

Deep Calls to Deep: Spiritual Direction Training & Formation

Philosophy of Spiritual Direction

Spiritual direction is a trusted one-on-one relationship of contemplative listening and compassionate presence. A trained, competent guide accompanies another individual, listening attentively for the movement of the Spirit within the life and story of the other.

With ancient roots dating back to the early church mothers and fathers, the true “director” is understood to be the Holy Spirit with the spiritual director trained as a listening companion, helping individuals attune to the direction of the Divine already taking place within the undercurrent of their lives. We believe that God is actively engaged in all parts of life and therefore everything belongs within spiritual direction: relationships, vocation, struggle, joy, doubt - this dailyness is the raw material for discerning the presence and movement of the Spirit. Directors are trained to listen for patterns and dynamics within the personal and interpersonal stories of their directees and to listen for the wider context: the communal, organizational, and environmental arenas in which the Spirit is ever present and at work.

Distinct from a chosen profession one pursues, we believe spiritual direction is a *charism*, a gift that is given and is already present. Spiritual direction training and education are pursued, therefore, in response to recognition of this charism, in order to develop and fine-tune the gift for the purpose of serving the people of God.

Spiritual direction is not therapy, pastoral counseling or spiritual “coaching,” but a bearing witness; a contemplative, compassionate relationship of co-listeners with time regularly set apart to receive and reverence God’s action and invitation, evoking a genuine response within the life of the individual being companioned.