

Outline of contents for the Novitiate

Aspect 1: Living with an experience of Exile. We take a look at the context in which we are trying to live out our foundational questions. We explore what it is about the world we encounter every day that makes it seem like a 'strange land' _to us. Is there some way in which we can view our relationship to the world that will help us make sense of our spiritual journey within it?

Aspect 2: We want to understand what is distinctive about Northumbria Community and the way we feel God is calling us to live out the spiritual life. To assist you as a Novice in examining whether journeying with Northumbria Community is right for you, we take a closer look at our Community, as we explore **Living with a Rhythm and Rule of Life.**

Exploring living with 'Availability', Aspects 3-6:

Aspect 3: This Aspect will focus on what it means to be available to God in the cell of our own hearts. **Living the way of the Cell** is a conscious act of availability more usually referred to in Northumbria Community simply as 'going to the cell'. We are exploring what this aspect could look like in our daily lives. As with many things in spiritual life, it is something that has to be lived out in order to be fully understood but there are still things that we can say about it to help us get started!

Aspect 4: In this Aspect we will be taking a look at **Living the way of Hospitality.** We are going to identify its essential characteristics, and draw on stories of hospitality in action, to help us reach a deeper level of understanding about what it really means to be 'available to God and to others' in a call to exercise hospitality.'

Aspect 5: In this Aspect we explore **Living the way of Prayer** and how the prayer life of Northumbria Community, and in particular our intercessory prayer life, has been shaped over the years. There is so much that could be said about prayer that we can only really begin to scratch the surface. As we are a diverse, ecumenical Community, there will be many different experiences and traditions of prayer represented, and it would be impossible to do justice to all of them.

Aspect 6: Availability to God and others – **Living the way of Mission.** This Aspect explains that Mission is not just an activity of the Church, but being who you are, where you are, what you are – joining with God to bring blessing to our needy world in any way we can by using the gifts and graces we have in the ordinariness of our everyday lives.

*Video Introduction to 'intentional Vulnerability':
What do we mean by 'Vulnerability?'*

Exploring 'intentional Vulnerability' in Aspects 7-10:

Aspect 7: Vulnerability before God and others – **Living the way of teachability.** This Aspect explains 'intentional, deliberate vulnerability' as an attitude of the heart. It is seeking to live without pretence, with humility and a willingness to remove defences.

Aspect 8: Vulnerability before God and others – **Living the way of Paradox.** One of the most important experiences we are invited to accept and welcome on our faith journey is that of paradox – living in the mystery of ‘simultaneous opposites equally true’. This is something which needs to be lived, not necessarily resolved. The Northumbria Community has always celebrated this and seeks to consciously embrace paradox and mystery as friends.

Aspect 9: Vulnerability before God and others – **Living the way of the Heretical Imperative.** This Aspect examines the need for ordinary believers who are willing to think (as best they can) about their faith and how to live it in today’s world, without making what they believe the primary anchor point of their faith. How can we hold our convictions in a way that puts right relationship rather than right belief at the centre of our living in a world of consumerism, pluralism, and huge cultural change?

Aspect 10: Living in our communities without walls—Living the way of Kingdom in the Streets. This Aspect will introduce you to some living examples, ‘case studies’ if you will, to stimulate your own creativity. How might you live the life and be a presence in the streets where you are called to walk and dwell?

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Aspect 11: A Celtic inheritance—Living the way of Northumbrian Spirituality. What is the history and inheritance of the Northern saints and what does their way of life have to teach us today? What is and what would you like your relationship to be to the land of Northumbria and where you live?

Aspect 12: Stepping stones from here—**Living in Companionship.** What do you feel called to do as your next step? What would life in Companionship look like for you? What have you learned about your vocation and how is it being called forward?