Contents:

Reflection: A Rule of Life 2
Reflection: Walking Alone? 3
What’s on? Events, retreats, opportunities... 4-7
Encouraging Young Spirituality 8
A Rule of Life
Reverend Chris Palmer

We all have a sense that living well doesn’t happen by accident. We have habits and patterns to get us through the day: alarm clocks to get us up, regular meals and exercise, and budgets for expenses. If we don’t have these things, life soon gets chaotic. Even though keeping a diary or getting exercise can feel a chore, really these liberates us to be healthier and happier people. Having a Rule of Life extends this principle so that we choose the patterns of life we need to be joyful and faithful disciples of Jesus. That doesn’t mean that our Rule of Life just has religious things on it; we follow Jesus 24/7 in everything we do, not just one day a week or when we pray or come to church.

Why ‘Rule’?
‘Rule of Life’ is the traditional phrase for a statement of our intentions for living. But it’s not about having someone in authority over us or choosing oppressive regulations. ‘Rule’ comes for a Latin word for a ‘straight stick’. It’s a straight line that helps us see when we’re wandering off the path. If you prefer, think of it as a ‘Path of Life’.

You make your rule
Importantly, no one else is telling you what you should do. It may help you to discuss it with someone, but it’s your rule. You decide what to include. In planning your rule it helps to start with questions. What things are healthy, life-giving and joyful for you? What takes you away from your best self? What does it mean for you to live generously? What niggling sense do you have a God’s call? What one change would help deepen your walk with God?

Now choose intentions under loose headings, for instance Work, Rest, and Play; or God, Others, Myself. People usually include intentions around prayer and worship, and giving time and resources in the service of God and others. But let your Rule of Life also contain fun or be quirky. It’s fine to include ‘I will go hang gliding regularly’ or ‘I plan to develop my skills as a mime artist’, or whatever brings joy to you and makes you more truly the person God made you to be.

Remember: it’s a Rule of Life: it should be life-giving. A good ‘Rule’ helps us to be our true selves – what God created us to be. So, it’s important that it is realistic. A Rule of Life is not a description of the ideal, but of what we can and will do in practice now. It’s a way to choose life in the life we have.

Where do we go from here?
Making a Rule is a start, not an end. Here are some suggestions for keeping your ‘Rule’ – and your life – under review. Most people find it helps to share their Rule of Life with a friend, spiritual director, or small group. They might encourage, guide, or reassure us that we’re on the right lines. It’s always a good idea to have a way to check out with others how we’re doing in our spiritual life – meeting every few weeks and giving time to talk about your spiritual life together. Keeping a simple journal of our spiritual life is a great way to stay aware of what we’ve discovered and where we’ve found God. We might note how we’ve done with our ‘Rule’ that day, anything that God’s revealed to us, or something we need to deal with. What have we found life giving? What has drawn us away from God?

A Rule of Life is living document. It needs revising from time to time. But it’s never good to make changes at times we feel disconnected, lethargic, or despairing. When we feel close to God we will be more open to God’s spirit guiding us to recognise his desires in and for us.
Walking Alone?
A Camino Reflection by Jonathan Coore

One of the hardest parts of the Camino de Santiago was walking with oneself. Frequently the path was clear of others or there was a deliberate choice to walk alone. If someone said that they needed time alone it was generally greeted with encouragement and sincere good wishes. The fact that one could ask without fear of a reaction was, for me at least, healing in and of itself. It had not, in fact, occurred to me that anyone would walk the Camino with somebody else. I simply saw it as a time to be with myself but it was still hard.

It was whilst walking alone that I had a surprising encounter with someone. They were beautiful and ugly, vulnerable and flawed, creative and sensitive, angry and gentle. There was something truly compelling yet vaguely familiar about them. I asked them their name and then watched as they gave me the most despairing of looks, turned off the path and seemingly vanished into the undergrowth. Despite the unease and discomfort, I wanted to see them again but doubted that I ever would. Lost and lonely I walked on.

Some days later as the sun began to burn less intensely and the distant mountains took on a bluish hue the same person approached with caution and asked me if they could walk with me on condition that I was loving and patient. I could think of nothing to say so I said yes.

This person had tried in vain to make their presence felt so many times before. They couldn’t get through. It had occurred to them that perhaps I simply didn’t like them. Why had I ignored them and shut them out? Was I ashamed to be seen with me? They had done nothing to me; no abuse or malice. Why did I hate them so? They had always looked for and wanted the best in me. They had always been present in my darkest times. Why couldn’t I love them?

My companion asked me these questions in resounding silence broken only by the trudge of feet on gravel. I could form no answer. I wanted to run as far away as fast as possible. On hearing this thought and sensing my feelings, my companion grabbed and gripped my hand. I tried to break free.

I wanted to scream at them to leave me be but they heard this thought as well. We came to a standstill sweating and panting in the heat. I cannot let you be. I have let you run from me before. I have even let you abandon me before but I can’t live without you. I love you and I need you more than ever before to love me. Once again, I asked them why they simply wouldn’t leave me alone.

I can’t; I’m you.
Wednesday 10th May 2017 How to Plan and Lead a Quiet Day
Sister Diane and Sister Marie-Christine

A day set aside to be open to God can take many forms. This day will move step by step through all practical aspects of planning and leading a quiet day. We will explore how to help people into stillness, possible themes and use of resources. In the afternoon people will be will given time in groups to plan a Quiet Morning or Day. Suggested donation £25-35, with concessions available. Ideal for those already involved or wanting to develop this ministry. This is day is held in partnership with the Diocese of Southwark.

Contact - St. Andrew, Lewisham, 99 Belmont Hill, Lewisham, London SE13 5DY, 0208 852 1662 welcome@sisters-of-st-andrew.com
www.sisters-of-st-andrew.com

~

Saturday 20th May 2017 10am – 1pm Spirituality of Ageing Workshop with Ann Morisy

Ann will explore the opportunities, challenges and joys of later life. The session will be at Trinity House, 4 Chapel Court, Borough High Street, London, SE1 1HW Tel: 020 7939 9400

~

Making Sense of Suicide with Andrew Wilson

“No one ever lacks a good reason for suicide” Cesare Pavese

“At least one in five people in the UK has been personally affected by a suicide. Given that figure, supporting the suicide bereaved is everybody’s business” wrote Alison Wertheimer. The day hopes to give an airing to our thoughts and anxieties as we face the task of supporting people in their pain and how we might take better care of ourselves in this area of ministry.

This session is open to all and will be at Trinity House, 4 Chapel Court, Borough High Street, London, SE1 1HW Tel: 020 7939 9400.

This is a day which may well have emotional implications for those who attend. In preparation you might need to plan what you will be doing for a couple of days after the session to look after yourself.
SAVE THE DATE
Following the great success of the *Awakening Spirituality* day last year we are planning a similar day for Saturday 21st October 2017 at Southwark Cathedral. The theme is *Going Deeper: Engaging Spirituality for Contemporary Living*. More details to follow.
Sisters of St. Andrew
an Urban Oasis

March
3-5 Stepping Stones into Silence. A beginner’s silent retreat with personal accompaniment. Sisters of St. Andrew
8 Icons in Lent* (1st) The Transfiguration 11am – 1pm
15 Icons in Lent* (2nd) The Samaritan Woman 11am – 1pm
15 Lenten Quiet Evening 7.30-9.00pm Input, reflection in silence finishing with prayer with the community. Sr. Regula
22 Icons in Lent* (3rd) The Blind Man 11am – 1pm
29 Icons in Lent* (4th) Lazarus 11am – 1pm

April
5 Icons in Lent* (5th) Entry into Jerusalem 11am – 1pm
10 – 12 Journeying in Silence with Jesus in the footsteps of His passion. Each day 10am – 7pm. Come for the day, half a day, or a few hours and spend time contemplating the Passion, with word, music, and image. (A detailed programme will be published closer from the time). Sisters of St. Andrew

May
10 How to plan and lead a Quiet Day. A Training Day - 10am – 4pm This event is being held in partnership with the Anglican Diocese of Southwark. Max.20.
Srs. Diane and Marie-Christine

Bookings through CSN catholicspiritualitynetwork@gmail.com or/ 07756 864784

20 Come and see: Andrew day. For young adults (20-35) walking, silence, Bible reflexion, sharing. 12.00am - 5.30pm Sr. Marie-Christine

21 Open House - The sisters invite you to come and enjoy their Urban Oasis: relax in the garden, walk the labyrinth, and spend time together. 2.00 - 5.30pm, including at 4.30pm a prayer with the community.

Further Information and Bookings:
Sisters of St Andrew, 99 Belmont Hill, SE13 5DY Lewisham T: 0208 852 1662
e-mail: welcome@sisters-of-st-andrew.com
website: www.sisters-of-st-andrew.com
Lose your head and come to your senses

A weekend retreat led by
Rev Malcolm Rothwell

Ladywell Convent, Godalming
7/9th July 2017

We spend a lot of our time in our heads thinking about things. Words of often act as a barrier between us and God.
This retreat encourages you to lose your head and start to feel and sense and thereby get closer to God.

Malcolm will be leading 5 sessions of about 20/30 minutes at other times you will always be able to find a quiet spot within the peace and tranquillity of the extensive grounds of the Convent, as well as a number of rooms within the convent which includes the chapel.

We will be observing silence at other times which will include our meals from the Friday night worship until Sunday lunch.

However should have any concerns there will always be someone available to talk with.

There are a few rooms left, if you would like to attend please contact me on 01883 370945 or at brian-car@hotamil.co.uk.

The cost of the weekend is £170 fully catered.
Encouraging Young Spirituality

Lent is a fantastic opportunity to encourage our young people on a contemplative journey. Here are some ideas:

**Mindful Walking** – as winter passes and spring comes, look out for the signs of new life whilst going on a routine walk. Say thank you to god every time you spot something. See how many times you said thank you as you walked.

**YouTube it!**
If you really can’t live without a screen, then this may be for you.

Lent Cartoon Jesus in the Desert
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O5bfxGNMY9c](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O5bfxGNMY9c)

**Food Waste Challenge**

Throughout Lent, try not to waste any food. Think about those who don’t have enough to eat and give thanks to God for every meal that you have.

**Go, see & think**

This painting by Briton Rivière is on display at the Guildhall Gallery in the City of London. Admission is free.