

LIVING SPIRITUALITY AND SYNODALITY

Pope Francis emphasises that a synodal Church is not first and foremost about new structures and plans for actions. Rather it is about a new mindset and a new style of being church. This requires:

- a deep prayer life rooted in the Mystery of the Trinity;
- which is made manifest in our sharing in the Eucharist;
- leads to a personal and communal conversion of minds and hearts;
- and enables a true discernment of the voice of the Holy Spirit.

Nurturing our spirituality needs a certain discipline, structure and commitment. In Religious Orders this is called a Rule of Life.

A Rule of Life enables

- personal growth in the knowledge and love of God;
- it nourishes the individual's relationships within the believing community;
- it drives the community's service to the world.
- Our faith in Christ brings growth to our personal, interpersonal and public lives

A Rule of Life can help us to respond to the love of God revealed in the Lord Jesus, in his life, death and resurrection. Individually and together, as we are led by the Spirit, a Rule can help us to become more like Christ. A Rule of Life is a way of putting our relationship with God into practice, a way of balancing action and reflection. It isn't about 'keeping the rules'; it is about discovering how we can grow as Christ's disciples in the rhythms and relationships that make up our everyday lives.

The Prophet Micah sums up what God requires of us: to act justly, to love tenderly, and to walk humbly with God (cf. 6.8)

In what follows, this text will be used and adapted as the basis of a Rule of Life for all the faithful in the Diocese of Motherwell.

ACT JUSTLY

Building up your family life

How am I doing this already?

What do I need to attend to?

For instance: I will make sure that special times are considered sacrosanct for time together as a family

I will sit down and take time when one of the family wants to speak

I will invite the family to spend some time in prayer each day

Caring for God's Creation

What am I doing already

What changes in my lifestyle are needed?

For instance: do I take recycling seriously?

Are there initiatives in my neighbourhood I could support or organise?

I will measure my carbon footprint

I will stop using plastic bags

Support for the poor of the earth

How am I doing this already?

What more can I do?

For instance: I will choose some charities I can support on an on-going basis? (eg SCIAF, Aid to the Church in Need)

I will join a group dedicated to social justice (eg Justice and Peace)

I will use social media to inform myself of the needs of our world

Serving the local community

What am I doing already?

Do I see any need where I could help?

For instance: I will consult local websites to find groups of active residents

I will identify any isolated person nearby

I will greet passers-by

I will offer my skills and talents

LOVE TENDERLY

Relationships with my Family and friends

How healthy and fruitful are these

What I must do to improve them?

I will keep in regular touch by phone, text or facetime

I will invite over someone who may be isolated or in trouble

I will remember to send a card to mark an occasion

I will mark down the birthdays of those dearest to me

Relationships with my parish and fellow parishioners

Do I feel I belong to this community?

What do I need to do to feel part of the parish?

For instance: I will make a point of introducing myself to someone I don't know

I will volunteer for some task

I will wait behind after Mass to say hello to others

I will set up a Standing Order for my giving to the parish

Relationship with myself

What am I doing to care for myself?

What are the areas I need to work on?

For instance: I will go for a walk each day

I will take time out to rest

I will nourish my mind by reading a good book, watching a good film or documentary

I will take up that hobby I always wanted

Relationships through living and giving

Am I living simply and generously?

How can I achieve this?

For instance; I will look at my wardrobe

I will review my social life and cut out one activity this month

I will look at my spending and decide what is not necessary

I will be generous with my time through one activity

WALK HUMBLY WITH GOD

Praying as a child to our Father in heaven

What is my prayer life like?

How can I develop this?

For instance: I'll meet for prayer with another two or three parishioners

I'll make myself aware of events in the parish and diocese

I will dedicate 5 minutes to personal prayer and meditation three or four times a day

I will read each day's Gospel

I will learn some prayers off-by-heart

Living as a member of the Body of Christ

How am I doing this?

What is the Lord asking of me?

For instance: I'll make the Sunday Eucharist the heart of my life

I'll bring the Real Presence of the Lord to others through my words and actions

I'll participate in Mass during the week

I will develop my gifts of tenderness and gentleness to others

Growing into a Temple of the Holy Spirit

How do I understand this?

What steps will I take to experience the Holy Spirit?

For instance: I will join a parish group and learn about new ways of being Church

I will be more confident in making suggestions to improve parish life

I will learn to be less fearful of change

I will listen carefully to others and be ready to share my faith.

I will be ready to invite others to enquire about the Faith through RCIA

HOW DO I CREATE MY OWN RULE OF LIFE?

Take the following three steps



1

For each heading, think about what you are already doing and then think about what else you could do

Now think about one or two goals which you will commit yourself to in the coming year. Use the Review Form on the next page to record what you decide to do

2



3

Finally, plan to review this rule on a regular basis. Think about who you could discuss it with.



REVIEW

Having thought of a number of things which you could focus on, decide which one or two things you will commit to do this year in each of the three sections

ACTING JUSTLY: I WILL ...

LOVING TENDERLY: I WILL ...

WALKING HUMBLLY WITH GOD: I WILL ...

TO WHOM WILL I BE ACCOUNTABLE?

HOW OFTEN WILL WE MEET UP?
