

Lights for Christ

Introduction to a Personal Rule of Life



As members of the Diocese of Sheffield we re-affirm our calling to be Christ-like, living as lights for Christ in our everyday lives by:

- receiving Christ's light as his friends
- walking in Christ's light as his followers
- reflecting Christ's light to those around us.



RELEASED

A *personal rule of life* is a framework that can help release each of us to become more Christ-like. It is a response to God's love and grace, a response which comes out of gratitude.



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Released for Fruitfulness

Our vision is, ***to become more Christ-like, living as lights for Christ in our everyday lives.***

Receiving

- **Praying** and seeking God's will
- **Participating** in the life and worship of the Church
- **Reading** and reflecting on the Scriptures
- **Receiving** Communion
- **Opening** our lives to the Holy Spirit

Walking

- **Enjoying** God's gifts with gratitude
- **Living** by the teaching of Jesus
- **Giving** generously to others
- **Giving** and receiving forgiveness
- **Balancing** work and rest

Reflecting

- **Loving** and praying for those we live and work with
- **Sharing** Jesus in our communities
- **Serving** those in need
- **Challenging** injustice and promoting peace
- **Caring** for God's creation

Throughout the ages, Christ's followers have discovered that receiving Christ's light has the power to change us and, as we are changed, so others can change too.

A simple commitment to specific actions can help to free us to focus on what really matters and release us to live more fruitfully.

In its monastic form, a rule of life is observed by whole communities, subject to vows and formal accountability. A personal rule of life can be more flexible and is subject to a different kind of accountability.



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A rule of life might be likened to a trellis: a framework giving shape to our lives, enabling us to grow stronger and more fruitful. It can help us create new patterns and rhythms for life.



An Invitation. We invite you to reflect on your current rhythm and notice what is helping you to become more Christ-like and what might be unhelpful. **Consider each strand of the vision** and seek to identify one thing you might affirm or introduce in your life – a specific daily, weekly, monthly or annual routine or discipline.



Don't rush. Take time to relax and be quiet. Open yourself to God's guidance. How is God affirming you? How is God challenging you to grow?



Some questions you might ask

Receiving: How and when do I pray? How do I listen to God? What nourishes and energises me? What stops me from receiving God's grace?

Walking: What difference does being a follower of Jesus make in your life and relationships? How might you take a step closer to the teaching and example of Jesus and the apostles?

Reflecting: What do my everyday life and words say to my family, work colleagues, friends and neighbours during the week? How does my life contribute to God's kingdom of love and justice?

You may find it helpful to talk this through with a spiritual accompanier, minister, trusted friend or group. Consider joining one of our sessions on *Exploring a Personal Rule of Life Together* (see further information on the Lights for Christ website).

When you've decided on your responses you might like to record them on your *Personal Rule of Life card*. As you do so, commit your intention to God and continue to ask for God's help and grace.

A personal rule of life can be most liberating when you share your experience of living by it with someone else.

As your rule becomes part of your natural rhythm helping you to grow, it will be good, from time to time, to review and modify it accordingly.



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