A Common Rule for Monastics

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.
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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.
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