

## **Creating a Rule of Life – some guidance notes**

Having a 'rule of life' or some 'guidelines' for daily living can help us bring God into every area of our lives and make us better disciples of Jesus.

Before you do anything, ask for the Holy Spirit to guide you.

A good starting point is to think what the overarching guideline for your life might be.

Then think about what is already part of your practice of prayer (personal and corporate) and other commitments you have made involving how you spend your time and the use of your money etc. It might be helpful to jot them down.

Finally over a few weeks think about what your Rule of Life might contain, make a few notes and begin to decide on your 'chosen commitments'.

As you think about what might be in your Rule, be mindful of -

- your relationships with others which are markers of your Christian faith
- your own personality and individual circumstances
- the need for time with others and time alone
- the need to listen
- the need to receive Holy Communion
- the need to be a real person and not a super spiritual hero!

### ***Questions to help you think it through***

- Am I respecting the three elements of body, mind and spirit of which I am made? e.g. Am I getting enough sleep? Do I have a good diet?
- How do I treat the ordinary and mundane things of my life? Is my mind being extended? Art, literature, study?
- Am I looking after my property/affairs properly?
- Am I allowing myself to be alone in order to face the pain, sin and failure within myself? Can I stand silence?
- Am I also spending time with others? Can I share deeply with someone?
- Am I willing to experiment and see things in a different way?

### ***General tips***

- Be yourself. Your Rule of Life will reflect the practical application of the gospel to your specific circumstances and preferences.
- Be realistic with regard to time.
- Think on 4 levels: daily; weekly; annually and general (see page 2).
- Remember to review your Rule of Life every so often and adapt it when necessary and however necessary.

## Chosen commitments

Everyone makes different commitments. Some examples are below, to give you some ideas, but you'll think of others you will choose to include in your Rule of Life.

### Daily commitments

- keeping a rhythm of prayer through the day
- spending specific time being with God, talking to him, listening to him and simply being in his presence, maybe in the morning and at the end of the day
- spending time reading the Bible
- being aware of God in people and in creation
- listening attentively to people and to God
- celebrating and caring for creation by showing respect for the environment e.g. re-cycling, not wasting water, buying Fair Trade etc
- anticipating and responding to the needs of others, accepting it may be costly
- being open to God's Spirit.

### Weekly commitments

- going to church
- receiving Holy Communion
- keeping a balance between work, study and recreation
- having a day off
- going for a walk or taking some exercise (depending on your circumstances)
- doing some activity that is life-giving for you, such as reading a book; watching a film; watching a favourite TV programme; gardening; singing.

### Annual commitments

- making a retreat
- having a holiday
- going to a concert; art exhibition etc
- maybe four times a year meeting with a spiritual director or soul friend with whom you can share your journey of faith.

### General commitments

- keeping a balance between work, study and recreation
- maintaining stewardship of time, money and talents
- healing whatever is broken, such as reconciliation in relationships
- pursuing justice
- cultivating unity
- taking on extra disciplines in Advent and Lent.

With her permission, these notes are based on a Spirituality Workbook written by The Revd Barbara Steele-Perkins.  
Some ideas come from the book *Creating Christian Community* by Simon Reed.

A helpful book full of creative ideas, including how to develop a Rule of Life, is *The God You Already Know: developing your spiritual and prayer life* edited by H. Morgan & R. Gregory (2009) and published by SPCK.