

notes April 9, 2016

HOMEWORK

yellow Fleming p 226-246

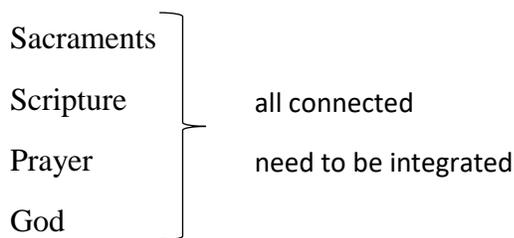
- articles (handouts):
- Notes on Spiritual Direction and Listening
 - Listening in Spiritual Direction
 - 10 Listening Skills
 - How to Listen, Another View

Barry & Connolly chapter 4 - table discussions

p49 Conversely, self-absorption makes the contemplation of anything or anyone else very difficult, if not impossible.

p54-55 People contemplating may not, however, be content with looking at the beauties of nature and admiring God's handiwork. They may also want God to reveal himself, to speak personally to them. They begin their period of contemplation by asking that he make himself known. Does he respond? How will they know?

p53 Are there any privileged places or privileged events to which we can go to put ourselves more explicitly in the Lord's way? The traditional answer has been that there are, and that they include the sacraments, especially the Eucharist, Church teaching, the Scripture, and the other works of the Lord, especially nature.



As spiritual directors, we need to be familiar with all these things.

By looking at God's creation, we should ask "What is God trying to show/teach me?"

We want to help people move from worshipping creation to worshipping the Creator.

Need to be able to appreciate God and also to be "good people"

Belonging to a faith community is important.

“Habits of the Heart” - study on individualism in Religion - idea of not “needing” anyone else (“individualism) including God. This is an American mindset. We need to understand that mindset as spiritual directors. We need to help move them from an individualist to a community mindset (hard in the U.S.)

Need to move from self-absorption and individualism to a contemplative mindset.

p59 (Barry & Connolly): “If directors do help directees to pay attention to the Lord, they find that the simple act of looking at the Lord in a scriptural event, or in some other event or situation, is in itself a productive prayer.”

Image of God - could ask them to read scriptures such as the Prodigal Son

- what they grew up understanding God as, may not be healthy.
- p61 “God is not a function of morality, but accepts, loves, and often challenges the imperfect person.”
- Isaiah “Even if a mother forgets her child...”

The more a spiritual director knows about Scripture, the more you’ll be able to help people.

Pope Francis is trying to lead the Church to a point of understanding God as a loving God.

p60 (Barry & Connolly): “The experience of people who pray seems to show us that the contemplation we have described has led them to deeper choices that are more involved with the wellsprings of their lives than the choices they make outside the ambience of this contemplation. This is another reason why “staying with the directee” can be one of the most valuable services the directee renders.

- not having our own agenda
- helping directee be consciously aware of God’s presence
- want them to lead by their own self-reflection

Our job is to help the directee help himself.

p47 (Barry & Connolly): “The people who come for spiritual direction are usually not neophytes in faith or in prayer. They have been believers and praying people for some time, but now they are looking for something more.”

- need to control things
- instead of putting self in scene, will try to direct it
- a controlling person might try to “play God” or might distance self from Jesus

Distractions could be what God wants someone to pray about

p51-52 “The actual experience of transcendence falls somewhere between total self-absorption and total absorption in the other. In any human experience, there is bound to be a mixture of both self-consciousness and awareness of the outside world.

- need to be able to distinguish between useful and non-useful distractions

affective attitude is a spiritual “heart”

attitude - not about the mind, it’s about the soul

desire/need to express what’s going on inside (in the heart)

BREAK

Role-play

Fr. Ron and Charles

In case of threat of serious harm to self or others, must be reported (can ask if serious about threat)

can call 911; give phone to directee

Catherine and Celine

Vera and Dennis

You must have a prayer life in order to discern anything.

LUNCH

Case Study 3 - Francine

Case Study 4

Case Study - Agnes

Case Study - Bill

Spiritual Conversation is important. While not taking someone on as a directee, you may want to have occasional conversations.

Case Study - Calvin

BREAK

“Notes on Spiritual Direction and Listening”

Focus of conversations with directees should be God. They should be conversations between friends.

Refer to yellow Fleming article p95 “The Three Dimensions of Spiritual Direction”

God will meet us in our lives and in our circumstances.

“My Ministry of Spiritual Direction”

Remember in our conversations with people, Jesus is entering into their lives and into our own lives.

“What is Ignation Spiritual Direction?”

Spiritual direction is rooted in the Spiritual Exercises.

Spiritual direction is optimistic - it sees the good in the world.

Ignation Spirituality is about seeing the good in people’s lives.

Spiritual direction is a partnership.

Be willing to accept different opinions.

Director must be able to see the good in directee.

Deepest desires of human heart

- placed there by God
- we try to find/figure out these
- transitory things can stifle/hide these

Rules for Discernment

- very important

“Spiritual Directors Who Direct”

- Every spiritual director will approach it differently.
- but must stay out of God’s way
- need to try to get directee to see the path/action they need to take

“Listening in Spiritual Direction” and “How to Listen, Another View” (similar)

How to listen - pay attention

- watch them, stay focused on them
- let them know you are listening

Defer judgment - keep bias out of the relationship

- move beyond own beliefs

Respond appropriately

“How to Listen, Another View”

Ten Steps:

1. Face speaker
2. Be attentive, but relaxed
3. Keep an open mind (meet them where they are)
4. Listen to the words and picture what they are saying
5. Don’t interrupt; don’t “fix it” for them

6. Ask clarifying questions at pauses
7. Ask questions for understanding
8. Try to empathize
9. Give feedback (showing empathy)
10. Pay attention to non-verbal clues

BREAK

Role-play

Janet and Emmanuel

Sabbath Day = a day of rest

Role-play

Janet and Emmanuel

Director may need to let directee go, if they feel something is not being disclosed (being hidden).

Self-disclosure by director only when directee might benefit from director's experience, e.g. meds needed, director takes them...but must be very careful what to divulge - and this is the rare exception, rather than the rule.

Role-play

Steve and Martha

Trevor and Fr. Ron

If directee does not answer (avoids) a question, can re-word it and try again. After 3-4 times, point out the directee is not answering it, and ask it directly again.

If God is calling you to this ministry, give yourself to it - the Church needs you

Need to take on "guinea pig" directee at some point now, or in the near future.