

Ritual of the Cell Phones by MaryAnn McKibben Dana

Note: You can read more about this on MaryAnn's blog at:
<http://theblueroomblog.org/blessing-of-cell-phones/>

I've used some variation of this at the beginning of Sabbath workshops and retreats. It's a way of acknowledging the many roles we play and the constant pull to be connected, to be relevant and useful. That impulse to connect can lead to many life-giving things. And it can also leave us scattered and overwhelmed.

The Ritual

Have people trade phones with someone they're sitting next to. I have them cup the person's phone in their hands, and I say something like this:

We hold in our hands these tools of connection.

They ring and we answer; they buzz and we respond.

For some of us, this is our tether... our calendar... our means of expressing ourselves... our means of reaching out, being heard, caring and being cared for, and exploring our world. We have more information at our fingertips, more data on demand, than any generation in the history of the world. That is a weighty thing.

Sometimes these possibilities excite us. Sometimes these connections bring light and joy to our lives.

But sometimes they feel like a burden. There is always another article we could read, always another website to peruse, another message to respond to, another person we might call.

We pray for the person whose phone we hold. We pray for the many roles they play, their connections to parishioners, to family, friends and loved ones. We pray for their responsibilities, their ministry. We pray for the heaviness and the lightness of those relationships and responsibilities.

We pray a silent blessing for this fellow traveler. O God you hear our prayer, Amen.