that there is no such thing as a “self-made man,” but only arrogant and ungrateful men with bad memories.

The earth is the Lord’s and all that is in it. Let us remember this in our attitudes and actions regarding all things that have been placed in our custody or possession so that we might administrate those things, which are God’s, in accordance with God’s heart and with His values.

## SIMPLICITY

Regarding the things of this world, let us choose simplicity over extravagance asking, “can I do with less” rather than, “can I get more;” “is the one I have sufficient” rather than, “can I get a new one.”

## AT WORK

We shall be a people who work diligently in all our endeavors as though working for the Lord, that we might provide for ourselves and have an abundance to share with those in need.

We will be quick to serve as Christ came to serve; to lead by serving; and to follow without grumbling.

For those who own businesses, we shall be exemplary in the pay rates of our employees and treat them well and with great compassion. We shall be known in our community to be of the highest integrity in all business dealings.

## CARING FOR GOD’S CREATION

The earth is neither a resource for our own self-pleasure nor a resource borrowed from the future. The earth is the Lord’s. We do not treat the creation (plants, animals, soil, water, air, etc.) with greed, contempt, or self-indulgence. Neither do we deify it.

The creation is the work of the Lord’s hand and it may be used and must be used in accordance with His values and in a way

that is honorable to Him. We shall be known in our various communities as a people who care about God's creation. And we shall treat the creation with honor and dignity consistent with its being the possession of the King who made it and shares it with us.

### BEING CREATIVE

By the word of the Lord all things are made; as He speaks things come into being and thus all of creation is a communication. From the beginning, God has allowed us to participate in His speaking of the creative word, in His naming and giving meaning and right order. As Christ restores us to our original intents and purposes as God's people, we can once again speak creative words into the world, words that form and shape, that proclaim who or what a thing truly is, words that communicate, that reveal, that provide a context for others to participate in their own understanding that they might understand from their own perspective.

For those of us who are artists or craftsman, let us work to be a Godly creative presence in this world, to be revealers of the truth in Christ through form and function. Let us speak creative words into this world, words of sound, light, shape, thought, order, movement, meaning, and purpose. And in every sphere where this is done, we shall strive for excellence unwilling to exchange the glory of the immortal God for popularity or fortune. Let us seek God as the supreme master of our craft, for it is He who reveals Himself in all that has been created.

## ANNUAL RETREAT

It is desirable that we take a number of days annually in a time of retreat for prayer and prayerful reflection upon our life and this Rule.

## A MORE SPECIFIC ELABORATION MADE BY EACH ONE

Each of us shall write our own personal chapter elaborating on this Rule and applying it more specifically to our self and our own circumstances. Furthermore, this personal chapter should be re-assessed at least annually so that this Rule itself does not become an idol or avenue for ignoring the voice of the Holy Spirit.

See our resource, *Creating a Rule for Yourself and Your Family*.

## ON ACCOUNTABILITY

Let us seek to encourage one another so that we may not be hardened by sin's deceitfulness and thus turn away from the living God. To this effect, we shall each take measures to hold ourselves accountable by other people primarily to the profession of being a disciple of Christ and secondarily to the lifestyle adopted by following this Rule. This exercise shall be conducted in such manner that it is legitimate and useful. Great care should be taken so that its importance is not relegated to the level of meaningless or tedious action.

## CONCLUSION AND MODIFICATION

Herein lies the design for our lives, a little Rule that has been written for beginners such as us, so made that we might stand firm in one spirit, contend as one body for the faith of the gospel, and conduct ourselves in a manner worthy of Christ's disciples.

It may be amended from time to time as we seek to give a clearer expression of how one may follow Christ according to this way. We desire that it contain nothing novel or extreme but, rather, simply expresses an ancient way of living as a Christian that can be lived out in our own day.

My brother, my sister, do not ask yourself, "am I living this way already" or even, "can I live this way today," but first ask, "is this way good, right, and true," and then, "with God's help, am I willing to take a single step along this way today?"

## ADOPTING THIS RULE FOR YOURSELF

Anyone desiring to join us in living out this Rule may do so privately by adopting any or all of this way of life to their own life.

For those wishing to make public their commitment to adopting this Rule for their lives, we invite you to notify us of your intention via [thetrinitymission.org](http://thetrinitymission.org) so that we might pray for you on your journey. You will also find there the resources listed below and many other aids to assist you in living out this way.

And finally, anyone who wishes to formally adopt this Rule and to have the benefit of guidance and fellowship in living it out may apply to our Oblate formation program at [thetrinitymission.org](http://thetrinitymission.org).

May we all abound more and more in love as we grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. To Him be all glory, honor, and praise. Amen.



## RESOURCES

*Available at [thetrinitymission.org](http://thetrinitymission.org)*

Audio Daily Office – a podcast of the daily office. Also available on iTunes or any other podcasting app.

Getting Started with the Daily Office in the Household – a guide and prayer-book for those who are just beginning to pray formally in their household. It contains a section focused specifically on praying with children.

Sacred Stories of the Old & New Testament – the child appropriate, narrative portions of the ESV Bible presented as a “chapter book.” Especially helpful to use for the readings at family prayer times with children.

Making a Good Confession – a guide for an extensive examination of our lives in preparation for confession. It includes a step-by-step of what to expect if you have never practiced confessing to a priest/presbyter before.

Creating a Rule for Yourself and Your Family – a guide for applying a Rule of Life very specifically, helpfully, and achievably in your own situation.

And various other podcasts, videos, blogs, and book recommendations.



The Way of Christ: an interpretation of the Rule of St. Benedict for people with jobs and families in the modern world

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