

# Spiritual Direction & Discernment – Information & Guidelines

## What Is Spiritual Direction?

Spiritual direction is a sacred space where you are accompanied in your relationship with God.

The role of the spiritual director is to help you:

- Grow in prayer and intimacy with God.
- Recognize God's presence and activity in your life.
- Discern God's will and make decisions with confidence.

Spiritual direction is **not** therapy, pastoral counseling, or problem-solving advice. It does not diagnose or treat psychological conditions, nor does it replace professional counseling, medical, or financial advice. Instead, it is a process of listening together for the movement of the Holy Spirit, so you can respond with greater freedom and peace.

## What to Expect

- Guidance in deepening your prayer life and living more aligned with God's will.
- Introduction to spiritual tools such as meditation, contemplation of Scripture, and the *Rules for the Discernment of Spirits* from St. Ignatius of Loyola.
- A confidential, prayerful environment where you can share freely and be supported without judgment.
- Encouragement and insight as you learn to distinguish God's voice from inner noise, confusion, or fear.

## What Not to Expect

- Quick fixes or "ready-made answers" to all decisions.
- Therapy or counseling for emotional or psychological issues.
- A director who "does the discernment for you." The responsibility to seek, listen, and respond always rests with you.

## The Role of the Director

A well-prepared director is of great service to one discerning. An effective guide must have knowledge and lived experience of:

- Ignatian forms of prayer.
- The *Rules for the Discernment of Spirits*.
- The three modes of discerning God's will.

I bring experience in all of these areas, and I will help you learn and apply these tools to your own life.

My role is to:

- Walk alongside you.
- Help you notice where God may be speaking.
- Offer Ignatian tools and wisdom to clarify your path.

## **God Is the Prime Mover**

In all fruitful discernment, the true director is God. Both you (the directee) and I (the director) will bring effort, presence, and openness, but discernment itself is ultimately a **gift from God**.

- My role is to guide you, provide the right tools, and help you stay aligned with God's will.
- Your role is to show up, remain prayerful, and stay open.
- God's role is to lead the process, offering clarity, peace, and direction in His time.

## **Readiness for Discernment**

Before starting the discernment process, I will offer a simple readiness assessment. This will help you and me determine whether you are prepared to enter formal discernment.

- If you are ready, we will proceed with the discernment journey.
- If not, I will guide you through a time of preparation — helping you grow in prayer, openness, and spiritual grounding until discernment becomes possible.

## **A Note of Trust**

The process of discernment is not about perfection. It is about allowing God to speak and lead. By working together in openness and trust, you will gain the tools, confidence, and freedom to hear God's voice more clearly and follow it with peace to achieve more fulfillment in your life.