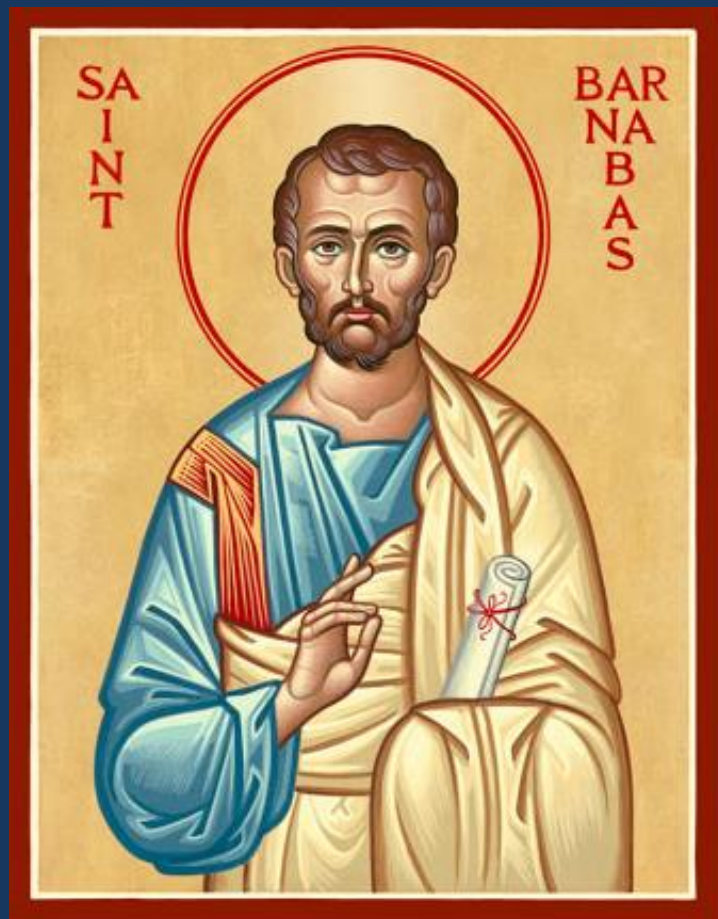


The Society of St. Barnabas



[In] the [dream] it was like [my father and I] was both back in older times and I was on horseback goin through the mountains of a night. Goin through this pass in the mountains. It was cold and there was snow on the ground and he rode past me and kept on goin. Never said nothin. He just rode on past and he had this blanket wrapped around him and he had his head down and when he rode past I seen he was carryin fire in a horn the way people used to do and I could see the horn from the light inside of it. About the color of the moon. And in the dream I knew that he was goin on ahead and that he was fixin to make a fire somewhere out there in all that dark and all that cold and I knew that whenever I got there he would be there. And then I woke up.

Cormac McCarthy, No Country for Old Men

The mission of the Society of St. Barnabas is to equip and encourage Christians across the Pittsburgh region to grow in Holiness through the spiritual life found within the catholic Anglican tradition. Through their Holiness, members of the Society are called to act as public witnesses to the Lordship of Jesus in their families, workplaces, and communities and to serve and strengthen local parishes. The Society of St. Barnabas is a confraternity of the Diocese of Pittsburgh of the Anglican Church of North America.

Guiding principles of the community

Universal Call to Holiness: Through his incarnation, death, and resurrection, Jesus Christ has established a new kingdom. As the citizens of this new kingdom, Paul instructs Christians to be Holy and “walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called”. Through our Holiness, we serve as a public witness to the beauty and majesty of Christ’s Kingdom to which we are called; a kingdom established on peace and not violence, generosity and not greed, hospitality and not rejection, mercy and not retribution, meekness and not pride. This type of Holiness is not confined to clergy or the vocationally religious. Instead, all Christians are called to make Holy all aspects of the ordinary lives including family, community, recreation, and work.

Holiness and the Wholeness of Man: We acknowledge the life of the mind, as manifested through study and catechesis, to be central to the Holy Spirit’s work of growing us in Holiness. However, we do not believe that human beings are purely cognitive beings. Instead, we appreciate man in its wholeness as cognitive, embodied, and imaginative. As embodied creatures, we believe God communicates his grace to us through physical means such as the sacraments and spiritual disciplines. We can participate with our bodies in the Holy Spirit’s gracious work through classical embodied Christian practices. We also believe that as imaginative creatures we are “narrative” in that we grow in faith as we retell the Gospel. Through imaginative practices, we can regularly engage in a rhythm of narrating the Gospel to ourselves and each other in a way that the Gospel becomes “lived-in”.

Classical Christian Tradition: While the Church is always responding to the unique context of its current cultural moment, we believe that the Church inherits the wisdom and practices of those who have gone before us. The community embraces, learns from, and relies on this tradition. We particularly draw from the Rule of St. Benedict with its emphasis on prayer and work to form the life of the Society.

Community of Accountability: Whether a person is a professional athlete or a student, skill development is tied to feedback and accountability. In the same way, we need the community of believers to help us grow in the “skill” of practice by encouraging us and holding us accountable to our call as Christians to “work out our salvation with fear and trembling”.

Patterns of practice (A Rule of Life)

Each member of the Society will commit to a pattern of practice (Rule of Life) to which they agree to be held accountable to and encouraged in by the Society. The development of the Rule of Life is modeled after the Rule of St. Benedict but adapted to the realities of lay life. The Society members are not compelled to participate in the practices in any particular way. However, members covenant to and will be expected to participate in the following set of specific Christian practices:

Prayer: Prayer rooted in the catholic Anglican spiritual tradition including Eucharist, daily offices, and daily private prayer. Members are expected to attend weekly Eucharist, pray the offices of the church daily, and practice daily meditative prayer using the lectio divina model.

Bible Reading: Daily Bible reading rooted in the Lectionary tradition.

Cycles of Fasting and Feasting: Participation in the rhythms of the Church calendar.

Almsgiving and Service: Giving of their time and money to the aid of the needy, as well as contributing to actions and activities that create visible expressions of God’s reign at home, work, and in the community. The members of the Society are called specifically to serve within their local parishes with their time, talent, and money.

Study: Regular study of Christian teachings with particular focus on texts that help to better equip the members to participate in their Rule of Life.

Spiritual Direction: Meeting regularly with a spiritual director.

Examination of conscience and confession: Members are expected to regularly perform an examination of conscience and participate in confession at least once per year.

What does life in the society look like?

The group's life together will be organized around a series of daily, weekly, monthly, and other activities designed to support our Christian practices.

Daily

- Private prayer
- Daily office
- Bible reading
- Study

Weekly

- Eucharist in home parishes
- Examination of conscience

Bi-weekly

- Community meeting focusing on prayer, study, accountability, and a meal

Other

- Feasting and fasting together in accordance with the church calendar
- Performing regular acts of Christian service and charity including in the member's home parish
- Almsgiving
- Spiritual direction
- Confession
- Spiritual retreats

Group membership requirements

The Society is open to any Christian in the Pittsburgh region who is willing to covenant with the Society to pursue Holiness through the Rule and communal accountability. The Society consists of 1) members, 2) tertiaries, and 3) novices. Consistent with the Rule of St. Benedict, members make three promises to the Society namely obedience, stability, and conversion of life. Members promise to keep the Rule of the Society to the best of their abilities (obedience), perpetually and actively participate in the life of the Society given their specific station in life (stability), and always seek to grow in faith, hope, and charity through the gifts of the Church (conversion of life). Members are also expected to give financially to the Society in order to support its work including educational materials and other events. The society also welcomes tertiaries who are not full members within the Society but who regularly attend meetings, celebrations, and other events. The tertiaries also attempt to live by the Rule of the Society. Any tertiary interested in becoming a member of the Society will commit to a one to five-year novitiate period. During this discernment period, the novice will complete spiritual training which is personalized and assigned at the discretion of the Society leadership.

How is the Society of St. Barnabas organized?

The Society of St. Barnabas is led by lay Anglicans who provide overall administration and spiritual leadership and report to the Bishop of the Pittsburgh Diocese of the ACNA. The Society is not a replacement for the local parish. Members of the Society are expected to attend Eucharist at their home parishes and to serve the life those parishes. Membership in the Society is designed to help the members serve and strengthen parishes across Pittsburgh.

For more information, please contact Brandon Daily at brandon@societyofstbarnabas.org or 724-217-1530.