

## 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 Community  
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 that member;  
If one member is honored,  
all rejoice together with that member.

## 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  
of which you are all a part.  
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 have leaders,  
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