

**PRAYER FOR THE
FELLOWSHIP OF SAINT PAUL**

O Lord, who became poor for our sakes that we through your poverty might be made rich: strengthen and sanctify the members of the Fellowship of Saint Paul that we may enrich your Church by our gifts of prayer and service. Grant that all our members, living before you with a single eye to your glory, may accomplish the work you give us to do. All this we ask through Christ our Lord. Amen

The Fellowship of St. Paul

The purpose of the Fellowship is two-fold: the strengthening of the individual's spiritual life by the keeping of the Rule in association with the Society's corporate life; and the support of the Society's active work by prayer, material assistance and direct involvement whenever possible.

There are various ways of sharing in the life of the Fellowship, according to each person's call and circumstance - Friend, Associate, and Companion.

Friends are automatically enrolled in the Fellowship when they have shared with the community their concern and support for our life and work. No special observance is required.

Associates are those who elect to keep the spirit of the Rule: commit to regular prayer, study, and service; and support the community and its works. Associates make an annual report to the Guardian of the Fellowship.

Companions are those who elect to keep the spirit of the Rule, say devotions from the Prayer Book or other source, maintain a study program and write a monthly report to the Guardian during the first year they are members of the Fellowship and at least annually thereafter. Companions also help support the work of the Society by their donations.

**THE RULE OF LIFE
OF THE FELLOWSHIP OF SAINT PAUL**

ARTICLE I

The Object of the Fellowship

It is the object of the Fellowship of St. Paul to seek that wholeness of life in relationship with others and with creation to which God in His unconditional love calls all people. In responding to this call we show forth the Light of the world which is Christ... Because God is the sole source of life and love, we seek a fuller relationship and openness to God, bearing in mind that the primary duty of a Christian is to live through one's baptismal vows.

ARTICLE II

Life of the Community

The Fellowship of St. Paul shall keep as much as possible the spirit of the Religious Life, adapted to meet the reality of contemporary culture. It shall strive for the greatest flexibility and recognition of special needs and individual situations. Our two-fold purpose: the ongoing development of the spiritual life and the expression of God's love toward God's people through service in God's name.

ARTICLE III

Our Baptismal Covenant

All who enter the Fellowship must seek to live out their baptismal vows. We can attain the end to which God is calling us by simplicity of life, true hearted love, and a joyful surrender to God. Let us live each day in a spirit of simplicity and stewardship of God's gifts. Cherish simplicity for the freedom it gives us. (Poverty)

A virtuous life is a singular witness to the love of God. It is a way of creating an opening for God in a world crowded with self serving demands. It includes pureness of heart and schools itself to refrain from judgment of other souls. A virtuous life is of thought and word as well as deed. (Chastity)

Let there be in each of us a desire to at all times seek the will of God. From the beginning, Christian tradition has spoken of Obedience, and it provides for us the means of following our Lord's teaching that "he who loses his life for my sake shall find it." (Obedience)

The Baptismal Covenant includes care for our mental and emotional health with the extension of that principle to a responsibility toward all creation. It also upholds the obligation and privilege of living in peace and justice with others.

ARTICLE IV

The Worship of God

Prayers or Devotions of Fellowship members are to be offered daily unless prevented by good cause.

St. Paul regards the Eucharist as the Sacrament of Christian unity which includes the integration of our own humanity as well as our relationships with others. It is central in our walk with God.

The private prayer life of each member needs to be carefully cultivated and should include a variety of spiritual exercises which will nurture our growth into wholeness.

Nothing must ever interfere with our progress in the understanding of God. Each member needs a regular program of prayer, study and reading under competent guidance.

ARTICLE V

Holy Living

We need to cultivate the most careful courtesy with those we meet. Courtesy is an outward and visible form of charity. Let it be all but instinctive. Courtesy includes thoughtfulness for the comfort and feelings of everyone.

St. Paul tells us: "Do not let your love be a pretense, but sincerely prefer good to evil. Love each other... and have a profound respect for each other. Work for the Lord with untiring effort and with great earnestness of spirit. If you have hope, this will make you more cheerful. Do not give up if trials come; and keep on praying. If any of the saints are in need, you must share with them; and you should make hospitality your special care." (Romans 12:9-13)

ARTICLE VI

Work as an Apostolate

Work is our share and partnership in God's creation. All work can be sanctified and all labor is equal in glory, honor and importance. With us work can be a prayer, an oblation and a service of love to God and to others.

**THE CONSTITUTION
OF THE FELLOWSHIP OF SAINT PAUL**

ARTICLE I

Friends

Friends are those persons or organizations who have made contributions of their time, talent and treasure in the past calendar year toward the life and work of The Society of Saint Paul. As such they are enrolled without application and are remembered regularly in the Society's intercessions.

ARTICLE II

Associates

The Rule of Life for an Associate includes

1. Observance of the Fellowship Rule insofar as possible and appropriate.
2. Regular attendance at public worship and the reception of Holy Communion.
3. Daily personal prayer, including at least once a week prayer for the life and work of The Society of Saint Paul.
4. Offering one's daily life with attention to one's physical, mental and emotional health, to the Glory of God. Acts of personal ministry to others are encouraged.
5. Maintaining an ongoing program of Christian education in accordance with one's opportunity and need.
6. Making an annual report of the observance of this Rule on the Associate's birthday. And a financial contribution to The Society of St. Paul and its works.

ARTICLE III

Companions

The Rule of Life for a Companion includes:

1. Observance of the Fellowship Rule insofar as possible and appropriate.
2. Weekly attendance at the Holy Eucharist.
3. Daily recitation of devotions in the Book of Common Prayer or its equivalent.
4. Offering one's daily life with attention to one's physical, mental and emotional health, to the glory of God. Acts of personal ministry to others are encouraged.
5. Maintaining an ongoing program of Christian education in accordance with one's opportunity and need.
6. Making of regular reports, monthly during the first year and thereafter annually on the Companion's birthday. These reports should include any difficulties in keeping the Rule and an estimate of spiritual progress plus an annual offering to The Society of St. Paul and its works.

ARTICLE IV

Organization

The Rector of the Society of Saint Paul has the general oversight of the Fellowship. This oversight is normally exercised by the Guardian of the Fellowship, who shall be appointed by the Rector.

ARTICLE V

Department

Associates and Companions are expected to observe the normal standards of deportment in the Rule of the Fellowship of St. Paul. They shall take special care never to link the name of this Society with any action or opinion of their own without the written approval of the Guardian. Every Associate and Companion should always be aware that their lives, for good or ill, reflect on The Society and of our witness for Christ in the world.

ARTICLE VI

Dispensations and Termination

The Guardian has full authority to adjust or dispense members from any requirement of the Fellowship Rule. Normally, each member should try to keep the Rule as set forth in this document. But if some part of it is burdensome or impossible, the fact should be reported to the Guardian, who will recommend such modification as may seem to be needed. The principle to be kept in mind is that a Rule of Life should be sufficiently demanding to require effort but not as difficult as to make failure inevitable, or to cause such strain that it becomes more a burden than a benefit.

Any member may end their membership at any time by notifying the Guardian in writing. Likewise, the Rector of The Society of St. Paul shall have the right to terminate the membership of any member by notifying that person in writing.

A COMMENTARY ON THE FELLOWSHIP OF SAINT PAUL RULE

The Fellowship of St. Paul is an association of men and women who are Friends, Associates, and Companions, of The Society of St. Paul, a religious community of the Episcopal Church, who live a Rule of Life centered on the Glory of God. Fellowship members support one another with their love, prayers and service. In addition they support the Society and its works with their alms when possible. Every Fellowship member is regularly remembered in prayer by the community.

The Fellowship Rule sets forth an ideal of living the Christian life. Specific observance of its discipline helps us to reinforce the practice of our baptismal vows in acts of worship, study and ministry to others.

The Objective of the Fellowship

The objective of the Fellowship is to seek that wholeness of life in relationship with others and with creation to which God in His unconditional love calls all people. Christians, by virtue of our baptismal promises, are called to a life lived in response to the love of God as reflected in our unique gifts of talent, character and spirituality.

God invites us to share the Gospel story and thereby to become whole. The more we let go of our self centered love and willfulness, the more we find our true self in God who lives within us.

As we live the Gospel story with Christ we gain access to the riches of those who have lived the Gospel in the past and are thus empowered to live with God today. We can discover God's presence in the marvelously unfolding gifts of creation and be strengthened to share in God's healing love.

Prayer, Study and Service

Since earliest times Christians have found strength and guidance in keeping their ordinary faith, prayer and service alive through a Rule of Life. The example of the saints has for centuries shown the value of this. All religious communities (which include families and small groups) are held together by the commitment of their members to a Rule, or a covenant. In today's uprooted and hectic society Christians are re-discovering the benefit and blessings of a Rule of Life.

The Fellowship Rule is like a highway in the desert. In it there is a commitment to prayer, study and service. Its ideals and obligations are intended to be adapted to each person's unique circumstances and needs, thereby avoiding rigidity and offering flexibility. Our life, with all due regard for our weakness, is a witness to the Good News of God in Christ. The more we

see Christ in others, the more we can give respect and dignity to every human being

The Fellowship Rule and its life of prayer is a means of strengthening our resolve to live fully the baptismal life. We are heartened by the solidarity and support of each other within the larger whole of the Community's prayer life.

A Christian's life in grace is enriched and enlivened through regular prayer and study. A portion of each day needs to be given to God in prayer and meditation. The length of time is not as important as its quality. Fellowship members are urged to recall the primacy of Holy Scripture and the Gospels in particular as sources of daily inspiration. As we pray, meditate and ponder the Scriptures and are fed with the inspired writings of others, the Spirit will lead us to a new awareness of God's will for us and ways to live it out day by day.

A School of Charity

The heart of our life is the love of Christ. Centuries ago, St. Benedict called the cloister a "school of charity," a place where Christians learn to love each other. St. John commends us with these words: "Beloved, since God Loved us so much, we also ought to love one another... We love because He first loved us... The commandment we have from Him is this: Those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also. (I John 4:11, 19, 21.)

Love begins with acts of simple courtesy, kindness, respect and consideration and grows to become the flame of the Holy Spirit. "Our God is a consuming fire" wrote the author of Hebrews. Let others see the love of Christ in us by frequent acts of Christian charity.

Keeping the Rule

Keeping a Rule of Life is a response to God's love and a personal commitment to a discipline. A Rule of Life is embraced, not enforced. A Rule does at least two things. First, it is an expression of love and faith in God, a witness to His Presence. Second, a Rule is a focal point of renewal in Christ. Its daily obligations return the soul to a way of living which contains the needed elements for a full Christian life. Again, like a highway in the desert, a Rule serves to provide the Christian a path to walk during this earthly pilgrimage. And on that path we will find Him who walked the road to Emmaus.

As a means to that end, which is union with God, our Rule contains a standard for worship and the strengthening of the soul through the Eucharist and a private life of prayer. Since the Church is a witnessing community, our Rule also has within its structure an ideal for Charity, the showing of God's love to God's people.

FELLOWSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Please complete and remove this form. Mail to the Guardian of the Fellowship:
The Society of St. Paul
P. O. Box 34548
San Diego, CA 92163-4548
Phone: (619)-542-8660 Fax: (619) 542-8585 email: anbsp@earthlink.net

Dear Friends, please enroll me in the Fellowship as an Associate or Companion. (Circle one.)

Name

Address City State Zip

(_____) _____
Phone Number

_____ Date Rule Began

_____ Date of Birth _____
Marital Status Occupation

Signature E-Mail Address

I have read, understand and will observe the Fellowship Rule, God being my helper.