

4. COMMUNITY

1. We are all part of a community;
a web of relationships
that have some common bond
which creates a sense
of identity and unity:
families, work groups, churches,
neighborhoods, towns, and
the Community of the Gospel.

2. These are the places where we work
to bring God's kingdom to earth
in service to others;
to unite all peoples
under the love and wisdom
of Our Lord.

RELATIONSHIPS

3. The lifeblood of any community
is the love of God that flows through
the veins of relationships.
God is love itself;
The deeper and more honest
the relationship,
the more evident will be the love of God.

4. We receive each person
in our communities
with thankfulness and openness
knowing that they, too, are temples of God,
fellow travelers on the journey.
What can we do
to help each other
along the way?

5. The flow of God's love
depends on how ready we are
to listen, receive, share,
and be vulnerable
in the image of Christ.
It depends on how willing we are
to put the good of the kingdom
above self-interests;
to let our false-self egos die,
and to grow in spirit,
that others may live.

6. Learn the stories of others;
take an interest in their well-being
with respect, dignity, and equity.
Love as we would be loved.
If one member suffers,
all suffer together with it;
If one member is honored,
all rejoice together with it.

A Common Rule for Monastics

7. We are all broken in some way,
in need of the love, healing
and support of Christ.
We affirm each other's potential
as children of God,
growing and learning
from the gifts
of each present moment.

DIVERSITY

8. We become fuller and more complete
as we tap into relationships
built on God's love.
Strength in diversity
builds strength in community.

9. As Paul writes, "There is a variety of gifts,
services, and activities among us,
but we all have
the same Spirit, Lord and God
for the common good.
Just as the body has many members,
it is still one body;
so it is with the body of Christ
you are all a part of.
One member of the body
is no less important
than another;
what good is it if we are all alike?"

10. Because we all have one Father,
we are all brothers and sisters
even though we are all unique.
No better, no worse – just unique.
God loves each of His children
very deeply, and very personally.
So must we.

11. This is the whole reason
we exist as a community –
to know, love, and serve God
in our own unique way,
based on the specific talents,
skills, and interests
that we have been given.

LEADERSHIP

12. Jesus is the only perfect leader;
the head of the Church.
The Church is all of God's people;
Not buildings.
The Church has many groups
which are led by people,
but all must follow Christ.
He has placed them there
to care and nurture
the members of the group.

A Common Rule for Monastics

13. While the leaders need authority,
they should not be authoritarians.
While they must be heard,
they must also listen.
While they must be loved,
they must also be loving.
While we are accountable to them;
they are accountable to God,
and to us,
for their leadership.

14. Together we seek
the building up of all our members,
of kindred souls,
to make the community whole
by growing in the love of the Lord.
Pray for the leaders,
and for those who follow,
let us be leaders in our own way,
the way we were made to be.

*"If we have no peace, it is because we have
forgotten that we belong to each other."*

- Mother Teresa