

A Spiritual Autobiography based on the Baptismal Covenant

This model was developed at Training of Trainers in Kelowna, BC Canada in August 2007. Any feedback from those who use it would be welcome. director@efmcanada.ca

In the baptismal rite, we enter into a covenant that has a series of commitments that are lifelong and compelling, and that describe a way of life that is liturgical, reconciling, evangelistic, compassionate and concerned. This method of Spiritual Autobiography invites you to use the questions in the baptismal covenant to reflect on your own life and ministry. Ministry is the exercising of gifts given to us by God. Indeed, part of the work of an EfM seminar is the discernment of these gifts and encouragement of one another in expressing gifts for ministry. According to the catechism of the Episcopal Church, the ministry of the baptized is ***“to represent Christ and his Church; to bear witness to him wherever they may be; and, according to the gifts given them, to carry on Christ’s work of reconciliation in the world; and to take their place in the life, worship, and governance of the Church.”*** (BCP p. 855)

EXAMINING YOUR LIFE

Your ministry in baptism has been expressed in many ways throughout your life. Using the following questions from the Baptismal Covenant as a guide, explore your life and ministry.

Will you continue in the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and in the prayers?

- How in your life has the community of faith equipped, informed or shaped your ministry?
- How have you expressed your baptismal ministry within the worshipping community?

Will you persevere in resisting evil, and whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

- Describe those occasions in which you were prevented from exercising your baptismal ministry.
- How have you experienced repentance and forgiveness in your life?
- When in your life have you experienced the ministry of reconciliation, and when have you exercised the ministry of reconciliation?

Will you proclaim by word and example the good news of God in Christ?

- How did you come to hear the good news of God in Christ?
- In what ways have you shared the good news of God in Christ?

Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons loving your neighbour as yourself?

- Recall a time when you have recognized the presence of Christ in another person. What happened?
- When has someone recognized the presence of Christ in you? What was that like?
- When have you found it difficult to see Christ in another person?
- What ministries of service have you undertaken? What were the challenges and rewards?

Will you strive for justice and peace among all people and respect the dignity of every human being?

- For whom have you sought justice or been an advocate? What did you do? What were the consequences?
- Recall a time when you came to respect the dignity of another human being. What allowed that to happen?

PREPARING FOR THE SEMINAR

As you reflect on the covenant, how do you see it has shaped your life so far?

Sit with your reflections in prayer/meditation/contemplation.

Re-read the quotation from the Catechism. Consider the times in your life when you have been a minister and when you have been ministered to.

SHARING WITH THE SEMINAR GROUP

Prepare a Curriculum Vitae, Portfolio or Resume that expresses your life in Christ and your ministry.

- A *Curriculum Vitae* is a point-form summary of your work and study. It contains highlights, generally without significant commentary.
- A *Portfolio* is a collection of materials (eg. writings, photographs, drawings, citations, etc.) representative of a your work and life.
- A *Resume* is similar to a Curriculum Vitae, but is more likely to be set in context and provide descriptions of particular responsibilities or situations