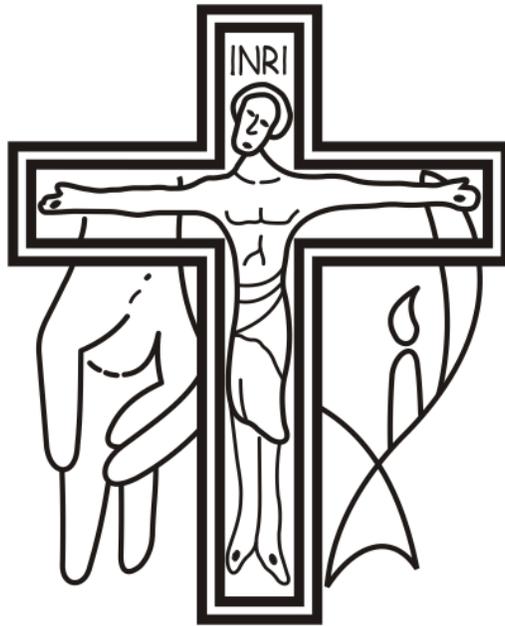


Via de Cristo



“Christ is counting on you”

Name: _____

Piety

Rollo # 5
25 Minutes

PIETY

Time: 25 minutes. Content of this rollo is expected to take 20 minutes, allowing for 3-5 minutes of personal examples or testimony.

Orientation: Piety is the last talk of Day One. At this point, the participants have not settled into the pace of the weekend. They have not experienced an entire day. They continue to anticipate the unknown events for the coming hours. The topics introduced earlier in the day (Ideal, Laity, and Grace) might be new and overwhelming to some participants. The tables are continuing to build their group dynamic.

Piety is a sensitive topic. Many participants will associate the word with behaviors of false piety. It is essential to remain aware of the mood and atmosphere of the room. Some participants will become defensive at the mention of piety. Focusing on the behavior and tying the principles of the earlier talks into piety as the Christian Ideal will make this concept more understandable.

Style: This talk should be delivered as a personal testimony focusing on the meaning of true, authentic piety. It is important to emphasize the difference between the behaviors of false piety and the ideal of true piety. The rollista should provide genuine examples of how he/she has demonstrated false piety behaviors but grew to practice authentic piety. At the same time, the speaker should focus on how true piety is building a personal relationship with Christ. It is true/authentic piety that transforms our lives for the better.

Objectives: Piety ties together all the concepts presented earlier in the day and sets the tone for the remainder of the weekend. This talk should provide a clear explanation that an active and dynamic relationship with God is the foundation of our Christian lives. The key points to be delivered are:

- Piety arises out of our personal relationship with God.
- There are many types of false piety.
- Authentic piety is directing our whole life to God.
- We need to nourish our relationship with God through practices of authentic piety.
- Piety is a life-long process.

Preparation: Prepare to write your rollo with prayerful consideration of the above orientation, style, and objectives. Remember, you are delivering God's message through your words. Studying the following verses will provide context and guidance.

I Corinthians 10:31
Colossians 3:17
Matthew 22:37-39
Luke 17:7-10
Matthew 7:21
Matthew 23:25-26
Mark 7:6
Matthew 23:2-4
Matthew 23:13-14
John 15:5
Matthew: 6:33
Philippians 2:1-11
Galatians 6:2
Philippians 4:13
Romans 12:2
Matthew 28:19

Colossians 3:17
Romans 3:22-23
Matthew 7:21
John 15:13
Matthew 15:32
Luke 15:1-7
John 11:35
Luke 19:41
Mark 14:34
John 12:27
John 6:56-58
Matthew 1:23
John 12:24-25
John 17:21-23
Philippians 2:17-18
Matthew 6:33

Mark 16:15
John 14:25-26
John 15:11
John 14:21
Luke 1:38
Matthew 14:4
John 8:7
Luke 22:48
John 18:11
John 18:23
Romans 8:31
Micah 6:8
John 13:35
Luke 1:46-55
Galatians 2:20

Do not include all the verses in your talk. Pick two to four that speak to you and share them to emphasize your point. The Rector and Spiritual Director may also have verse selections to include.

1. INTRODUCTION

The word “piety” is often misunderstood because it is often associated with negative and misguided views of the church.

- A. True piety is the combination of ideas discussed earlier today.
- B. Piety is the Christian Ideal of embodying the church, developing a full relationship with Christ, and living in grace.
- C. Piety is the total dedication of our lives to God in a personal relationship with Christ – total dedication to living the Christ ideal.

2. TYPES OF PIETY

There are two types of piety: Authentic and False.

- A. Authentic piety is an intimate, revitalizing, deepening relationship with God.
- B. False piety is a superficial, inaccurate or deceptive practice that appears to be Christian. False piety is destructive. It distracts people from seeking and knowing God and from the fulfilled life God has for them.

3. FALSE PIETY

False piety embodies the negative behaviors that come to mind when people hear the word “piety or pious”. We are all sinners. At some point, we have done some of these things.

- A. “The Saved” wear their religion like a badge. They are concerned about their external Christian works and not their relationship with God.
 - Over emphasize the significance of tradition, culture, the structure of the church.
 - Lack concern for the salvation of others and are self-centered in their own religious life.
- B. “The Robot” lacks awareness and understanding of actions. They make decisions and complete activities because they always have. They carry out the same pattern.
 - They go through the motions of practicing Christianity instead of living it.
 - Robots attend church because it’s what they have always done.
 - They are formalistic and conventional, and follow a set of laws without understanding the meaning.
- C. “The Hypocrite” performs acts of religion to be seen but acts in direct contradiction.
 - Piety is something to be displayed for the world
 - The hypocrite demands virtues of others they do not practice themselves.

D. "The Socialite" focuses on the people in the church rather than their relationship with God.

- They go to church to be with the crowd or for the social outlets the church offers.
- Socialites don't operate on a spiritual plane but see the church as equivalent to many other clubs or groups to which they belong.
- They desire the social standing that may come from being a member of a church. It looks good on a resume.

4. AUTHENTIC OR TRUE PIETY

Piety is a behavior. We are all sinners who are called to lives of true piety. We live true piety by having a dynamic personal relationship with God and living a Christ-centered life.

A. Live life as God Intended

- Piety is living a Christ-centered life. We respond to God's immeasurable gifts of grace by following Christ's example in every area of our lives.
- Life that is growing. Piety is a life-long process. It is dying to self and living as Christ wants us to live. Our love of God and our self-giving and obedience to God's will grows when it is fed and declines when neglected.
- Life that is shared. We are God's channels of grace to others. We must attentively listen to others and share God's love and life with them.

B. Love the Lord - We are mindful of the unchanging, unceasing presence of God in our lives: the love of God the Father, our friendship with Christ, our brother, and the power of the Holy Spirit in us.

C. Listen to God's voice - Piety depends on listen to God through reading and hearing God's word, prayer, meditation, and spiritual direction.

5. LIVING IN AUTHENTIC PIETY

Living in piety is not the same as doing acts of piety.

A. An authentic life

- True piety requires us to actively work at our relationship with God.
- The practices of piety are those things we do that nourish our relationship with God. They are our concrete, visible responses to God's love for us.

B. Relationships: As we are directing our whole life to God, we are conscious of being in a relationship with the triune God. We are:

- Children of the Father.
- Brothers/Sisters of Christ.
- Temples of the Holy Spirit. Describe personal practices of piety that nourish your relationship with God.

C. Courage – Embracing our call to be the church requires courage.

- Courage to live up to God's expectations rather than those of the world.
- Courage to call others to their potential, even if it involves risks.

D. Naturalness – God calls and equips us to live in authentic piety.

- The ordinary life made extraordinary through God's grace.
- Being Christian in everyday life, as Christ kept the customs of His day.
- Committed and enthusiastic, but not turning people off with excessive zeal.
- Authentic - living a life that is consistent with our belief.

E. Vibrant and Joyful Life – Our relationship with God is a gift. God desires us to live in joy.

- Lived deeply and fully, life is exciting and stimulating.
- Gives one strength and vitality which others will find attractive and want to imitate.

6. INTRODUCTION OF THE VIA DE CRISTO TRIPOD

To live out the Christian ideal, we need a solid basis or foundation on which to build our life in union with God.

- A. Three aspects of our Christian life that give it a strong foundation: piety, along with study and action.
- B. This foundation like a tripod; all three legs are necessary; need balance to grow in grace filled life. Piety is the dedication of our lives to God and dedication to living the Christian ideal.

7. CONCLUSION

God promised us that we would not have to walk through life alone. As we direct our whole life to God, our intimate, revitalizing, deepening relationship with God impacts every area of our lives. The fulfillment and joy we experience in this relationship overflow into our relationships with others. Authentic piety is complete only when it is shared with others.

- A. God calls each person to a new life. This involves a radical change from within, which alters our relationships with:
- Self

- God
- Others
- The world

B. Living life in Grace gives Christian's purpose and perspective to these relationships. To live in God's immeasurable Grace is to seek to BE what God intended us to be, not simply to DO Christian things. This BEING is best expressed in a balance of three dimensions:

- Piety
- Study
- Apostolic Action

This morning you were asked to examine yourself and your ideal. Living the life of authentic piety is a choice. God says that He has set before us life and death. Choose life, then. Live life as God intended. Love the Lord your God and listen to God's voice.