

# **Christian Action: Giving Our Hands to God**

## **Overview**

The maximum length of this rollo is thirty minutes. Christian action is one of the central themes for the weekend. It is given on Saturday, usually just after lunch. It follows the “Christian Study” and “A Sacramental Life” rollos. It is followed by the “Obstacles to Grace” and “Leaders” rollos.

The rollo should be both informative and inspirational. Christian action is an essential part of the balanced Christian life. It is our solemn responsibility. It is also our joyous response to, and reflection of, God’s redeeming love. We are ambassadors for Christ, entrusted with the ministry of reconciling the world to God. (I Corinthians 5: 18-20) Illustrations of Christian action should be drawn primarily from the speaker’s personal experience, not historical examples. They should reflect the qualities outlined in the rollo and should therefore serve as encouragement for the listener. This rollo is a testimony of the role of Christian action as an essential component of the balanced Christian life. The listener should leave this rollo with a heightened awareness of Christian action and an increased commitment to a life of Christian action.

Immediately following the end of the rollo, the Rector should allow the Pilgrims a short time for personal reflection before introducing the discussion time. This time of reflection is to allow the Holy Spirit to inform their thoughts.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this rollo is twofold: It defines the concept of Christian Action as our natural response to God’s love and grace, and it inspires the listener to a life of Christian action in the context of the balanced Christian life.

## **Objectives**

- To re-introduce the three-legged stool concept of a balanced life – piety, study and action. Christian Action is the third leg.
- To define Christian action in terms of loving others as a result of our life in grace – giving God our hands.
- Demonstrate that a life in grace flows naturally into a life of Christian action.

## **References**

The Holy Bible

## **Visual Aids**

The three-legged stool.

## **Opening Prayer**

Please turn to page \_\_\_\_ in your Pilgrim’s Guide and pray with me.

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in us the fire of your love. Send forth your spirit and we shall be created. And you shall renew the face of the earth.

O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, instructs the hearts of the faithful, grant, that by the same Holy Spirit, we may be truly wise and ever rejoice in his consolations. Through Christ our Lord.

Please continue to pray with me:

We believe, Lord, that you are here present. Although our eyes do not see you, our faith senses you. Take any stray thoughts from our minds. Help us understand the truths you wish to teach us in this meditation. Let us make up our minds to put them into practice. Your servants are listening; speak Lord to our souls. Amen

### I. Introduction

#### A. Self

1. Name
2. Church name
3. Pilgrimage/Via de Cristo/Emmaus/Cursillo
  - a. Date
  - b. Table Name
  - c. Today’s Table Recognition
4. Family
5. Church Involvement – name a few activities
6. Occupation/Vocation
7. Hobbies/Interests

- B. Quick review of previous rollos. *[Note to Speaker: The following points may be put into your own words. Keep this review brief.]*

1. Christian Study (Speaker's name \_\_\_\_\_). Christian Study is the ongoing pursuit of knowing God.
  - a. Study is giving our minds to God.
  - b. We should have a natural desire to grow and deepen our knowledge of Christ and the Christian faith.
  - c. Life in grace must be conscious and enlightened.
2. The Sacramental Life (Speaker's name \_\_\_\_\_). Sacraments are signs of God's grace. Life is a sacrament.
  - a. Baptism - our adoption into God's family and our ordination into the "priesthood of all believers"
  - b. The Lord's Supper - reminding us that we are linked to Jesus, celebrating God's great love for us and reminding us of our universal Christian family.

C. Topic

1. The title of this rollo - **Christian Action**
2. Purpose of this rollo is:
  - a. To complete the description of the three-legged stool as a model of the balanced Christian life. Christian action is the third leg of the stool
  - b. To define Christian action.
  - c. To show how life in grace flows naturally into a life of Christian action.

II. What is Christian Action? [*Note to Speaker: Christian action is different because of its motivation and goal. It is motivated by God's redeeming love, and its goal is the reconciliation of the world.*]

- A. **Christian action is both an expression and a consequence of our love of God.** It is a realization that we are called to love our neighbor, because we are loved by God.
- B. Christian action is more than:
  1. Human activity motivated by friendship, neighborliness, brotherhood.
  2. The performance of Church duties or religious "busyness".
  3. Anything we "do".
- C. **Our actions become Christian when our motivations are elevated and empowered by God's love and grace for the spreading of the kingdom of God.**

### III. Concepts of Christian Action.

#### A. False concepts of Christian Action - Christian Action is not simply:

1. Normal, civilized good behavior.
2. Limited to times when one is "moved by the spirit".
3. Being in the spotlight.
4. Service in church organizations.

And it is not:

5. A way of "earning" salvation.
6. An option.

#### B. Authentic (genuine) Christian Action

##### 1. **Christian action springs from love for God and love for neighbor.** *[Note to Speaker: Matthew 22:36-40 "The greatest commandment".]*

- a. Our personal commitment to Christ reflects a fundamental change in the direction of our lives and in all our relationships with others.
- b. Christian love is more than affection, more than giving time, energy or things.
- c. **Christian love is having the attitude of Christ for another person, showing respect, genuine concern, and steadfast commitment.** *[Note to Speaker: At its highest level of expression, Christian love allows us to see Christ in our neighbor - even the neighbor we don't particularly like. Remember, "The Christ in me greets the Christ in thee in one great family." [See also I Corinthians 13.]*
- d. The total giving of oneself for another for the love of God is the measure of a person's human and spiritual development. *[Note to Speaker: This echoes the Ideals rollo.]*

##### 2. **Christian action is a way of bringing God's love to the world.** Our task as Christians is to discover God's will for our lives, so that our lives will make real God's love for the world.

- a. Christian action flows from our own encounters with Christ and our encounters with God's children.
- b. Christian action is often where our pain and brokenness meets the world's pain and brokenness. *(Note to Speaker: Often God uses our experiences and our gifts to touch others in unique ways. Examples can come from personal experience as we have been touched by particular events and responded in love, or as we have witnessed such action by others.)*

- c. Christian action is consistent with our personal gifts and abilities.
- d. Christian action is informed by the special concern we are to have for the poor and lonely and lost (*Note to Speaker: see Matthew 25: 31-46 "sheep and goats"*)
- e. Christian action empowers others. [*Note to Speaker: It is not patronizing action designed to help others from our positions of power, but rather recognizes the Christ in those to whom we are ministering, and their abilities to be Christ ministering to us. "Pray that I may have the grace to let you be my servant, too."*]
- f. Christian action empowers us. It often rewards us with more than we have given.

#### IV. Qualities of Christian Action

- A. Reasonable and balanced [*Note to Speaker: For most of us, Christian action is a way of life, found in the midst of ordinary lives touched by extraordinary grace.*]
- B. Consistent [*Note to Speaker: Christian action reflects our conscious desire to live lives of grace. It is not dependent upon emotion.*]
- C. Enthusiastic [*Note to Speaker: We are not sentenced to a life of Christian action, rather it is our privilege and a part of living an abundant life. In Christian acts we find joy.*]
- D. Supernatural [*Note to Speaker: The Holy Spirit guides and directs our actions. Prayer is always be a part of our efforts at Christian action.*]
- E. Evangelistic: **Spreading the good news of God's redeeming love, reconciling the world to God -- is evangelism.** [*Note to Speaker: The emphasis in this rollo is not personal evangelism, although action often results in opportunities for personal evangelism. It is reaching out in love to a broken world. Mother Teresa provides an excellent role model. Her mission was a life of ministry to the poorest of the poor. She saw her ministry as seeing the Christ in each soul she encountered, loving in the name of Christ, without precondition and without a compelling need to seek conversion. According to Saint Francis, we are to "Preach the gospel in all that you do and when necessary use words."*]

V. Summary Illustration and Conclusion

*[Note to Speaker: It is often best to conclude this rollo with an illustration of authentic Christian action.. Such illustrations are effective if they reinforce the concepts of authentic Christian action outlined above.]*

***[Note to Speaker: Please end with “God loves you, my brothers and sisters in Christ, and so do I.”]***