

# The Maltfriscan Rule



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## **Foreword**

This set of worksheets based on passages from the Rule of the Maltfriscan community can be used as reflection material for small gatherings of Maltfriscans, or for individual members of the community. They can also be used for reflection by those interested in joining our community.

# 1. God's Love

"Dear children of the White Rose,

God has loved us with so much love the he gave his beloved Son to be our saviour. We see this love alive in Jesus and know that he too loves us and has given his life for us on the cross." (Rule p.3 &5)

1. How do we see God's love alive in Jesus?
2. Do you know God loves you? How? Do you believe it?
3. How should this knowledge affect your life?
4. Which piece of scripture most reminds you of Jesus' love for you?

"...Let our two hearts, O Lord, be one, I'll be forever in your love..."  
(Lift Up My heart).

## **God's Word**

Jn. 3:16; 19:28-30

Isa. 44:1-4, 21-22

Hos. 2:19-23



## 2. Lord and Saviour

“We accept Jesus, Son of God, who is now in the Father’s glory, as our Lord and Saviour; we entrust our lives to him.” (Rule p6)

1. God’s love for us impels us to respond. The more we experience his love the more we wish to love in return. How can we give ourselves in love to Jesus?
2. Jesus is “Lord”. What does this mean?
3. Why do communities use formal commitments when entrusting themselves to God?

“...He’s my Jesus, and saves us, and there’s no other, can take us to the Father but my Lord...” (He’s My Jesus)

### God’s Word

Jn.9:35-38



# 3. Praise

“We are called especially to praise God’s love in Jesus.” (Rule p7)  
“MAGNUS ES DOMINE ET LAUDABILIS VALDE” (Psalm 144:3)

1. Why do we praise? (Think of as many reasons as you can).
2. What do you find difficult about praising?
3. Must praise always be loud? Why/why not?
4. When do you praise God?

“Even if stand empty the stalls, and bare the land, I will praise still my King  
and my God...” (Living on the Edge)

## God’s Word

Josh.6:15-20

1Chron.29:10-13, 20

Ps.29:1-2

1 Cor.12:4-12



## 4. Love #1

“We are called especially to obey the commandment of LOVE. Jesus says to us, ‘A new commandment I give you, my own commandment I give you. As I HAVE LOVED YOU, LOVE ONE ANOTHER. By this shall all know you are my disciples, that you love one another. THIS IS MY COMMANDMENT, LOVE ONE ANOTHER.’” (Rule p9)

1. In what ways have you seen Maltfriscans loving one another?
2. Is this part of the Rule difficult to obey? Why/why not?
3. How can you help yourself /others to obey this part of the Rule? (Be practical!)

“Praying for the unity we seek - one in you - so that our joy may be complete, brimming over...!” (Liberty of Love)

### **God's Word**

Jn.13:34-35

15:12

Mtt.5:43-48

Read Acts 6:1-7. Did the Early Church always obey the commandment to love? How did they resolve differences of opinion?

## 5. Love #2

“Because we have experienced the Father’s forgiveness we are to be compassionate towards one another as our Father in heaven is compassionate... not to judge, not to criticise one another... always to forgive and to give generously. In this way we will be children of the Most High God who is our ABBA.” (Rule p11)

1. Have you experienced the Father’s forgiveness? How?
2. What does it mean to show compassion to others?
3. What would you do if you heard someone criticising another person?
4. How can you give generously?



“...For the sake of all my brothers, for the sake of all my sisters, may the peace of God be with you, and I will ask for your good...” (I rejoiced).

### God's Word

Luke 15:1-7, 11-32

Mtt. 18:21-35

Luke 23:32-43

### Personal Prayer

Do I judge, criticise, hold grudges? Tell God about it and ask to experience his forgiveness.

# 6. Witness

“We are called to share the Good News that we have learnt, bringing the love of Jesus to the hearts of all. In this way we obey the Lord’s commandment: ‘Go to the whole world and spread the Good News.’”  
(Rule p13)

1. What is the ‘Good News’?
2. How many methods of evangelism can you think of?
3. How do Maltfriscans evangelize?
4. Does the thought of spreading the Good News fill you with excitement or fear? Why?

“We possess a Maltfriscan Cross and wear a sign of Christian witness daily.”  
(Rule p 29)



“...stand tall in the world, there’s a job here to be done, to bring all people to the Lord...”  
(Arise, Shine Out).

## God’s Word

Acts 1:7-9

Mk. 24:45-49

Acts 2:32-42

## Personal Reflection

What opportunities do I have to spread the Good News?



# 7. St Francis and St Clare

“We follow the inspiration of Francis and Clare of Assisi who gave themselves in love to Jesus so that his love may be set free in them.” (Rule p 15)

The first Maltfriscans were a group of punk rockers and some other young people living in and around the town of Maltby in South Yorkshire (UK). Touched by God's love and inspired by St. Francis of Assisi the name **MALTby FRANCISCANS** – MaltFriscans was adopted (sometimes shortened to 'friscans).

Try to hire the DVD, “Brother Sun, Sister Moon” watch it and discuss.

**“We recall the words of Jesus:**

‘Blessed are the poor in spirit:

Blessed are the pure in heart:

Blessed are the meek:’” (Rule p17)



# 8. Poverty

## **Blessed are the poor in spirit:**

“We accept everything we have as gifts of the ABBA and strive to live in the gift of God’s merciful love.” (Rule p 17)

1. Why do you think ‘poverty’ has always been a commitment taken by religious orders?
2. Maltfriscans interpret ‘poverty’ in our Rule as ‘joyful simplicity.’ Why do you think this is?

TASK: Find a book about St. Francis and read it over the next few weeks. Ask Francis to teach you his love for Lady Poverty.

“...’cos by letting go we can receive all that our Father longs to give...”  
[Francis (Free)]

## **God’s Word**

Mtt. 6:24-34

Luke 14:25-33

9:57-58

18:18-30

## **For Reflection**

Do I accept everything I am and have as God’s gift? What would I find it most difficult to give to God?

# 9. Chastity

## **Blessed are the pure in heart:**

“In our relationships we respect and cherish each other, body and soul, for love is sacred.” (Rule p 19)

1. What does it mean to be chaste in today's world?
2. What is the difference between ‘a commitment to celibacy’ and ‘a commitment to chastity according to one's state in life’?
3. How can we live out God's unconditional love in marriage?

“... So our God is worthy of my life, so absolute, so right, so true...”  
(Stay Awhile).

## **God's Word**

Mtt. 5: 8, 5:27-30



## **Question**

What would you say to someone arguing for sex outside marriage?

# 10. Obedience

## **Blessed are the meek:**

“We choose to be obedient to the Rule and, in all that concerns the good order of our family, the Spiritual Guardian and those asked to exercise authority within the community.” (Rule p21).

1. Read Mk. 14:35-36, Heb. 5:7-10. In what ways did Jesus obey his Father?
2. Read Luke 2:51. God's son, obedient to Mary and Joseph, 'mere' human beings – is this 'sensible'? Is obedience based on logic?
3. What opportunities have you to lay down your will for God?

“We give ourselves in service to the mission of the church and offer reverence and obedience to the local Bishop.” (Rule p31)

Why is it so important that this sentence is part of our Rule?

“And day to day I pray to see...  
that I'm where you want me to be...  
obeying you makes me alive...” (Liberty of Love)

# 11. The Heart of Jesus

“In these ways we too give ourselves to Jesus who, in the depths of his heart, longs to love and to be loved.

Praise God.

Love one another.

Spread the Good News.”

(Rule p22 & 23)

In the early days of the 'friscans during a retreat at Hazelwood Castle, God spoke (as He does!) and said that He entrusted to our care the Heart of Jesus.

What do you think this means to us?

“...never allow us, Lord, from you to part.  
Keep us sheltered always  
in your Sacred Heart...” (Yours the Glory)

“Lord, you come to show the way, you show us how to love in all we do,  
you show us how to live...” (The meaning of Your Love)

## **God's Word**

Jn. 19:31-37

Mk. 1:41; 2:5

Mtt. 11:29

# 12. Meeting Together

“We meet together to praise God, to learn more about his word, and to love and serve each other.” (Rule p25)

“We all meet together once a year with the Spiritual Guardian for the Chapter of Mats. This is the supreme council of the community.”

1. Read Acts 4:23-31. Why did the early church find it necessary/helpful to have regular meetings?
2. The Maltfriscans were a prayer group before they became a community and praising God together is still at the centre of our community life. Does page 25 of the Rule accurately describe your experience of ‘friscan prayer meetings?
3. What ‘friscan meetings are there in your area? What purpose do they serve?
4. How could your local ‘friscan meetings be enriched?

“... I rejoiced when I heard them say, ‘Let's go to God's house...’”

(I Rejoiced).

## **God's Word**

Acts 2:43-47

4:23-31



# 13. Prayer

“We pray each day and read some of God’s Word so that we can learn to live by it, since Jesus tells us we live by every WORD that comes from GOD’S mouth.” (Rule pg 27)

“We say a decade of the Rosary each day for the community and for the spread of God’s kingdom.” (Rule p35)

1. Think of as many different ways of praying as you can.
2. How and where do you prefer to pray?
3. Is it important to set a time for daily prayer? Why/why not?
4. Have you heard God speaking to you in scripture?

“... Take me to the place where fear becomes an orphan kneeling quiet beside the threshold. Take me to the place...where I can see your face.” (Take me to the place).

## God's Word

Mk. 1:35-37

Mtt. 4:4

Luke 11:1-13



## This week

Take some time to pray in one of the ways which is less familiar to you.

# 14. Mary

“Dear Children of the White Rose.....

On the cross, Jesus entrusted his mother to every Christian home. We learn and delight in her pure love and rejoice that Mary has chosen to be the MOTHER of our family. We say a decade of the Rosary each day for the community and the spread of God's kingdom. In moments of parting or danger we ask her help:

O Dear White Rose whose petals enfold my heart, draw me to the centre of your sweetness, Jesus.” (Rule p3, 35 & 37)

1. Look at the gospel passages which mention Mary. What do they tell us about her? About following Jesus?



2. Read about or ask other 'friscans about the early days of the community. Why does Mary have a place of honour in our community?
3. In what sense does Mary “preside” at our meetings?
4. Each community has its own special “charism”. From our history so far, what do you think is the charism of the Maltfriscan community?

“... Beautiful Lady, we pray, reveal to us the love that you portray, your word so gentle, O sinless queen, your heart so pure, star of the sea...” (Beautiful Lady)

## God's Word

Luke.1:26-56; 2:4-7; 19, 34-35; 48-52.

Mk.3:31-35.

Jn. 2:5; 19:25-27

