

7 Practical Principles

Study Circle Lessons



REGNUM CHRISTI

Love, Serve, Build



Seven Practical Principles of Regnum Christi

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Introduction to the Seven Practical Principles of RC

I. Introduction:

- a. The end of the Apostles Creed speaks about “**His Kingdom** having no end...”
- b. The Regnum Christi Movement is dedicated to building up the **Kingdom of God** in every heart, in every family, in every community, starting with our own.
 - i. It is not a military kingdom but one of grace and love.
- c. An obelisk is a symbol of human power and greatness and was developed by the ancient Egyptians; St. Peter’s basilica has an obelisk in its center; the big difference is that it is topped with a cross and put in front of a church in order to give honor to the only empire that will truly last forever... **the Kingdom of Christ**, the empire of God’s grace&love.
- d. Christ is our king. All who follow him are made into citizens and soldiers of His Kingdom.
- e. What does that kingdom look like and how does it grow? We will never fully know in this life, as it is a supernatural reality. But Jesus did describe it partially with parables.
- f. A Parable of *The Kingdom of Christ*:
 - i. In parables, the kingdom is portrayed as a seed that puts down roots in good soil, and then grows and bears fruit. That image is Christ’s own sketch of His kingdom.
 1. The **soil** is our human nature
 2. The **seed** is the Word of God, God’s grace
 3. The **fruit** is the cooperation between nature and God’s grace; this cooperation yields fruitfulness (or holiness) in our lives.
 - ii. That is what Christianity is all about.
- g. Regnum Christi is translated “**Kingdom of Christ**”.
 - i. As members of this ecclesial Movement, we have accepted a personal invitation from God to make “building up the Kingdom of Christ” our top priority/goal.
- h. As we embark on this study, be prepared to share with your team some of the biggest insights that you have received from this lesson.

II. There are Three Basic Dimensions to being a Christian Apostle.

- a. To understand how to become the Christian apostle that Christ needs us to be, we can go back to a biblical image... a tree that has roots, a trunk and fruit-bearing branches.
 - i. Roots: As Christian apostles, we must be “rooted” in the **Core Convictions**...which help us know God’s love more and more.
 - ii. Trunk: As Christian apostles, we are stabilized, protected, and directed by **Practical Principles**, which help us live lives that reflect God’s love better and better.
 - iii. Fruit: As Christian apostles, we mature through apostolic action and actively spread God’s love, helping others to also discover and embrace God’s love.
 1. Because our mission as Christian apostles **comes from Christ**, only **He** can bring it to fruition. “I am the vine, you are the branches,” he told his first Apostles at the Last Supper. “Cut off from me, you can do **nothing**” (John 15:5).
 2. The **fruit** we bear as Christians comes from **our cooperation** with his grace, but his grace is still the initiator and force behind it.
 3. To help **improve the quality of our cooperation**, let’s take a **closer look** at these three dimensions of a Christian Apostle.

III. The Roots: The Core Convictions:

- a. Saints are those whose beliefs become convictions.
 - i. Convictions are **ideas**, deeply held beliefs that influence actions.
- b. **The Core Convictions** shared by Regnum Christi members and rooted in the Gospel, are the ideas that help us see God, ourselves, and the world as Christ does. They give us a Christian worldview.
- c. Just as the roots of a tree are constantly pushing deeper into the soil and drawing nourishment for the whole organism, so these convictions are constantly growing deeper, through prayer, reflection, and the action of the Holy Spirit, filling us with more wisdom and an ever-greater desire to love Christ.
- d. As we review the 8 Core Convictions below, discuss as a team the questions that follow.
- e. The 8 Core Convictions Review:
 - i. CC #1- God my Father loves me with an eternal love.
 1. **What most helps us to understand the depths of God's love for us?**
 - ii. CC #2- Because I love God, I love his will above all things.
 1. **How does the Movement help us to know God's will for our lives?**
 - iii. CC #3- My only passion is Christ, who "loved me and gave himself up for me".
 1. **Why is RC considered a "Christocentric Movement"?**
 - iv. CC #4: Because I love Christ, I carry out my mission in the Church.
 1. **Discuss how we can become more docile to the Church and the Holy Father.**
 2. **As RC members, how can we have the attitude of walking with the Church –neither a step behind nor a step ahead?**
 - v. CC #5- Because I love Christ, I contribute to a civilization of Christian justice and love.
 1. **How does this motto fit into the fifth CC, "Believe all the good you hear, but only the evil you actually see?" Are we like a black hole for gossip, gently shutting it down if we hear it and never repeating it? Do we defend people we hear criticized?**
 2. **How does conviction tie in with our apostolic dynamism, with the clear sense that formation is oriented toward a mission?**
 - vi. CC # 6- Because I love Christ, I lovingly embrace my calling to RC.
 1. **Are vocations meant for a season or a lifetime? How can we better energize our calling to the Movement?**
 - vii. CC # 7-My life is short; my destination, eternity.
 1. **If a stranger found my weekly schedule, what would he deduce from it about my priorities? How can the way we organize and spend our time effect our eternity?**
 - viii. CC #8- Mary my Mother accompanies, inspires, and upholds me.
 1. **As RC members, how do/can we show Mary our love?**

IV. The Trunk: The Seven Practical Principles:

- a. A Regnum Christi member doesn't spend all his time in the chapel or on his knees.
- b. We are contemplative, but we are also conquering.
- c. We are called to know Christ, but also to follow Christ, to let his love for us, and our love for him, shape our lives.
- d. The Practical Principles help us do that.
 - i. Like the trunk of a tree, they **stabilize** and direct our efforts to fulfill our life mission of knowing Christ, loving Christ, and helping others do the same.
- e. It is not enough for a soccer player to want to win or even to be convinced that he can win. He has to have a smart game plan, some basic strategies and tactics that will maximize his efforts in pursuit of victory
- f. The **Practical Principles** are a game plan for loving Christ, for letting his love shape every sector of our lives and maximize our efforts to build his Kingdom.



- g. The **Seven Practical Principles** are listed below and will be studied over the next 7 Study Circle sessions:
- i. Be effective
 - ii. Work person-to-person
 - iii. Live team life
 - iv. Rise to challenges out of love
 - v. Inspire others for the mission
 - vi. Be flexible
 - vii. Form the whole person

V. Conclusion:

- a. **With the remaining time, discuss some of the insights you received from this lesson.**
- b. Next session will hone in on the first Practical Principle: **Be Effective**. To prepare, read the RC Handbook # 326-337 and answer the questions for PP1-Be Effective.

Practical Principle #1: Be Effective

I. Introduction: There are Three Basic Dimensions to being a Christian Apostle.

- a. To understand how to become the Christian apostle that Christ needs us to be, we can go back to the biblical image of a tree that has roots, a trunk and fruit-bearing branches.
 - i. Roots: As Christian apostles, we must be “rooted” in the **Core Convictions**...which help us know God’s love more and more.
 - ii. Trunk: As Christian apostles, we are stabilized, protected, and directed by **Practical Principles**, which help us live lives that reflect God’s love better and better.
 - iii. Fruit: As Christian apostles, we mature through apostolic action and actively spread God’s love, helping others to also discover and embrace God’s love.
- b. **The Trunk: The Seven Practical Principles:**
 - i. We are called to know Christ, but also to follow Christ, to let his love for us, and our love for him, shape our lives. The Practical Principles help us do that.
 - ii. Like the trunk of a tree, they **stabilize** and direct our efforts to fulfill our life mission of knowing Christ, loving Christ, and helping others do the same.
 - iii. The **Practical Principles** are a game plan for loving Christ, for letting his love shape every sector of our lives and maximize our efforts to build his Kingdom.
 - iv. For the sake of clarity, we can divide our Christian formation into four basic sectors that correspond to the principle of “integral formation,” which will be explained in detail later on.
 - v. Each practical principle is applicable to each of those four areas of our ongoing Christian growth.
 - vi. The practical principles are the trunk of the tree – they are connected to every part of the tree.
 - vii. This session will allow us to embark on the **First Practical Principle: Be Effective**.

II. Practical Principle #1- Be Effective:

- a. In the Middle Ages, entire towns and cities throughout Europe dedicated themselves to glorifying God and the Church.
- b. One of the ways they did this was through building magnificent cathedrals, breathtaking testimonies of faith and prayer carved into stone, built to last for a thousand years and beyond.
- c. These could sometimes take more than a century to construct, and the whole geographical region would dedicate money and labor to the task.
- d. When a bishop undertook such a monumental project, he put an experienced master architect in charge, not just a local stone cutter.
 - i. The local stone cutter would have been the easier and cheaper choice, but the results would have been disastrous.
- e. An experienced master builder was the harder and more expensive choice, but it was also the more effective one.
- f. As Christians and members of the Movement, we are building something much more magnificent than a Cathedral: we are building up the Kingdom of God, the Church itself.
- g. This means that we have to choose intelligently:
 - i. Which activities and projects we dedicate ourselves to
 - ii. How we invest our time and talents, and
 - iii. How we measure our progress.
- h. In short, we ought never to be satisfied with mediocrity in our efforts to serve Christ and his Kingdom.

- i. Instead, we should strive to work at least as effectively for Christ as we do for the person in charge of our paycheck.
- j. This first principle applies to every aspect (all 4 prongs) of our ongoing Christian formation...
- k. Recall the 4 prongs of formation before moving to the next page...

	SPIRITUAL FORMATION	INTELLECTUAL FORMATION	HUMAN FORMATION	APOSTOLIC ACTIVITY
1.BE EFFECTIVE	e.g., knowing root sin	e.g. pride of place to Gospel and papal teaching	e.g. program guide and calendar	e.g. influence the influencers (epriest.com)

- l. **As a Study Circle, discuss how each of these specific tools that the Movement gives us will help us to become more effective apostles. As individuals, how are we doing with each of them?**
- m. Jesus once observed to his apostles that “the children of this world are more astute in dealing with their own kind than are the children of light” (Luke 16:8).
- n. Why should we let the enemies of the Church work more efficiently and effectively than the members of the Church?
- o. It would be a shame for Christians to insist on using pea shooters when the enemies of Christ are wreaking havoc with tanks and missiles.
- p. We have only one life to live and one chance to live it, so we ought to give Christ our very best.

III. Questions to answer from RC Member Handbook (# 326-337):

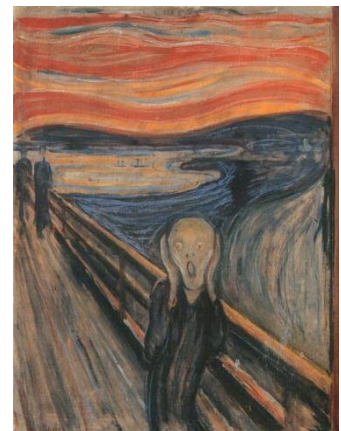
- a. **The principle of effectiveness is always understood as being intrinsically linked to what?**
- b. **When choosing which apostolic works to undertake, what four criteria does the Movement take into account? How do you see the wisdom of the four criteria of effectiveness? Give some concrete examples of each of them.**
- c. **RC Handbook # 330 mentions synergy. How would you define synergy? What can our section do better at for promoting synergy between its apostolates?**
- d. **Why does the Movement have each RC section and each of the apostolates draw up a program every year? How can we improve to better implement the plan developed by the section (or the apostolate we are involved in)?**
- e. **One of the principles of being effective means working vertex-to-base. What does this mean? Who is a leader?**
- f. **What can I do better to be a more effective apostle as a result of this study?**

IV. Conclusion:

- a. Next session will cover the second Practical Principle: **Work Person-to-Person**. To prepare, read the RC handbook # 338-342 and answer the questions.

Practical Principle #2: Work Person-to-Person

- I. **Introduction:** Remember that repetition helps move information into long term memory... **There are Three Basic Dimensions to being a Christian Apostle.**
- II. **Roots:** As Christian apostles, we must be “rooted” in the **Core Convictions**... which help us know God’s love more and more.
- i. **See if the Study Circle members can name the 8 Core Convictions.**
 - b. **Trunk:** As Christian apostles, we are stabilized, protected, and directed by **Practical Principles**, which help us live lives that reflect God’s love better and better. That is what this study will allow us to explore in more depth.
 - c. **Fruit:** As Christian apostles, we want to help others also discover God’s love.
 - d. **The Trunk: The Seven Practical Principles:**
 - i. The practical principles are the trunk of the tree – they are connected to every part of the tree.
 - ii. This session will allow us to embark on the **Second Practical Principle: Work Person-to-Person**
- III. **Review of the Previous Practical Principles:**
- a. **PP #1- Be Effective:**
 - i. As Christians and members of the Movement, we are helping to build something magnificent: the Kingdom of God, the Church itself.
 - ii. This means that we have to choose intelligently which activities and projects we dedicate ourselves to, how we invest our time and talents, and how we measure our progress.
 - iii. In short, we ought never to be satisfied with mediocrity in our efforts to serve Christ and his Kingdom but instead should strive to work at least as effectively for Christ as we do for the person in charge of our paycheck.
- IV. **Practical Principle #2- Work Person-to-Person:**
- a. One of the most disturbing characteristics about modern secular culture is the breakdown of community, of real interpersonal contact and rewarding relationships.
 - b. With so many mass media technologies, so many ways to travel quickly and over long distances, so many sprawling urban areas and spiraling population centers, in both the developed and the developing world, it’s easy for people to feel isolated, rootless, and alone.
 - c. Life is so fast-paced and on-the-move that we feel less connected to a tight-knit community where relationships are deep, long-lasting, and satisfying.
 - d. We feel that no one really knows us, and we wonder if we really know others.
 - e. The early modern artists sensed this, and tried to warn us about it.
 - f. Edvard Munch, the great Norwegian expressionist painter, exposed this dangerous trend in a haunting painting called *The Scream*
 - g. It’s a disturbing image, but it captures perfectly the sense of isolation and frustration that has become part of our mass secular culture.
 - h. Not only does the world seem to be collapsing and dissolving around this tragic figure, who has no strength, no substance with which to resist the collapse...



- i. But the even greater irony is that, because this is a painting, (a silent medium), we will never know what he is screaming for or about; he is stuck in isolated silence in spite of his desperate attempts to express himself; even his frustration is frustrated.
- j. That’s not how God made the world to be.
- k. People are not cogs in a machine, and they shouldn’t be treated as if they were.
- l. God creates each human soul individually, out of love, and Christ calls each one of us by name.
- m. This is the reason behind the second practical principle: **Work Person-to-Person**.
- n. By working person-to-person and creating a true family atmosphere, a true community, the Movement follows Christ’s own example, the example the Church has always followed.
- o. **Discuss how the Movement works person-to-person with each of the 4 prongs of our formation, using the chart below, as well as other examples.**

	SPIRITUAL FORMATION	INTELLECTUAL FORMATION	HUMAN FORMATION	APOSTOLIC ACTIVITY
2. WORK PERSON-TO-PERSON	e.g. biweekly confession, monthly s.d.	e.g. tracks at YFEs – indiv needs and indiv. attn	e.g. dialogue with team leader	e.g. Cheshire retreat for young men: shipping in priests (my first contact)

- p. Did you ever notice how St Paul finished his New Testament letters? He almost always ends with a personal greeting or reference to people in the community he is writing to. He often mentions them by name.
- q. In his last homily before being elected Pope Benedict XVI, Joseph Ratzinger told his fellow Cardinals: “And we must bear fruit that abides. But, what abides? Money does not last. Buildings do not last, or books. After a certain time, more or less long, all this disappears. The only thing that abides eternally is the human soul -- man created by God for eternity.”
- r. And that’s the truth: the Movement isn’t really about programs and statistics and things; those are just means to an end.
- s. The Movement is about people, the people Christ died for and longs to have with him forever in heaven.
- t. The Movement is about bringing people closer to Christ – as many people as possible, as close to Christ as possible.
- u. And we can only do that by keeping in mind the second practical principle: Work Person-to-Person.

V. **Questions to answer from RC Member Handbook (# 338-342):**

- a. **Why is evangelization most effective when it is done person-to-person?**
- b. **What tools does the Movement give us for having a personal, unique Encounter with Christ? According the RC Member Handbook # 340, the person-to-person principle is an expression of charity. How is this so?**
- c. **How is *person-to-person* built into the methodology of RC?**
- d. **How can we make sure that our structures and institutional organization do not eclipse this important principle?**
- e. **What can I do this week to improve on this Practical Principle in my apostolate?**

VI. **Conclusion:**

- a. Next session will cover the third Practical Principle: **LiveTeam Life**. To prepare, read the RC handbook # 343-346 and answer the questions.



Practical Principle #3: Team Life

- I. **Introduction: There are Three Basic Dimensions to being a Christian Apostle.**
- a. **Roots:** As Christian apostles, we must be “rooted” in the **Core Convictions**...which help us know God’s love more and more.
 - b. **Trunk:** As Christian apostles, we are stabilized, protected, and directed by **Practical Principles**, which is what this study will focus on.
 - i. The practical principles are the trunk of the tree – they are connected to every part of the tree.
 - ii. In this session, we will study the **Third Practical Principle: Live Team Life**
 - c. **Fruit:** As Christian apostles, we want to help others also discover God’s love.
- II. **Review of the Previous Practical Principles:**
- a. **PP #1- Be Effective:**
 - i. In order to build the Kingdom, we must carefully choose which activities and projects we dedicate ourselves to, how we invest our time and talents, and how we measure our progress. In short, we must work effectively for Christ.
 - b. **PP #2- Work Person-to-Person:**
 - i. God creates each human soul individually, out of love. By working person-to-person and creating a true family atmosphere, a true community, the Movement follows Christ’s own example, the example the Church has always followed of working person-to-person in order to bring souls closer to Christ and the Church.
- III. **The Third Practical Principle: Live Team Life:**
- a. In the seventeenth century, some Enlightenment philosophers began developing new theories about human nature.
 - b. One of these, the social contract theory, claimed that living in society was not natural to mankind, but that our natural state is one of rugged individualism, and society is an artificial construct.
 - i. Really, this theory posited, people are meant to be completely self-sufficient.
 - c. Of course, we know that this theory is false – in fact, just the contrary is true.
 - d. It was sin that divided the human family and made individuals believe that they could be self-sufficient, that they could “be like gods.”
 - e. We know from Scripture that “it is not good for man to be alone,” and that we were created in the image and likeness of God, who is a Trinity.
 - f. And history as well shows us that all of mankind’s greatest achievements are communal achievements – the seven man-made wonders of the world could never have been built by one person.
 - g. The great nineteenth-century Spanish painter Francisco Goya captured this truth, this social nature of the human person, in a monumental painting called *The Forge*.
 - i. It shows three metal-workers gathered around a small forge and shaping a large piece of iron.
 - ii. Each one is intent on his part of the job, and together they are molding the raw material into something useful.



- iii. Each one is working, straining at his full capacity – clearly, any one of them working alone would never be able to get the job done.
- iv. And if you look closely, you can see that the three figures represent the three stages of life – youth, adulthood, and old age.
- v. Each member of this earthly trinity is contributing his part, but he is also benefiting from and being enriched by the others.
- vi. By themselves, each is limited; together, they reach their full potential.
- h. This is the idea behind the fourth practical principle: *Live Team Life*.**
- i. Team life makes us more productive in the actual tasks we set ourselves, because others can offset our limitations with their expertise and talents.
- j. But cooperating with others, having a *real team life*, takes us out of our personal comfort zones, and that gives us the chance we need to enrich and be enriched, to exercise virtues like patience, charity, generosity, and humility.
- k. And becoming more like Christ through growing in virtue is the most basic task of all.
- l. Team life is present in every area of our Christian living...
- m. Discuss how team life helps us to grow and develop in our integral formation, using the chart below. Try to find other examples as well.**

	SPIRITUAL FORMATION	INTELLECTUAL FORMATION	HUMAN FORMATION	APOSTOLIC ACTIVITY
3. LIVE TEAM LIFE	e.g. monthly retreat together	e.g. study circle; (not just my opinions and my homework)	e.g. Encounter with Christ – mutual accountability, enrichment	e.g. AFIRE teams to run a R.C. section, LCAs to coordinate and synergize

- n. Christ’s final commandment to his Apostles was that they love one another just as he had loved them.
- o. If we wall ourselves up into a tower of self-sufficiency, we not only limit the amount of work we can do, but we also cut ourselves off from the flow of Christian charity, which sooner or later will yield a drought in our souls.
- p. The Book of Proverbs says that “as iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another” (Prov. 27:17).
- q. Members of the Movement commit themselves to fighting full time to build up the Kingdom of Christ; teamwork helps keep their weapons sharp.

IV. Questions to answer from RC Handbook (# 343-346):

- a. How did the early church experience “team life”?
- b. How will the Christian renewal of society take place?
- c. How is team life an effective tool for its members?
- d. How are the principles of team life adopted in our apostolates?
- e. What can I do better to be a more effective apostle as a result of this study?

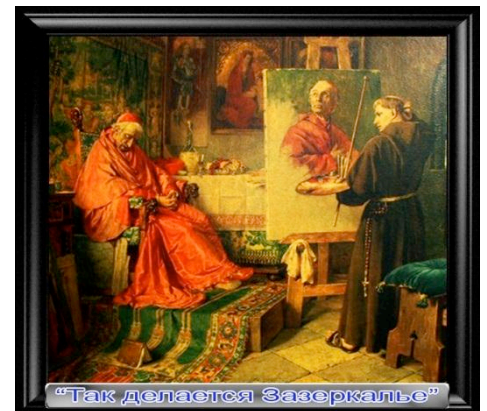
V. Conclusion:

- a. Next session will cover the fourth Practical Principle: **Rise to challenges out of love.** To prepare, read the RC handbook # 347-350 and answer the questions.



Practical Principle #4: Rise to Challenges Out of Love.

- I. **Introduction: There are Three Basic Dimensions to being a Christian Apostle.**
- a. **Roots:** As Christian apostles, we must be “rooted” in the **Core Convictions**...which help us know God’s love more and more.
 - i. **See if the Study Circle members can name the 8 Core Convictions.**
 - b. **Trunk:** As Christian apostles, we are stabilized, protected, and directed by **Practical Principles**, which is what this study will focus on.
 - i. The practical principles are the trunk of the tree – they are connected to every part of the tree.
 - ii. In this session, we will study the **Fourth Practical Principle: Rise to Challenges Out of Love**
 - c. **Fruit:** As Christian apostles, we want to help others also discover God’s love.
- II. **Review of the Previous Practical Principles:**
- a. **PP #1- Be Effective:**
 - i. In order to build the Kingdom, we must carefully choose which activities and projects we dedicate ourselves to, how we invest our time and talents, and how we measure our progress. In short, we must work effectively for Christ.
 - b. **PP #2- Work Person-to-Person:**
 - i. God creates each human soul individually, out of love. By working person-to-person and creating a true family atmosphere, a true community, the Movement follows Christ’s own example, the example the Church has always followed of working person-to-person in order to bring souls closer to Christ and the Church.
 - c. **PP#3- Live Team Life:**
 - i. Man was created in the image and likeness of God, who is trinity (a communion or team of persons). Team life makes us more productive in helping us complete tasks for the Kingdom and also gives us an opportunity to grow in virtue.
- III. **The Fourth Practical Principle: Rise to Challenges Out of Love**
- a. There is a famous and rather amusing painting from the 1800’s by Toby Rosenthal called *The Cardinal’s Portrait*.
 - b. It depicts a monk painting the portrait of an elderly cardinal.
 - c. The young painter is doing his best to show the cardinal’s great love for the church, nobility, and missionary spirit, and we can see all of that in the unfinished canvas.
 - d. But the cardinal himself, as he sits posing for this heroic image, has fallen asleep – he is tired and worn out.
 - e. It’s a perfect Icon of Christ’s famous phrase from the Gospel: the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak (Mt 26:41).
 - f. There is always the danger, in our Christian journey, of **forgetting about that very real fact of life.**
 - i. When we do, we can easily start to live a divided life.
 - ii. We try to look like energetic and committed Christians on the outside, like the unfinished canvas in the painting, but on the inside we kind of fall asleep, like the cardinal in the painting – looking for shortcuts and slacking off in our efforts to really love Christ and build up his Kingdom.
 - g. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. As a result, we have to stay on top of ourselves.



- i. We always have to push ourselves a little bit, refusing to slumber inside our personal comfort zone.
- h. It is imperative that we not work hard for the kingdom because we are afraid of what other people will say, of what they will think of our portrait, but because we really do love Christ and his Church.
- i. We have to live our mission coherently and energetically, but from the inside out, constantly stirring up the flame of our core convictions, so that no obstacle or difficulty will ever be able to burn us out.
- j. This is where the fourth practical principle comes in: **Rise to Challenges Out of Love**
- k. **Discuss how we incorporate this Practical Principle into the 4 prongs of our Integral Formation, using the table below as an aid. Try to come up with more examples.**

	SPIRITUAL FORMATION	INTELLECTUAL FORMATION	HUMAN FORMATION	APOSTOLIC ACTIVITY
4. RISE TO CHALLENGES OUT OF LOVE	e.g. program of life	e.g. LC and 3G formation houses – don't see your grades e.g. scheduling study weeks, (because we all tend to like activity more than study)	e.g. writing a personal letter to enter the Movement (more than a formality: a real, free, personal decision) e.g. having a commitment card (practical tool for spiritual growth)	e.g. Working by objectives and concrete goals (so we don't deceive ourselves or just work to make ourselves feel good) (what we do on the outside flows from who we are and what we want on the inside)

- l. In Job 7:1, the Bible tells us that: "man's life on earth is a warfare", a continual series of battles.
- m. St Ignatius of Loyola's, the great soldier turned even greater saint, used to say that the Christian has to keep on striving and struggling until 72 hours after he dies.
- n. Earth is not heaven, and it never will be.
- o. The need for constant effort is one of the driving themes in the Letters of St. Paul:
 - i. Look up and read together 1 Corinthians 9:27 and discuss.
 - ii. Look up Galatians 6:9 and discuss.
- p. And so, to fulfill our life-mission we have to constantly be pushing ourselves, constantly renewing our conviction and exercising our freedom – not because our efforts alone will save souls, (only Christ's grace can do that), but because Christ wants our friendship, and so he leaves us free to choose, each day, to take up our cross and follow him...which is what this Practical Principle is all about!

IV. Questions to answer from RC Handbook: # 347-350:

- a. **How is the fourth Practical Principle tied to the cross? Why is this principle necessary in order to undertake great projects?**
- b. **What is the basis or justification for every demand that is made?**
- c. **How is the fourth Practical Principle rooted in Sacred Scripture? Can you find some scriptures that teach about the demanding nature of being a Christian?**
- d. **How easy is it for us to slip into mediocrity? When are times when we find it happening more easily? What are some things we can do to "be demanding" with ourselves during these times?**
- e. **What can I do better to be a more effective apostle as a result of this study?**

V. Conclusion:

- a. Next session will cover the fifth Practical Principle: **Inspire Others for the Mission.** To prepare, read the RC handbook # 351-353 and answer the questions.



Practical Principle #5: Inspire Others for the Mission

- VI. **Introduction:** Remember that repetition helps move information into long term memory... **There are Three Basic Dimensions to being a Christian Apostle.**
- a. **Roots:** As Christian apostles, we must be “rooted” in the **Core Convictions**...which help us know God’s love more and more.
 - i. **See if the Study Circle members can name the 8 Core Convictions.**
 - b. **Trunk:** As Christian apostles, we are stabilized, protected, and directed by **Practical Principles**, which is what this study will focus on.
 - i. They are the trunk of the tree, connected to every part of the tree.
 - ii. In this session, we will study the **fifth Practical Principle: Inspire others for the Mission.**
 - c. **Fruit:** As Christian apostles, we want to help others also discover God’s love.
- VII. **Review of the Previous Practical Principles:**
- a. **PP #1- Be Effective:**
 - i. In order to build the Kingdom, we must carefully choose which activities and projects we dedicate ourselves to, how we invest our time and talents, and how we measure our progress. In short, we must work effectively for Christ.
 - b. **PP #2- Work Person-to-Person:**
 - i. God creates each human soul individually, out of love. By working person-to-person and creating a true family atmosphere, a true community, the Movement follows Christ’s own example, the example the Church has always followed of working person-to-person in order to bring souls closer to Christ and the Church.
 - c. **PP#3- Live Team Life:**
 - i. Man was created in the image and likeness of God, who is trinity (a communion or team of persons). Team life makes us more productive in helping us complete tasks for the Kingdom and also gives us an opportunity to grow in virtue.
 - d. **PP #4- Rise to Challenges Out of Love**
 - i. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak (Mt 26:41). There is always the danger, in our Christian journey, of moving into a slumber or place of mediocrity. As a result, we have to stay on top of ourselves. Earth is not heaven, and it never will be; thus, we have to constantly be pushing ourselves to take up our cross and follow him...
- VIII. **Practical Principle #5- Inspire Others for the Mission:**
- a. This lesson presents a late-nineteenth-century painting by Robert Zund that shows a wide, smooth dirt road meandering through a forest.
 - b. It looks like an old forest, with tall, majestic trees towering like the pillars of a huge, natural cathedral over three small figures engaged in an animated discussion as they walk along.
 - c. We can glimpse the blue sky and light clouds of a summer’s day.
 - d. There are three walkers crossing a bridge.
 - i. The one in the middle, dressed in white, is gesturing energetically.



- ii. He is obviously explaining something of importance to his two companions who flank him on either side, eagerly listening and, it seems, intent on expressing their own opinions.
- e. The title of the painting is *The Way to Emmaus*, and it illustrates the remarkable encounter between the resurrected Christ and two of his disciples on Easter Sunday, recorded in Chapter 24 of Luke’s Gospel.
- f. This painting captures apostolic heart of Christ. He dedicated the vast majority of his time to training twelve comrades to become his Apostles, his missionaries, his messengers.
- g. The heart of Jesus burned with love for sinners, and his preferred method of spreading that fire was through kindling it in the hearts of others, who in turn kindled it in more hearts, until it lit up the entire world.
- h. Building Christ’s Kingdom involves following this aspect of Christ’s example too.
- i. We don’t just invite people to come close to the fire that burns in our hearts, so they can share some of its warmth and light.
- j. We actually spread the fire of Christ’s love by going out, kindling it, and building it into a healthy blaze in the hearts of others.
- k. That’s the core of the fifth practical principle: **Inspire Others for the Mission**.
- l. This multiplication of efforts takes time and patience, but its fruits are well worthwhile, and we can experience them in every sector of our life in the Movement...
- m. **Discuss how each segment of our integral formation can help get others working...**

	SPIRITUAL FORMATION	INTELLECTUAL FORMATION	HUMAN FORMATION	APOSTOLIC ACTIVITY
4. INSPIRE OTHERS FOR THE MISSION	e.g. the formation of lay formators and spiritual guides	e.g. first ever Department of Bioethics (change cultural trend by multiplying pro-life agents of culture)	e.g. length of formation of LCs and 3Gs (first LC priest almost 20 years before ordained)	e.g. YTM missions began with a handful of missionaries and one town...

- n. This principle is so central to our way of serving the Church that our founding documents actually invented a new phrase to encapsulate it: *hacer, hacer hacer, dejar hacer*.
 - i. In English it is: to work, to get others to work, to let them work. (Do, Get, Let)
- o. It’s a beautiful way of expressing this generous missionary spirit by which each one of us does our very best to follow Christ. But at the same time we strive to inspire, encourage, and equip others to join in the mission.
- p. And when they do, we don’t clip their wings by selfishly micro-managing everything according to our own limited vision: our greatest success is to see as many others as possible succeeding for Christ.
- q. As Pope John Paul II used to say, there is no better way to grow in our own faith than to give it away.
- r. Christianity isn’t about just keeping Christ’s light safe.
- s. It’s about spreading that light to others, so they can spread it in turn – just like the candle service at the Easter Vigil.

IX. Questions from RC Handbook: Inspire Others For the Mission (# 351-353):

- a. How does this Practical Principle encompass all the other ones?
- b. Explain in your own words the principle, “Do, Get, Let”.
- c. The Movement pins a great measure of its effectiveness on this principle, which allows it to multiply its apostolic reach by involving all members. Spend the remaining time discussing how our section, our team, our apostolate can improve with this important principle.
- d. Does being active in the Movement mean that we neglect our other personal and family responsibilities? If there is a conflict between the two, which comes first?
- e. What can I do better to be a more effective apostle as a result of this study?

X. Conclusion:

- a. Next session will cover the sixth Practical Principle: **Be Flexible**. To prepare, read the RC handbook # 354-355 and answer the questions.



Practical Principle #6: Be Flexible

- XI. **Introduction: There are Three Basic Dimensions to being a Christian Apostle.**
- a. **Roots:** As Christian apostles, we must be “rooted” in the **Core Convictions**...which help us know God’s love more and more.
 - b. **Trunk:** As Christian apostles, we are stabilized, protected, and directed by **Practical Principles**, which is what this study will focus on.
 - i. They are the trunk of the tree, connected to every part of the tree.
 - ii. In this session, we will study the **Sixth Practical Principle: Be Flexible**
 - c. **Fruit:** As Christian apostles, we want to help others also discover God’s love.
- XII. **Review of the Previous Practical Principles:**
- a. **PP #1- Be Effective:**
 - i. In order to build the Kingdom, we must carefully choose which activities and projects we dedicate ourselves to, how we invest our time and talents, and how we measure our progress. In short, we must work effectively for Christ.
 - b. **PP #2- Work Person-to-Person:**
 - i. God creates each human soul individually, out of love. By working person-to-person and creating a true family atmosphere, a true community, the Movement follows Christ’s own example, the example the Church has always followed of working person-to-person in order to bring souls closer to Christ and the Church.
 - c. **PP#3- Live Team Life:**
 - i. Man was created in the image and likeness of God, who is trinity (a communion or team of persons). Team life makes us more productive in helping us complete tasks for the Kingdom and also gives us an opportunity to grow in virtue.
 - d. **PP #4- Rise to Challenges out of Love**
 - i. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak (Mt 26:41). There is always the danger, in our Christian journey, of moving into a slumber or place of mediocrity. As a result, we have to stay on top of ourselves. Earth is not heaven, and it never will be; thus, we have to constantly be pushing ourselves to take up our cross and follow him...
 - e. **PP #5- Inspire Others for the Mission:**
 - i. Building Christ’s Kingdom involves working, getting others to work, and then letting them work, following the example of Christ. Christianity isn’t about just keeping Christ’s light safe; it’s about spreading that light to others, so they can spread it in turn – just like the candle service at the Easter Vigil.
- XIII. **Practical Principle #6- Be Flexible:**
- a. When the first group of Legionary seminarians traveled to Spain in 1946 to study at the world famous Pontifical University of Comillas, the benefactors providing the scholarships arranged for the small community to reside in the old Duke’s palace, close to the university campus.
 - i. The palace was old, but it was still a palace. The grounds and the buildings were beautiful and inspiring. It was a perfect setting for this new adventure.
 - b. But only a few months later, circumstances changed, and the brothers had to change residences. Circumstances changed so radically, in fact, that they had to move from the palace to a farmhouse, where the only space big enough to have a dormitory was the stable.
 - i. The boys had to clean out the stable and set up their straw beds as best they could, and continue with their formation.

- c. As one of the seminarians said at the time, if Jesus left heaven’s court to sleep in a cave at Bethlehem, then we should be honored to trade the Duke’s palace for the Duke’s stable.
- d. *Jesus told us that the Holy Spirit blows where he will – we don’t always know why or how.*
- e. God wants us to use our intelligence as we work for his Kingdom, to be smart, to plan ahead. **But that doesn’t mean that he has to follow all of our plans.**
- f. On the contrary, we are the ones who have to stay always ready to follow his plans, even when they are unexpected (as they so often are).
- g. That’s the reason behind the sixth practical principle: **Be Flexible.**
- h. This multiplication of efforts takes time and patience, but its fruits are well worthwhile, and we can experience them in every sector of our life in the Movement...
- i. **Discuss how the Movement incorporates flexibility into all 4 aspects of our Integral Formation.**

	SPIRITUAL FORMATION	INTELLECTUAL FORMATION	HUMAN FORMATION	APOSTOLIC ACTIVITY
6. BE FLEXIBLE	e.g. vacation meditations during years of LC formation (during hike, b/c won’t always be ideal conditions to prayer)	e.g. personalized study programs within a unified curriculum in houses of formation	e.g. new members can take on commitments gradually, in accordance with their personal needs	e.g. National Catholic Register not a planned acquisition (and now it has become the Catholic newspaper of record in North America)

- j. There is a famous Christian proverb that says, if you want to make God laugh, tell him your plans. There’s a lot of truth in that.
- k. We are not the senior partners in this venture of building Christ’s Kingdom, we are just junior partners.
- l. Christ is the general on the hill overlooking the battle, sending his soldiers and messengers (that’s us) to the different parts of the battlefield; he has the bird’s eye view of our lives, the Church, and all human history.
- m. True missionaries and apostles never forget that. They stay flexible and docile to the end, ready to change their own plans and hopes at a moment’s notice if Christ’s Kingdom demands it.
- n. **Discuss Psalm 38, verse 5: “Commit your way to the Lord; trust in Him, and he will act.”**
- o. Or, as John Henry Cardinal Newman put it in a poem written on the verge of his difficult conversion to the Catholic faith: “Lead, kindly light, amid the encircling gloom, lead thou me on... I do not ask to see the distant scene, one step enough for me.”
- p. One step at a time, whether it leads to a duke’s palace or a duke’s stable, being as smart and responsible as we can, but at the same time ready for whatever the Holy Spirit sends or asks: that’s the heart of the sixth practical principle: **Be Flexible.**

XIV. Questions from RC Handbook: Be Flexible (# 354-355):

- a. **Why is flexibility such an important principle to maintain? What kind of problems could we face if we do not maintain this principle?**
- b. **Discuss in your own words what is meant in the RC Handbook #355, using concrete examples from your own section and parish.**
- c. **What was one of the biggest insights you received from this lesson that you can apply in your own life this week?**

XV. Conclusion:

- a. Next session will cover the seventh Practical Principle: **Form the Whole Person.** To prepare, read the RC handbook # 356-357 and answer the questions.



Practical Principle #7: Form the whole person

- XVI. **Introduction:** Remember that repetition helps move information into long term memory... **There are Three Basic Dimensions to being a Christian Apostle.**
- a. **Roots:** As Christian apostles, we must be “rooted” in the **Core Convictions**...which help us know God’s love more and more.
 - i. **See if the Study Circle members can name the 8 Core Convictions.**
 - b. **Trunk:** As Christian apostles, we are stabilized, protected, and directed by **Practical Principles**, which is what this study will focus on.
 - i. They are the trunk of the tree, connected to every part of the tree.
 - ii. In this session, we will study the **Third Practical Principle: Team Life**
 - c. **Fruit:** As Christian apostles, we want to help others also discover God’s love.
- XVII. **Review of the Previous Practical Principles:**
- a. **PP #1- Be Effective:**
 - i. In order to build the Kingdom, we must carefully choose which activities and projects we dedicate ourselves to, how we invest our time and talents, and how we measure our progress. In short, we must work effectively for Christ.
 - b. **PP #2- Work Person-to-Person:**
 - i. God creates each human soul individually, out of love. By working person-to-person and creating a true family atmosphere, a true community, the Movement follows Christ’s own example, the example the Church has always followed of working person-to-person in order to bring souls closer to Christ and the Church.
 - c. **PP#3- Team Life:**
 - i. Man was created in the image and likeness of God, who is trinity (a communion or team of persons). Team life makes us more productive in helping us complete tasks for the Kingdom and also gives us an opportunity to grow in virtue.
 - d. **PP #4- Build Personal Convictions; Make High Demands**
 - i. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak (Mt 26:41). There is always the danger, in our Christian journey, of moving into a slumber or place of mediocrity. As a result, we have to stay on top of ourselves. Earth is not heaven, and it never will be; thus, we have to constantly be pushing ourselves to take up our cross and follow him...
 - e. **PP #5- Get Others Working:**
 - i. Building Christ’s Kingdom involves working, getting others to work, and then letting them work, following the example of Christ. Christianity doesn’t just keep Christ’s light safe; It’s about spreading that light to others, so they can spread it in turn.
 - f. **PP #6- Be Flexible:**
 - i. God wants us to use our intelligence as we work for his Kingdom, to be smart, to plan ahead. But that doesn’t mean that he has to follow all of our plans. On the contrary, we are the ones who have to stay always ready to follow his plans, even when they are unexpected (as they so often are). True missionaries and apostles never forget that. They stay flexible and docile to the end, ready to change their own plans and hopes at a moment’s notice if Christ’s Kingdom demands it.
 - g. **Practical Principle #7- Form the whole person**
 - i. One of Rembrandt’s **unsung masterpieces** is a painting called *Aristotle Contemplating a Bust of Homer*.



- ii. It shows Aristotle, perhaps the greatest philosopher who ever lived, as an old man, wearing the philosopher's hat.
- iii. His right hand is resting on a marble bust of Homer, one of the greatest poets who ever lived. His left hand is fingering a silver and gold chain, a chain of honor, from which dangles a medallion with the portrait of Alexander the Great, one of the greatest conquerors and political geniuses who ever lived.
- iv. The only thing we see in the background are a few books behind a curtain.
- v. There is a pensive, far-away look on Aristotle's face.
 - 1. He is contemplating the meaning of life, the great question faced by every real philosopher.
 - 2. Is life about beauty, as Homer and the poets believed? Is it about power and action, as Alexander believed? Is it about knowledge and understanding, as the philosophers taught?
 - 3. He hasn't decided – he is wondering.
- h. Of course, life is not primarily about any one of those things; it is about all of them.
- i. God became man in Jesus Christ in order to redeem every human person, and the whole human person. He worked, he studied, he contemplated, he enjoyed, he suffered – and in doing so he showed us that holiness doesn't mean leaving our humanity behind; it means developing it to the full.
- j. As St Irenaeus put it 1800 years ago, and as Pope John Paul II often quoted, "*Gloria Dei, Vivens Homo*" – the Glory of God is man fully alive.
- k. This is the idea behind the seventh practical principle: **Form the whole person.**
 - l. And that's exactly what we have been seeing in the chart.
 - m. The different parts of human nature don't work independently – they are all connected.
 - n. And so when we strive to obey Christ's command to love God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength, we open up our whole personality to the sanctifying power of his grace...
 - o. St Thomas Aquinas, the great Doctor of the Church whose thirteenth-century works still guide popes, saints, and theologians, summed this principle up well. He wrote that "grace builds on nature."
 - p. Christ didn't come to replace our fallen human nature, but to redeem it.
 - q. Our Lord himself gave us a beautiful image for this principle in his parable of the sower.
 - i. The seed was the Word of God, but it could only put down roots and grow to maturity if it found good soil.
 - ii. Form the whole person is about tilling, fertilizing, watering, and weeded the soil of our human nature, so that Christ's grace can blossom there.
 - r. As one Cardinal wrote in the guest book after a visit to the Legionary seminary in Rome, quoting a famous Italian song "*Legionario – l'impero dell'armonia*" [Legionary – Kingdom of Harmony], in other words, our spirituality is a place where harmony reigns.
 - s. A harmonious development of nature and grace, that's our ideal in the Movement; that's the path to holiness, for ourselves and for everyone we come into contact with.



XVIII. Conclusion:

- a. As we can see by the chart on the next page, these Practical Principles are built into the very structure of life as a Regnum Christi.





- b. They all flow from the core of our charism, which is to know, live, and spread Christ's love, and since love never settles for second-best or mere appearances, we adopt these principles to empower our love.
- c. They are not additions that we attach but veins that keep our love flowing on the inside.
- i. (Do not read the chart aloud; it is here for the silent reflection at the end...)

	SPIRITUAL FORMATION	INTELLECTUAL FORMATION	HUMAN FORMATION	APOSTOLIC ACTIVITY
1. BE EFFECTIVE	e.g., knowing root sin	e.g. pride of place to Gospel and papal teaching	e.g. program guide and calendar	e.g. influence the influencers (epriest.com)
2. WORK PERSON-TO-PERSON	e.g. biweekly confession, monthly s.d.	e.g. tracks at YFEs – indiv needs and indiv. attn	e.g. dialogue with team leader	e.g. Cheshire retreat for young men: shipping in priests (my first contact)
3. TEAM LIFE	e.g. monthly retreat together	e.g. study circle; (not just my opinions and my homework)	e.g. Encounter with Christ – mutual accountability, enrichment	e.g. AFIRE teams to run a R.C. section, LCAs to coordinate and synergize
4. BUILD PERSONAL CONVICTIONS; MAKE HIGH DEMANDS	e.g. program of life	e.g. scheduling study weeks, (because we all tend to like activity more than study)	e.g. writing a personal letter to enter RC e.g. having a commitment card	e.g. Working by objectives and concrete goals (what we do on the outside flows from who we are and what we want on the inside)
4. GET OTHERS WORKING	e.g. the formation of lay formators and spiritual guides	e.g. first ever Department of Bioethics (change cultural trend by multiplying pro-life agents of culture)	e.g. length of formation of LCs and 3Gs (first LC priest almost 20 years before ordained)	e.g. YTM missions began with a handful of missionaries and one town...
6. BE FLEXIBLE	e.g. vacation meditations during hike, b/c won't always be ideal conditions to prayer	e.g. personalized study programs within a unified curriculum in houses of formation	e.g. new members can take on commitments gradually	e.g. National Catholic Register not a planned acquisition (and now it has become the Catholic newspaper of record in North America)
7. FORM THE WHOLE PERSON	Grace: prayer and sacraments	Mind (reason enlightened by faith)	Will (self-mastery over instincts and temperament)	Primacy of charity (as fulfillment of human vocation in which all things come together)

- d. If we simply strive to live each of our commitments as they are meant to be lived, little by little we absorb these principles, and learn how to apply them more efficiently.
- e. They are like basic skills for the art of Christian living.



- f. We want to practice these practical principles until they become second nature – we think about them less, while we live them more.
- g. And that’s what really matters, because these principles, like many other aspects of our life, are just means to an end. They are just strategies that can help us fulfill our mission.
- h. But still, they are just strategies, just means to achieve our goal, which is the goal of every Catholic and every Christian: nothing less than loving Christ and building his Kingdom, all for the Glory of God.

XIX. Conclusion:

- a. **Questions from RC Handbook: Form the Whole Person (# 356-357):**
 - i. **What is the ultimate purpose of formation? Why is the formation of the whole person so important in the life of a Christian?**
 - ii. **How do the four areas of formation complement each other?**
 - iii. **Spend the remaining time in silence, asking our Lord to show you what areas of our formation you need to improve on and how.**