**Training for Faithful Living**

* Tough decisions and persistent effort are required of those who seek lives that are whole and holy; we seek to learn the practice of saying no to that which crowds God out and yes to a way of life that makes space for God (Deuteronomy 30:19)
* Saying yes to a life in Christ means saying no to that which harms (1 Corinthians 9:24-27; Galatians 5:16-26)

***Prayer, examination of conscience, and participation in communities of faith are three acts that can help us in this practice.***

**Prayer (Matthew 6:5-15; Luke 11:1-4)**

* Prayer is an intimate conversation with God – real, demanding, loving and engaged dialogue
  + Initiates, sustains, and augments a dynamic relationship full of risk and joy
  + Since each person is unique, the tenor and content of our prayers will be unique

***Prayer changes the one who prays.***

**Examination of Conscience (Luke 18:18-30; 2 Corinthians 13:5a)**

* How is my/our relationship with God?
* Where and how is my life/are our lives growing?
* Who and what am I/are we becoming?
* To what am I/are we saying yes with my life?
* Are my/our noes life-affirming one?

**Sharing in Communities of Faith (Hebrews 10:25)**

* When an honest sharing of faith is at a group’s center, it can provide a very helpful setting as we seek to be more deliberate in saying yes and saying no
* When group partners challenge us to reconsider our yeses and noes, we must be open to hear and respond

***If we are to enhance and build up the capacities for a good, wholesome, and holy life, we must learn to say yes to what affirms and renews wholeness and life while saying a related no to what induces and brings about destruction and ruin.***

**Homework: read and/or listen to Mark 2:23 – 3:6 considering the practice of keeping sabbath.**