

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO DEVELOP A RULE

- Developing a rule gives our lives structure, guidance and direction
- It is self-supporting (supportive of self)
- It is an intentional way of living that includes prayer
- It gives rhythm to our daily lives
  
- It's a way to apply Benedict's "little rule" to our lives in the 21<sup>st</sup> century
  
- It introduces spirituality into all parts of our lives. It is:
  - Service
  - Love
  - Listening
  - Humility
- It is a matter of discernment
- It is a way of living life under God

Look at your life. What's possible? What fits your life?

- Make deliberate time to practice your rule
- Set aside quiet time with God
- Seek practice – not perfection
- PRAY ABOUT HOW TO DEVELOP YOUR RULE (Discernment)

Is a prayer partner a consideration as part of your rule?

Go on-line and look at Episcopal Life website [http://www.cuac.org/episcopal\\_life.htm](http://www.cuac.org/episcopal_life.htm)

Some possible elements of a rule could include

- Spiritual Director
- Retreats
- Service to others
- Keeping a spiritual journal
- The Community of Hope <http://www.slehc.org/AboutUs/Spirituality/COH/Index.cfm>

## WHAT A RULE IS AND IS NOT

### IS

- Developing relationships with God/Self/Others
- Provides
  - Consistency
  - Guidance
  - Directiontowards our goal of living with God
  
- Provides a daily structure that enables us to ENJOY and deepen our relationship with God

### IS NOT

- Punishment
- Onerous
- Someone else's idea of how I should enjoy God in my life.

A rule is how we live our day-to-day lives – deepening our relationships with God/Jesus/Spirit and as a result of that – with each other

## WHY HAVE A RULE?

- It gives shape to our lives and orients us towards God
- To seek Christ more
- To draw closer to God and to honor God
- Provide a new balance to our lives and a healthy structure for living
- To start anew
- Should do it in/with community
- Provides:
  - Discipline
  - Focus
- Helps us engage in the life and mind of Christ

## HOW TO DEVELOP A RULE

- Slowly
  - Take your time and be thoughtful
  - Gradually add different elements to your rule
  
- Individually - Is this going to fit my life?
- Prayerfully
- Thoughtfully

Would developing a Rule around a life "theme" be a possibility?

- Work
- Prayer
- Study

OR

- Body
- Mind
- Spirit

Practices could include:

- Spiritual reading (holy leisure)
- Church attendance
- Joining a spiritually-oriented group
- Worshiping God outside of church
- Daily, regular prayer
- Taking care of your self: both body and spirit

A rule helps us stay intentional in our daily living.

A rule is a combination of both community and private practices

## WHEN TO DEVELOP A RULE

- Anytime
  
- When renewing your spiritual life
  - How is God calling me?
  - Beginning a new ministry
  - Where is God in my life?
  
- Life situation changes
  - Job (new/leave/change)
  - Health
  - Retirement
  - Marriage/Divorce/Death in the Family
  
- At times of major change – look at your Rule
  - Is your life chaotic? Do you need to step back?
  - Is it time to refresh your rule? Drop something/add something?
  
- A Rule is not permanent – it is open to changes and refreshing from time to time as your life circumstances need it to be