
Summer Rules

**An article from the *Cathedral Times*
by Canon George Maxwell**

My wife, Mary Hunter, suggested that we adopt a rule of life for the summer.

The rule is relatively simple. Every day we look for something for which we are grateful, and for opportunities to get outside, read, play a game, and learn something new.

The rule is not supposed to be a set of boxes to be checked every day. Robert, our six-year-old, has already established the “Rules for the New House” – things like “Tell someone if you are going into the basement or outside” and “No sliding down the stairs headfirst.”

The rule is supposed to serve as a reminder of things we want to do as often as we can. It is intended to serve more like a mutual invitation. We want to get into a rhythm in which these things became part of our life together.

When Memorial Day finally came, we were eager to get started!

We decided to take a short hike along a trail that runs behind the Garden Hills community pool, thinking it would be a perfect place to do a little exploring.

It wasn't long, though, before it became clear that we were not all of one mind about our adventure. The trail was longer than some of us had expected, and the beauty of nature proved to be no match for the unanticipated demands of hunger and thirst. The rain didn't help either.

I knew we were in trouble when Robert announced, “If you don't feed me right now, I'm going to sit down and never eat again.”

I was just about to add a codicil on conduct to our rule of life, but Mary Hunter chose to interpret Robert's comment as an interest in hunger strikes and led us into a conversation about Mahatma Gandhi and the strategies of nonviolent civil disobedience.

Mary Hunter was supplying the rhythm. We kept going.

The unwelcome climb up the hill to Taco Mac at Lindbergh City Center turned into an Orton-Gillingham training session, as we all practiced making the sounds of various letters and learning about red words that have to be memorized because they can't be sounded out.

The disappointment at the dessert offerings at Taco Mac led to a trip on MARTA to Jeni's Splendid Ice Creams in Decatur.

The uncomfortable heat on the square in Decatur led to a cool break reading children's books (and passing in and out of Platform 9-¾) in A Little Shop of Stories.

By the time we found our way home, we had been outside most of the day, read, played games, and found many things for

which we were grateful.

And, I learned some very important things about rhythm.

Summer rules!

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