

RULE OF LIFE GUIDE

This document is intended to help you bridge the gap between intention and reality. This structure focuses on four different “pillars” of our life: the spiritual, the human (emotional and physical health), the intellectual, and the pastoral (life on mission). Making commitments in each of these realms is how we begin to create an authentically Catholic culture marked by virtue, joy, and purpose. We aren’t just a body or just a spirit, and we don’t live in isolation. That’s why our Rule of Life has to speak into more than just the spiritual to have an impact on our whole life and thus, our culture.

You’ll notice that we combine a more ideal “vision” with practical commitments for every section. As the year goes on, consistency will be key. Choose commitments you know you can actually stick to even when your fervor fades. You can always add things later.

For an example of what it can look like as a finished product, see the sample. Keep what you like, add your own touch, and change what doesn’t work. Each one of the four sections has a guiding Scripture (or a few!), a vision to guide the section, and space for concrete commitments. This is meant to be an outline- feel free to copy and paste right into your own document. For a complete example, see file “Sample Rule of Life.”

Know of our prayers for you! St. Benedict, pray for us!



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RULE OF LIFE

In your title, consider choosing a patron Saint for your Household, i.e. "Joan of Arc House."

I. Spiritual

Guiding Scripture:

Verse Here

Vision: Vision statement here

Commitments:

- A. Personal Prayer Commitments
 - Sub-Commitment
- B. Communal Prayer Commitments
 - Sub-Commitment
- C. Sacramental Prayer
 - Sub-Commitment

II. Human

We packed a lot into this section. Think about what is most important to you and what areas you most desire to grow. Look at our example to see some of what you could incorporate. If you are in a place of needing to enter into the fullness of Catholic moral teaching, make sure to include that in your Rule!

Guiding Scripture:

Verse Here

Vision: Vision statement here

Commitments:

- A. Commitment 1
 - Sub-Commitment
 - Sub-Commitment
 - Sub-Commitment
- B. Commitment 2
 - Sub-Commitment
 - Sub-Commitment
 - Sub-Commitment

III. Intellectual

Not all of us are theologians or college students, but we should all be learning. This is a great way to keep each other accountable to be constantly learning and growing toward loving God with our whole mind.

Guiding Scripture:

Verse Here

Vision: Vision statement here

Commitments:

- A. Commitment 1
 - Sub-Commitment
 - Sub-Commitment
 - Sub-Commitment
- B. Commitment 2
 - Sub-Commitment
 - Sub-Commitment
 - Sub-Commitment

IV. Pastoral

Here's that apostolic piece. As we grow into more mature Christians, our lives should have a natural "overflow." This is a great place to pray about how your house is "on mission." Maybe it's hospitality, or hosting a small group, or running a Bible study. This will vary widely.

Guiding Scripture:

Verse Here

Vision: Vision statement here

Commitments:

- A. Commitment 1
 - Sub-Commitment
 - Sub-Commitment
 - Sub-Commitment
- B. Commitment 2
 - Sub-Commitment
 - Sub-Commitment
 - Sub-Commitment

V. Conclusion

Time to tie it all together. Maybe use some Scripture. Or a guiding quote. Or point back to the vision from the beginning.

RULE OF LIFE — SAMPLE

I. Spiritual

Guiding Scripture:

And he said to them, "This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer and fasting" (Mark 9:29).

Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life... (John 6:68)

Return to me with all your heart... (Joel 2:12).

Vision: We commit to personal and communal growth in holiness as a response to *Him who first loved us (1 John 4:19)*, especially through the following:

Commitments:

- A. Personal Prayer
 - We commit to at least 30 minutes/day of dedicated personal prayer.
- B. Communal Prayer
 - We commit to gathering for prayer together 5 times/week as a community.
 - Community spiritual practice: We commit to choosing a common fast and intention as a community each month.
- C. Sacramental Prayer
 - We commit to attending daily Mass 3 times/week.
 - We commit to going to the Sacrament of Confession frequently.

II. Human

Guiding Scripture:

Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God? You are not your own; you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

Vision: As we pursue a life of holiness, we strive to grow in wholeness in Christ, *rooted and grounded in love (Ephesians 3:17)*. These ideals help us respond to Christ who calls us to *love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength...(Mark 12:30)*.

Commitments:

- A. Wholeness in Body
 - Exercise: *I drive my body and train it, for fear that, after having preached to others, I myself should be disqualified (1 Corinthians 9:27)*. We will strive to incorporate regular exercise into our routine in a way that helps us be our best.
 - Eating well: *So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God*. We will seek to develop a healthy relationship with food that glorifies God.
 - Drinking temperately: *wine to gladden their hearts (Psalm 104:15)*... We will treat alcohol as a gift to be enjoyed temperately, not abused, and will avoid all drunkenness.
 - Practically, we will limit ourselves to two drinks per occasion.

B. Wholeness in Rest

- *Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy (Exodus 20:8).* We will strive to rest well, especially on the Sabbath.
- *For freedom Christ has set us free; stand fast therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery (Galatians 5:1).* We will nurture a healthy relationship with technology, committing to a discerning use of technology, especially in our home.
- *I will not set before my eyes anything that is base (Psalm 101:3).* We will avoid entertainment that contains excessive profanity, violence, or demeaning sexual content.

C. Wholeness in Relationship

- We choose to trust one another and assume the best in one another.
- We are committed to engaging only in chaste relationships, appropriate to our state in life.
 - We will not have members of the opposite sex as overnight guests.
- We will communicate directly with the person impacted when we do not follow through on commitments.
- We will come directly to the person who hurt us when we are hurt by something said or done within the house.
- We will not gossip.
 - We will cultivate a culture of honor and respect for the privacy of others' stories and personal lives. Our lives are plenty interesting. And if they're not, we'll work on being more interesting.

III. Intellectual

Guiding Scripture:

"Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind..." (Romans 12:2)

Vision: In order to be more faithful disciples, we will continuously be students of the faith, through spiritual reading, podcasts, attending talks, etc.

Commitments:

A. Weekly Study

- We will set aside 30 minutes every week to study something together.

IV. Pastoral

Guiding Scripture:

...love one another with brotherly affection; outdo one another in showing honor (Romans 12:10).

Vision: We will seek to grow in our own discipleship and foster a culture of joy in our house that overflows into those we welcome into our lives and home.

Commitments:

A. Generous Hospitality

- We will welcome guests, as often as possible, according to our house rules.
- We will host a monthly event at the house where we welcome others.

- We will celebrate liturgical feasts, birthdays, and other occasions in a way that showcases the joy of the Gospel.
 - We will maintain cleanliness in our home to the extent that we would always be ready to welcome a guest. A reasonable, adult guest. Like our mom.
- B. Living as Disciples
- In order to continuously pursue a life of greater holiness, we will seek to be consistently learning from someone wiser than us.
 - We will seek opportunities to lovingly form others into lifelong disciples in ways that suit our state in life, personal gifts, and charisms.
 - We will choose a consistent way to serve our local parish, according to our gifts.
 - We will choose a consistent way to serve in our broader community.

V. Conclusion

This life is a gift from above. May this rule serve as an ideal that helps us to *run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith (Hebrews 12:1-2).*

After all, *God is love (1 John 4:16).*