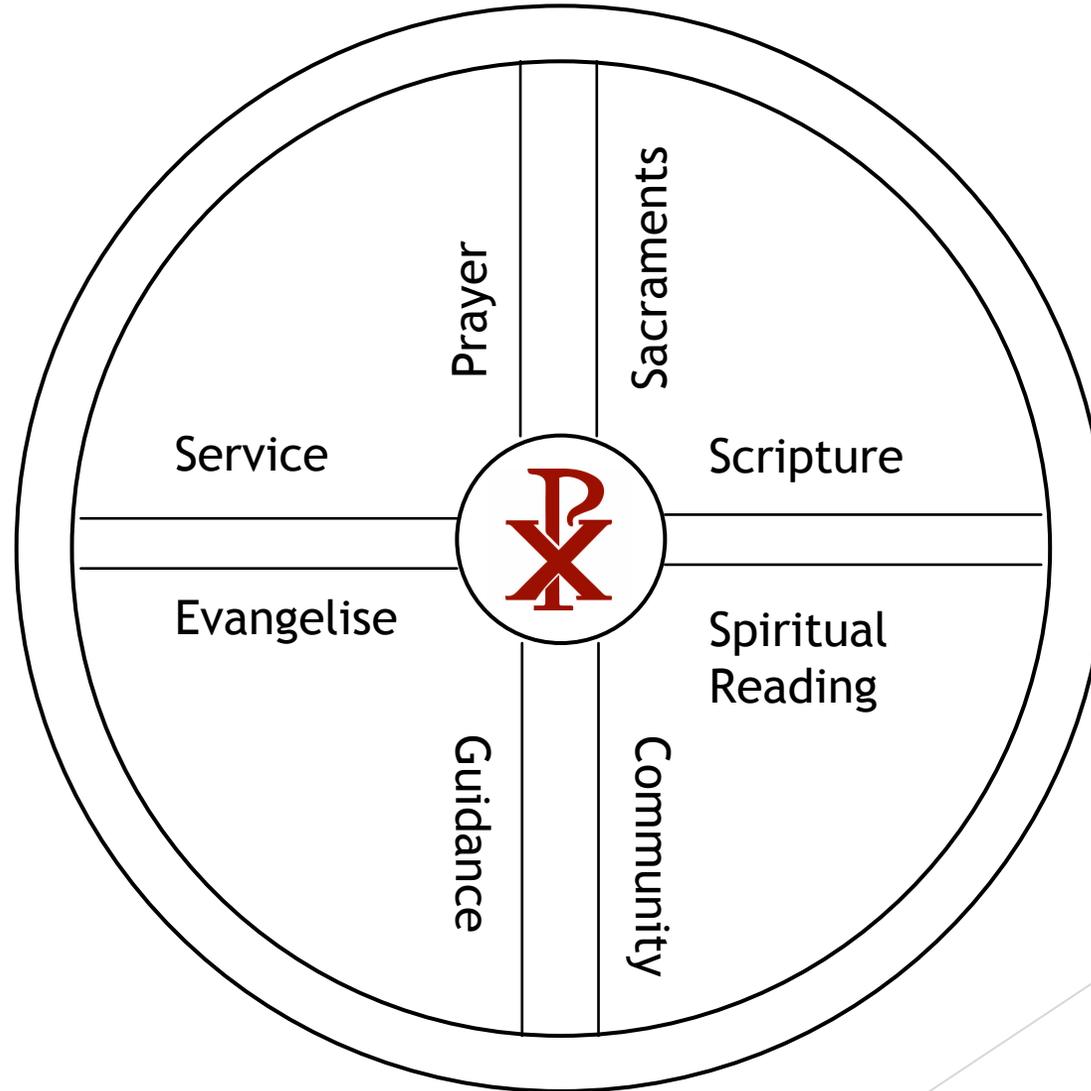


GROWTH AS A DISCIPLE

CONDITIONS FOR GROWTH

Growth - Christian Life



Context for growth in Christ

PARABLE OF SEED FINDING “GOOD SOIL”

- A PLAN OF LIFE
- PERSONAL PRAYER
- COMMUNITY
- LISTENING TO THE WORD
- SPIRITUAL READING
- EUCHARIST
- RECONCILIATION
- INTERCESSION, EVANGELIZATION, COMPASSION

PLAN OF LIFE

- ▶ Giving priority to the most important things; God's agenda
- ▶ Regular weekly schedule. Time management expert
- ▶ Check it with spiritual director
- ▶ Finding the right balance between competing claims on time

TIMES ALONE WITH THE LORD

- ▶ Top priority for a disciple; each day quiet time alone
- ▶ Life or death - our daily food. Commitment
- ▶ Fallacy that we have no time to pray; example of Jesus
- ▶ We are made to pray - first steps, miracle

TIMES ALONE WITH THE LORD

- ▶ A way of the heart Mt 6:6 “secret place” within
- ▶ Problem of over-stimulated society
- ▶ A way of communion with the Lord; self-knowledge; identity in him
- ▶ A way of listening to quiet voice of shepherd gently leading us

RELATIONSHIPS AND COMMUNITY

- ▶ We are relational beings; no one is an island
- ▶ Where Holy Spirit is there is communion
- ▶ Avoid rugged individualism of our age; the “body of Christ”
- ▶ Church is more than “service-station” or “fast food”
- ▶ Grow in holiness within community relationships

LISTENING TO THE WORD

- ▶ God's love letter to us - personal - his word to me
- ▶ Holy Spirit brings word alive for us ; hearts burn Lk 24:32
- ▶ Word of God forms the heart and cleanses the mind Jn 8:31
- ▶ Active minds; turning the word of God over in the mind - mill-stone
- ▶ New energy, new vision for God's way of thinking

SPIRITUAL READING

- ▶ Feeds the mind and inspires the heart
- ▶ Use of books, Videos, DVDs etc

- ▶ Lives of the saints - inspired by their response to gospel in their time
- ▶ Not study but to be aroused in love of God and longing for holiness

- ▶ Select what speaks to you now
- ▶ A good book can be read again and again - leads into prayer

NOURISHED BY EUCHARIST

- ▶ Stokes the fire of love in our hearts
- ▶ Our hearts are enflamed with his love
- ▶ Take and eat... “trogon” our daily food; staple diet
- ▶ Changed into his likeness

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

- ▶ Brings surety of forgiveness, but also the power to change
- ▶ Can gain victory over sin in our lives; applies to our lives the power of death and resurrection of Jesus
- ▶ Encounter with mercy of God - prodigal son . Learn to trust in the mercy of God given in heart of Jesus
- ▶ Not to be discouraged by our failings, being burdened by irrational guilt and anxiety. Throw ourselves confidently on mercy of God.

Intercession, evangelization and compassion

- ▶ Growing in love of God is a heart turned outwards towards others
- ▶ Intercession: praying for blood of Jesus to break open hard hearts
- ▶ Evangelization: new Pentecost ; new fire of the Spirit in hearts.
- ▶ Compassion: touching the flesh of Christ in those discarded and neglected; finding Christ in the distressing disguise of the poor