

THE RULE OF LIFE

OF THE

Anglican Society of Jesus

Societas Iesu Anglicana

*Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam
Ut Omnes Unum Sint*

A Religious Community constituted under Episcopal Canon Law
in communion with the Anglican Communion
Formed on the principles of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola
in synthesis with the Anglican liturgical and theological tradition

Anno Domini MMXXVI

PREAMBLE

To be a Companion of the Anglican Society of Jesus is to enter a company of persons — lay and ordained, male, female, and non-binary — who have heard the call to campaign for God under the standard of the Cross. Such a person desires to give service to the Lord alone and to his people and all creatures on earth. Professing First Vows of Simplicity, Fidelity, and Obedience, the Companion belongs to a Society instituted especially to aim at the progress of souls in Christian life and learning, at the propagation of faith through the ministry of the Word, the Spiritual Exercises, and works of charity, and expressly at the formation of the young and of those not yet formed in the Christian way of life.

The Anglican Society of Jesus does not prescribe a habit for its Companions. Its distinguishing mark is not outward dress but the interior disposition of one who seeks to find God in all things, in all places, and in all persons.

CHAPTER I

Of the Vows

Article 1 — The Three Vows

A Companion of the Anglican Society of Jesus professes three vows: Simplicity, Fidelity, and Obedience. These vows are the framework of the Companion's consecrated life and the means by which the interior freedom necessary for apostolic mission is both expressed and sustained.

Article 2 — First and Final Vows

The Society recognizes two forms of profession. First Vows are professed following the successful completion of the Novitiate, which shall extend for a period of not less than twelve months and may be undertaken along any of the several Pathways set forth in the Society's Directory of Formation, according to the manner in which the novice undertakes the Spiritual Exercises and the novice's prior spiritual formation, under the direction of the Superior General. Final Vows are professed upon the invitation of the Superior General, at the five-year mark, following a period of probation and continued formation. At the profession of Final Vows, a Companion professes a fourth vow: the special mission to protect children and to remain available for mission within and beyond the Anglican Society of Jesus.

A novice identifies as name, nASJ. A Companion who has professed First Vows identifies as name, ASJ. A Companion who has professed Final Vows follows the same designation: name, ASJ.

Editorial Note: Revised to reflect the Society's Directory of Formation, issued after this Rule was first drafted, which sets the Novitiate's minimum term at twelve months and provides several Pathways — for a novice newly undertaking the Spiritual Exercises, for a novice undertaking the Nineteenth Annotation, and for a novice who has previously made the Exercises in full — in place of the single year-long Novitiate this Article originally described.

Article 3 — The Vow of Simplicity

A Companion professes Simplicity as a disposition of spirit: to take genuine joy in the use of necessary things, to receive goods and monetary support as means of meeting genuine needs, and to hold all material provision lightly for the sake of the Kingdom. Simplicity does not prohibit the prudent stewardship of resources; rather, it reorients the Companion's relationship to all material goods toward the greater glory of God and the service of others.

After the profession of Final Vows, a Companion may freely elect to make provision from personal resources for the purpose of supporting novices who seek to make the spiritual progress required for reception into the Society.

Nota Bene: Should the Anglican Society of Jesus grow in numbers and complexity, provisions for a Provincial, a Vicar for Formation, and other deputies would need to be discerned at the Annual Meeting (see Chapter III below).

Article 4 — The Vow of Fidelity

A Companion professes Fidelity in a manner appropriate to their particular vocation. For those who are single, Fidelity corresponds to the traditional vow of Chastity: a free gift of the whole self to God and to apostolic service. For those called to Holy Matrimony, Fidelity is the vow of faithfulness to one's spouse as the primary arena of loving service. In both cases, Fidelity is defined as generative sexuality — a way of living with all in

love, with deep respect for the integrity of every person. Fidelity is thus a form of chastity, comprehending both its married and celibate expressions.

Article 5 — The Vow of Obedience

An ordained Companion professes Obedience, in order, to Jesus Christ as sole Lord and Saviour; to their Diocesan Bishop; and to the Superior General of the Anglican Society of Jesus.

A lay Companion professes Obedience, in order, to Jesus Christ as sole Lord and Saviour; and to the Superior General of the Anglican Society of Jesus.

Obedience in the Society is not servility but apostolic freedom: the willingness to be sent wherever the mission of God requires, in fidelity to the Gospel, the Constitutions of the Society, and the canonical structures of The Episcopal Church. The Society's understanding of this readiness to be sent — what the Society has come to call Apostolic Availability, given the particular circumstances of a membership that is largely married and rooted in a particular place — is set forth in Article 12 below and in the Constitutions (Article 22).

Editorial Note: This paragraph now points to Article 12, Of Apostolic Availability, newly added to Chapter V below, and to the corresponding Article 22 of the Constitutions.

Article 6 — The Rite of Profession

First and Final Vows are professed publicly, in the context of a liturgy of Holy Eucharist presided over by the Superior General and, where possible, in the presence of the Bishop or the Bishop's representative. The form of vows prescribed by the Constitutions of the Society shall be used.

Each Companion who professes vows receives a vow cross. Upon the death of a Companion, the vow cross may be buried with them, at their election, or returned to the Superior General for bestowal upon a newly professed Companion. A vowed Companion may choose to include the designation name, ASJ on their tombstone as a mark of their life's commitment.

CHAPTER II

Of the Life of a Companion

Article 7 — The Rule of Daily Life

The Companion's daily life is governed by the following practices, which constitute the minimum observance of the Rule of Life:

- Daily personal prayer, offered to God in the manner and form most conducive to genuine interior conversation with the Trinity.
- The Examen Prayer of St. Ignatius of Loyola, prayed twice daily: once at midday and once in the evening.
- The Daily Office, or other prayers drawn from the 1979 Book of Common Prayer, observed according to the Companion's circumstances and vocation.
- Regular attendance at Services of Holy Eucharist, placed at the heart of the Companion's life and not less than weekly.
- Ongoing engagement with a trained spiritual director.
- An annual retreat of not less than five days.

The Companion exemplifies in all things the motto of the Society: *Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam* — all for the greater glory of God. The Companion practices steady humility and does not impose upon themselves extraordinary pieties — such as unauthorized fasts or bodily disciplines — that would remove them from the freedom articulated in the First Principle and Foundation of the Spiritual Exercises (Annotation 23 of the Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola).

Article 8 — The Spiritual Exercises

The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola are constitutive of the Society's charism and the primary instrument of the Companion's formation. During the Novitiate, a Companion completes the Spiritual Exercises along one of the Pathways set forth in the Society's Directory of Formation: the Traditional Thirty-Day Silent Retreat, the Nineteenth Annotation (given in the midst of daily life over an extended period), or, for a novice who has previously made the Exercises in full before entering the Novitiate, a retreat of renewal ordered specifically toward the election to enter the Society. The Directory of Formation sets forth the particular course and length of the Novitiate proper to each Pathway.

The interior content of the Novice's experience of the Exercises shall be ordered toward the election to enter the Anglican Society of Jesus and to profess First Vows. Before being invited to profess Final Vows, the Companion shall complete the Spiritual Exercises a second time, with the content ordered toward the election to make a full and final profession, committing themselves to the Society for the whole of their life.

Editorial Note: Revised to reflect the several Pathways of the Society's Directory of Formation, in place of the simple choice between the Nineteenth Annotation and the Thirty-Day Silent Retreat this Article originally described, and to provide for a novice who has previously made the Exercises before entering the Novitiate.

CHAPTER III

Of the Manifestation of Conscience

Article 9 — The Annual Manifestation

A Companion of the Anglican Society of Jesus manifests their conscience to the Superior General with great humility, transparency, and charity. Nothing essential to the Companion's apostolic life and interior state is to be concealed. The manifestation is to be spiritually consoling in character: an offering of one's inner life to the Lord, through the ministry of the Superior General, so that the Companion may be better provided for in Our Lord and God's grace may work more copiously for the greater glory of God's divine goodness.

The annual manifestation shall center on the matters that bear most directly upon the Companion's apostolic life over the preceding year, including:

- The Companion's prayer life and interior movements.
- The Companion's vision and current understanding of their mission, both corporate and individual.
- Other matters of the heart that the Companion wishes to bring before God and the Superior General.

CHAPTER IV

Of the Annual Meeting: The General Congregation

Article 10 — The General Congregation

Members of the Anglican Society of Jesus shall seek to gather together once each year in a General Congregation. This gathering is both the primary deliberative body of the Society and a privileged occasion of common prayer, mutual accountability, and renewed apostolic commitment.

The General Congregation shall begin with a celebration of the Holy Eucharist, followed by the meeting proper. The agenda of the General Congregation shall include the following matters:

- The union of the Society: its common life, spirit, and interior bonds.
- The mission and ministries of the Society: review and discernment of apostolic works.
- The admission process: the reception of aspirants, novices, newly professed Companions, and Associates.
- The governance of the Society: the exercise of authority and the oversight of the Rule.
- The cura apostolica and cura personalis of each Companion: the care of the apostolate and of each individual member.
- The preservation and growth of the Society.

The Superior General serves a term of six years, or until resignation. Following the death or resignation of the Superior General, the election of a successor shall take place at the General Congregation convened for that purpose.

The Anglican Society of Jesus is unmistakably a mystical body of Jesus Christ. Such an identification emphasizes the Episcopal Church's teaching on the unity of all baptized Christians and the incarnation of Jesus Christ in the visible reality of our world. Let every gathering of the General Congregation reflect that identity.

CHAPTER V

Of the Apostolate

Article 11 — The Apostolic Character of the Society

Companions of the Anglican Society of Jesus are not monastic. They do not retreat from the world but are sent into it. Each Companion, from the city of their heart and from within their daily work — whether lay or ordained — seeks the service of faith, solidarity with the poor, and the promotion of justice as the integrating factors of their interior life and their pilgrimage toward salvation.

All Companions are urged to strive daily, personally and communally, toward an ever greater integration of spiritual life and apostolate. In this integration, the Companion finds God in all things: the God who is present in this world, in its struggle between good and evil, between faith and unbelief, between the yearning for justice and peace and the growing reality of injustice and strife.

Article 12 — Of Apostolic Availability

The Companion holds themselves apostolically available: ready, should the Society or the Church require it through the ordinary and communal processes of discernment, to be sent further in service of the Gospel. For the greater part of the Society's Companions — married or single, rooted in a particular parish, family, and secular vocation — this availability is not chiefly a readiness to relocate, but an interior freedom lived out within the place already given them.

The Companion therefore:

- Attends to the mission of God already at work in their present parish, household, and daily work, rather than looking beyond that place for a truer field of service;
- Exercises this availability as fully in sacerdotal ministry — the sacraments, preaching, spiritual direction — as in the ordinary, civic, and communal work undertaken in the same place;
- Guards against the disordered attachment that would make of that place, or of any particular ministry, a possession held for its own sake rather than a gift held freely for God;
- Remains, even while stable in body, a pilgrim in spirit, ready to say yes should some further sending be discerned and confirmed in the manner the Constitutions and the Society's Directory of Formation describe.

The fuller theological articulation of Apostolic Availability, and its place in the discernment of a novice's readiness for First Vows, is set forth in the Constitutions (Article 22) and the Society's Directory of Formation (Article 11).

Editorial Note: This Article is newly added, arising from the Society's own discernment concerning the practical shape of apostolic mission for a membership that is largely married and rooted in a particular place, and corresponds to Article 22 of the Constitutions and Article 11 of the Directory of Formation. Its insertion rennumbers the Articles that follow within this Chapter: the former Article 12 (Prayer and Apostolate) is now Article 13, and the former Article 13 (Sponsored Apostolic Works) is now Article 14.

Article 13 — Prayer and Apostolate

Familiarity with God in prayer is essential to apostolic action. Without prayer, the apostolate becomes merely activism; without action, prayer becomes merely piety. The Companion holds these two realities together in the Ignatian manner: as a contemplative in action.

Private daily prayer and an annual retreat are essential disciplines for engaging the Trinity in one's personal life and in the larger, complex, and often messy world in which the Companion serves.

Article 14 — Sponsored Apostolic Works

A Companion may petition the Superior General to designate one's apostolate as a sponsored work of the Anglican Society of Jesus. Such designation marks the work as carried out under the Society's charism and subject to the discernment of the Society's governance.

Nota Bene: Should a sponsored work of the Anglican Society of Jesus grow to a scale that warrants consideration of communal living, such considerations would be best and most prudently addressed at a General Congregation.

CONCLUSION

Of the Spirit in Which This Rule Is to Be Observed

This Rule of Life is not an end in itself. It is an instrument placed in the service of a Spirit who blows where he wills, and who is always working the greater freedom, the deeper union with God, and the more complete service of the neighbor. Let every Companion read and observe this Rule in that spirit — seeking not the letter, but the life that the letter serves.

The Companion is above all a person of prayer. For it is from prayer — daily, persistent, honest, and desirous — that all else flows: the formation, the mission, the discernment, the governance, and the care for one another and for the world. Without prayer, the Society is merely an institution. With it, it may be a sign of the Kingdom.

“Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my entire will, all that I have and possess. Thou hast given all to me. To Thee, O Lord, I return it. All is Thine, dispose of it wholly according to Thy will. Give me Thy love and Thy grace, for this is sufficient for me.”

— St. Ignatius Loyola, *Suscipe*

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Received for deliberation and discernment by the founding members of the Anglican Society of Jesus.