

FOREWORD BY MATTHEW KELLY

# Plan of Life

ROGER J. LANDRY

HABITS  
TO HELP  
YOU GROW  
CLOSER  
TO GOD



## The Importance of a Plan of Life



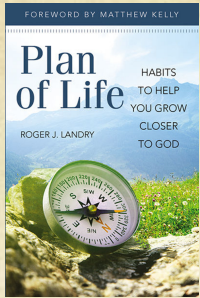
**Fr. Roger J. Landry**

Seminar for

Chesterton Academy of the Holy Family

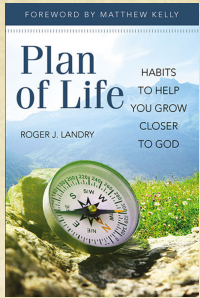
April 15, 2020





# The Importance of a Plan

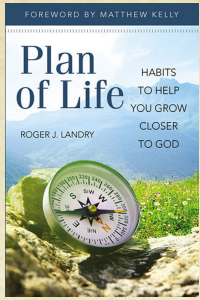
- In almost every sphere of life, those who take something seriously come up with a plan:
  - Championship sports teams
  - Flourishing businesses
  - Triumphant political campaigns
  - Successful individuals in almost any sphere of life
- Those who get results are generally the ones with better plans implemented with perseverance.
- It's true, too, of the spiritual life, which is way too important to wing.



# The Importance of a Spiritual Plan

- Jesus spoke about a plan: “No disciple is superior to the teacher; but when *fully trained*, every disciple will be like his teacher.” (Lk 6:40)
- Saint Paul specialized in providing training in the Christian life. His letters are full of advice from an expert coach in the spiritual life.
  - Paul exhorted parents to raise their children “in the discipline and instruction of the Lord” and he provided the same training for his spiritual children (Eph 6:4).
  - He urged the young Saint Timothy, “Train yourself in godliness, for, while physical training is of some value, godliness is valuable in every way, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.” (1 Tim 4:7–8).
  - He followed his own advice, telling the Corinthians, “I do not run aimlessly, nor do I box as though beating the air; but I punish my body and enslave it, so that after proclaiming to others I myself should not be disqualified.” (1 Cor 9:26–27).

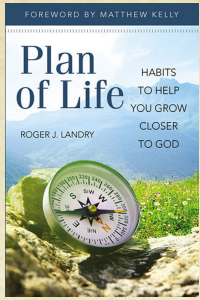




# The Two Elements of a Spiritual Plan

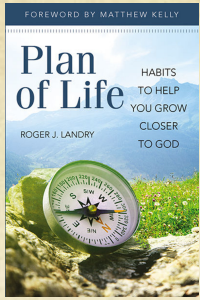
- A plan involves two essential elements:
  - The goal
  - The means are to obtain that goal
- In the spiritual life, what is the **goal**?
  - It's holiness!
    - To become holy as God is holy.
    - To become like God, growing fully in his image and likeness.
    - Since God is love: to receive God's love and to love as he loves.
- A spiritual plan of life without this goal of holiness is to embark on a journey to the wrong destination!





# The Goal of Holiness

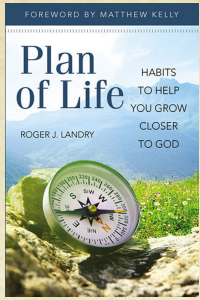
- St. John Paul II wrote in 2001 in his pastoral plan for the third Christian millennium (*Novo millennio ineunte*):
  - “I have no hesitation in saying that all pastoral initiatives must be set in relation to holiness.”
  - “Stressing holiness remains more than ever an urgent pastoral task.”
  - “It is necessary to rediscover the full practical significance of ... the universal call to holiness,” that “all the Christian faithful, of whatever state or rank, are called to the fullness of the Christian life and to the perfection of charity.”
  - “It would be a contradiction to settle for a life of mediocrity, marked by a minimalist ethic and a shallow religiosity.”
  - “The time has come to repropose wholeheartedly to everyone this high standard of ordinary Christian living.”



## The Means: Training in Holiness

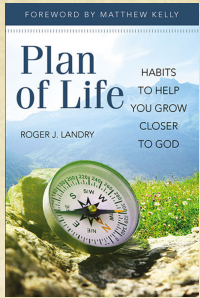
- St. John Paul II likewise stressed the means:
  - “The paths to holiness are personal and call for a **genuine training in holiness** adapted to people’s needs.
- He underlines six pillars of holiness:
  - Prayer – “This training in holiness calls for a Christian life distinguished above all in the *art of prayer*.”
  - The Sunday Eucharist
  - The Sacrament of Reconciliation
  - The primacy of grace (God’s free action)
  - Listening to the Word of God
  - Proclaiming the Word of God





# What is a Plan of Life?

- Integrating those pillars into one's life and receiving all of the help God wants to give us by means of them requires effort!
- A Plan of Life is a unified series of commitments we make to grow in holiness.
  - It's a “game plan” for our spiritual life to help us achieve the goal.
  - It involves various spiritual exercises given to us by saints and spiritual directors to help us translate our desire to grow closer to God from vague wish to reality
  - It helps us to keep a full-time awareness of God – and how he is trying to help us – throughout the day.
  - It is a means by which we seek to live in God's kingdom, to follow Jesus, and to cooperate with the Holy Spirit.

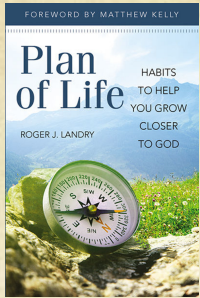


## Elements of a Plan of Life

- In my book, I describe and develop a series of different practices to help one keep an awareness of God throughout the day, to abide in him and allow him to abide in us (Jn 15:4)
- I distinguish between what I call the “basics” from “beyond the basics.”
- I list the following basics:

The Holy Spirit	Heroic moment	Morning Offering	General Exam
Regular Prayer	Sacred Scripture	Keeping Holy the Lord's Day	Frequent Confession
Adoration	Charity	Holy Week	Rosary

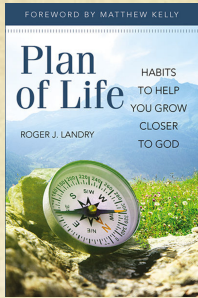




# Elements of a Plan of Life

○ I focused on the following practices in “Beyond the Basics”:

Daily Mass	Spiritual Communion	Angelus or Regina Caeli	Memorare
Saturday devotions to Mary	Virtue of Penance	Fasting	Order and Organization
Particular Exam	Work	Study	Spiritual Reading
Retreats and Days of Recollection	Acts of the Heart: Faith, Hope, Love, Presence of God, Divine Filiation, Thanksgiving, Atonement	Aspirations	Christian Joy



## Final Tips and Thoughts

- What I've given is not an exhaustive list of helpful spiritual practices and exercises, but they cover the essential elements.
- Knowing and listing them is easy; putting them into practice is what is the challenge.
- No one can do everything at once. Choose one or a few of these practices and begin to form new habits. Once they become part of your “second nature,” move on to others. Be patient and persevere.
- Jesus said, “If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them” (Jn 13:17).





# For a copy of this presentation

You may download a copy of this presentation in powerpoint or in PDF, and listen to the audio recording

by going to  
[www.catholicpreaching.com](http://www.catholicpreaching.com)  
and then clicking on the appropriate link under “Most Recent Talks”

Fr. Roger J. Landry

Email: [fatherlandry@catholicpreaching.com](mailto:fatherlandry@catholicpreaching.com)

The screenshot shows the homepage of [catholicpreaching.com](http://www.catholicpreaching.com). The header includes the site name and a navigation menu with links for Home, Homilies, Articles, Plan of Life Book, Retreats, Teaching, and Biography. A search bar is located in the top right. The main content area features a 'Welcome!' message from Fr. Roger J. Landry, followed by a paragraph about his ordination and a quote: "Receive the Gospel of Christ, whose herald you now are. Believe what you read. Teach what you believe. Practice what you teach." Below this is a section titled 'Most Recent Homilies', 'Most Recent Articles', and 'Most Recent Talks', each with a list of recent posts and their dates.

Home Homilies Articles Plan of Life Book Retreats Teaching Biography

Search this website ... Search

## Welcome!

I warmly welcome you to this website, put together at the insistence and with the assistance of friends.

During my diaconal ordination, Cardinal Edmund Szoka gave me the following instruction from the Ordination Rite as together we gripped the Book of the Gospels:

*"Receive the Gospel of Christ, whose herald you now are.  
Believe what you read.  
Teach what you believe.  
Practice what you teach."*

Those words have never lost their resonance.

Since that day -- October 8, 1998 -- I have tried to live up to that commission to be a "herald of the Gospel," by striving to teach what the Church believes, to practice what I preach to others, and to spread with joy and enthusiasm the truth Christ has entrusted to His church -- in and out of season, in and out of the pulpit.

This website is a chronicle of those attempts.

It constitutes the "five loaves and two fish" (or even less!) that I have placed into the hands of the Lord as an attempt to feed a hungry crowd, confident that, if He wishes, He can multiply and supplement that meager offering to nourish many more (Jn 6:1-14).

In Christ,  
Fr. Roger J. Landry

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Most Recent Homilies	Most Recent Articles	Most Recent Talks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Bearing Fruit Attached to the Vine, 12th Wednesday (II), June 27, 2018</li><li>Following the Lead of the Precursor, Solemnity of St. John the Baptist, June 24, 2018</li><li>Placing Our Heart and Treasure in God, 11th Friday (II), June 22, 2018</li><li>Longing to See God's Face in Prayer and in Others, 10th Friday (II), June 15, 2018</li><li>The Surpassing Righteousness of Christ-like Merciful Love, 10th Thursday (II), June 14, 2018</li><li>Greatest in the Kingdom, 10th Wednesday (II), June 13, 2018</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The Secular Push to Get Priests to Break the Seal, The Anchor, June 29, 2018</li><li>Approaching the Suicide Surge with Honesty and Resolve, The Anchor, June 15, 2018</li><li>The Abortion Exception to the Practice of Discrimination, The Anchor, June 1, 2018</li><li>The Contemporary Attack on Motherhood, The Anchor, May 18, 2018</li><li>The Euthanasia of Alfie Evans, The Anchor, May 4, 2018</li><li>"Do Not Be Afraid of Holiness," The Anchor, April 20, 2018</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The Church and International Diplomacy, Acton University, June 20, 2018</li><li>The Entrepreneurial Vocation, Acton University, June 20, 2018</li><li>The Social Teaching of Pope St. John Paul II, Acton University, June 20, 2018</li><li>The Necessity and Art of Trinitarian Prayer, Catholic Medical Association Boot Camp, June 18, 2018</li><li>Christ, the Redeemer of Marriage: Living and Proclaiming the Gospel of the Sacramentality of Marriage at a Time When Sex Love,</li></ul>



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*Questions and  
Comments*