

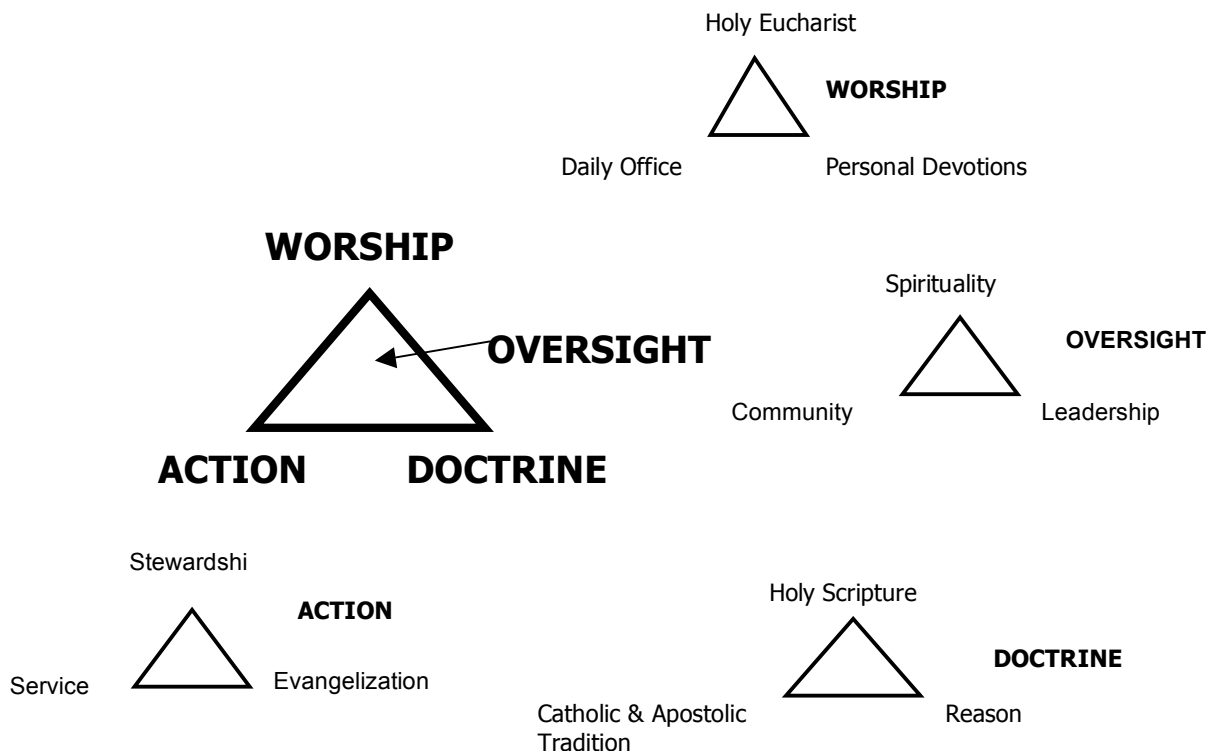
The Christian Life Model: A Diagram Overview

In a world where carpenters get resurrected, everything is possible.

Eleanor in *The Lion in Winter*

For many years Mother Mary Laney was vicar of Saint Gabriel's Church in the Olney neighborhood of Philadelphia. Olney is a community of African Americans, Asians, Arabs, Africans, Hispanics, and some whites, the remains of a once large German American population. It's one of the most diverse communities in Philadelphia. It's also a community struggling with crime, affordable housing, and employment. It was a small parish dependent on the diocese for assistance, serving the Olney community with efforts of community organizing, employment and education, and holding together a diverse membership. Saint Gabriel's had a motto "With God all things are possible". What held them together and allowed them to move forward in service? Liturgy and prayer were certainly at the heart of it. Another one of the tools Mary Laney used was this Christian Life Model. It offered a way of thinking about the elements and dynamics of life in a Christian community.

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE MODEL



- Each element is a way in which Christ comes to us and in which we seek Christ. Each is an entry into, and participation in, the unity to which we are called. In them we are called into a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ - the heart of Christ, the mind of Christ, the work of Christ.
- The model can be used by parishes for self assessment, as a framework for planning, as a way to focus the parish on the essentials of the Christian life, and as a resource to individuals in shaping a Rule of Life. Each triangle is a system of mutual influence in which the elements strengthen and impact the other elements.

Copyright Robert A. Gallagher, 1985, 2006

For more on the model see Robert Gallagher's *Fill All Things: The Dynamics of Spirituality in the Parish Church*, 2006 and *Power from on High: A Model for Parish Life and Development*, 1982