



Published on *Inclusive Church* (<http://inclusive-church.com>)

Home > Book Review: 'The City is My Monastery ? A Contemporary Rule of Life?' by Richard Carter

---

## Book Review: 'The City is My Monastery ? A Contemporary Rule of Life?' by Richard Carter

Thu, 2020-10-29 14:07 -- Ruth Wilde



This most compelling book is about the evolution and identity of the Nazareth Community at St Martin-in-the-Fields, London. Rev Richard Carter serves as an NSM there, among immigrants, the desperate, homeless, and broken. It is lived experience and practice within fully inclusive communities. Filled with beautiful poetry, prayer, Lectio-Divina and autobiographical stories, it is balm for the soul.

Rooted in the unconditional, love, mercy and grace of Christ, the community epitomises the simple life of the Melanesian Brotherhood in the Solomon Islands where Carter lived before moving to London. At the heart of their Rule of Life is being with God and one another, learning from the disadvantaged through worship and hospitality, as both the method and goal of social engagement. Carter writes, 'They come with such diversity, from so many cultures. At the centre, it is those who seek asylum who come without artifice, mask or pretence, they centre us.'

Immersion in the ways of the Spirit, unlocks and enables closed, cynical, broken hearts to heal, trust, hope, try and persevere. Discipline and routine are suffused with imagination, desire and longing, wrapped in irony, humour, even self-deprecation in seeking deeper relationship with God and one another, without taking it all too seriously.

The book's eight chapters; 'With Silence'; 'With Service'; 'With Scripture'; 'With Sacrament'; 'With Sharing'; 'With Sabbath'; 'Staying With' and 'When Me becomes Us', invite us to reflect on what it truly means 'To behold', 'To accept', 'To gather', 'To inspire', 'To enrich', 'To restore' and 'To live'. In my

favourite chapter 'Staying With', we read that it's about letting go and letting God which Carter describes in this beautiful reflection:

His stillness,

His silence,

His open heart,

His wounds for love,

The power of gentleness,

His open, translucent compassion for the world.

I am not seeing the death of Truth; in Him we are seeing salvation.?

We too can create a healing, transformative and truly beautiful community wherever we live for that too is our city and our monastery.

*Yve Taylor is an Inclusive Church supporter and a member of St Thomas' Church, Exeter. This review was first published on St Thomas' website here [1].*

---

**Source URL:** <http://inclusive-church.com/blog/book-review-city-my-monastery-%E2%80%93-contemporary-rule-life%E2%80%99-richard-carter>

**Links**

[1] <http://www.stthomaschurchexeter.co.uk/st-thomas-blog?aid=22161>