

Spiritual Director training notes

August 13, 2016

Video - interview with Fr. Joe Tetlow (Spiritual Directors International)

link - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0UocAnX8DGc>

Who would benefit from Spiritual Direction?

those who want to keep growing in their relationship with Jesus Christ

Do I need to know how to pray before spiritual direction?

in interested in praying, seek spiritual direction

“pray always” (Jesus Christ)

everything you do all day long is prayer

can get help in praying in certain traditions

can help become more conscious of prayer

Contribution to world peace?

show compassion to individual; helps others be compassionate

What nourishes you as a Spiritual Director?

long time (one hour) to pray every morning - ESSENTIAL TO PRAY

spiritual conversations with spiritual friends

reading

Opening Meditation

Spiritual Check-In (general comments only)

prayer on my dossier - revisit often, pay particular attention to things you have previously “side-stepped”. It is good to know “who we are”, but we need to move deeper, to know “who we are in God”.

Examen (twice a day) encourages us to see where God is present, throughout the day. The dossier expands this to our whole lives.

Balance of joy and sorrow is “peace” (better: tranquility).

BREAK

Any time we work with the dossier (or work with someone who is) remember to ask “Where is God in this?” and where God is working in our lives. How is this leading us in regards to faith, hope, love?

Case Study: Darren Goes For Deacon

“How things look” is important to Darren

Is Darren being called by God? (Where is God in all this?)

How do we help Darren discern? to listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit? (discernment of spirits)

What is Gods’ Will? (try to discern)

Spiritual Director must let Darren make the discernment (need to be aware, understand, and respond)

Evaluating Our Prayer Life:

“Where is God in all this?”

“Am I growing?”

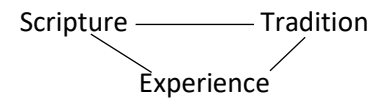
Need to go back to before a decision is made. Consider: “Was my decision well-made?”

LUNCH

Qualities of a Spiritual Director (handout)

- possessed by the Holy Spirit
 - Realize that everything comes from God
 - Know your own biases (and be non-judgmental)
 - Realize that conversion is on-going

Spiritual Direction - three components



- has experience of God
 - important for Director to have his/her own Spiritual Director
- learned/familiar with Scripture
 - “wise” (as a gift and from experience)
- and more (see handout)

“God is”

- Dominican: “God is truth”
- Carmelite: “God is love”
- Franciscan: “God is simplicity, poverty”
- Ignatian (Jesuit): “God in all things”

Lectio Divina - praying with Scripture

Meditation (in the Ignatian Tradition) - “spectator”

Contemplation (in the Ignatian Tradition) - actively engaged in events

Not all types of prayer will be comfortable for all people.

Prayer of Consideration

e.g. “Consider the Lilies of the Field” and “Consider the Birds of the Air”

Praying with Fantasy

e.g. “Falling into the Sun” and “Fantasy of the Mirror in the Field”

All of these are types of “Mental Prayer”

- these are all about Jesus and learning to live what He teaches.

Ongoing Conversions

- intellectual conversion: moves us from one way of thinking and acting, to another (e.g. overcoming prejudice based on color, or from abortion to pro-life)
- moral conversion: stopping a moral wrong and moving to a different way
- religious conversion: moving from one set of beliefs (or no beliefs) to a relationship with God
- social/political conversion: moving from a radical individualism to a sense of belonging to a community
- affective conversion: moving from disdain to compassion, or from an abusive (or unhealthy) relationship to more holy ones

Be gentle with people. Respect people and their stories. Be patient. Have prayer in your own life.

BREAK

Rule 5 of the Rules for Discernment

First four Rules for Discernment of Spirits makes us aware of the actions of the Holy Spirit and the Evil Spirit.

Rule 5 says:

“The fifth: in time of desolation never make a change, but be firm and constant in the proposals and determination in which h one was the day preceding such desolation, or in the determination in which one was in the preceding consolation. Because, as in consolation the good spirit guides and counsels us more, so in desolation the bad spirit, with whose counsels we cannot find the way to a right decision.”

Important: Awareness of what’s going on (“negative messages”)

↓
Understand

↓
Reject (action)

Never make a major decision or change when in desolation.

Ignatius’ journal describes how he determined that he would celebrate daily Mass for fourteen days; was subject to much turmoil at the end, but realized what was going on and chose not to change the path determined earlier.

p78 (Gallagher): “NEVER” - categorical adverb, no exceptions.

Desolation comes from the enemy, not from God

p81: “spiritual desolation attempts to define the spiritual past and future”

p83: “...Ignatius explains the reason for the categorical “never” regarding changes in time of spiritual desolation: Because, as in *consolation* the *good spirit* guides and *counsels* us more, so in *desolation* the *bad spirit*, with whose *counsels* we cannot find the way to a right decision.”

Rule 6

p85 Rule 6 says:

The sixth: although in desolation we should not change our first proposals, it is very advantageous to change ourselves intensely against the desolation itself, as by insisting more upon prayer, meditation, upon much examination, and upon extending ourselves in some suitable way of doing penance.

Use Examen (twice) daily - in middle of day and before bed at night

Important to have a Spiritual Director when determining a "suitable" way of doing penance

When in spiritual desolation, remember:

"I've been here before"

"It will end"

Rule 7

p94 rule 7 says:

The seventh: let one who is in desolation consider how the Lord has left him in trial in his natural powers, so that he may resist the various agitations and temptations of the enemy; since he can resist with the divine help, which always remains with him, though he does not clearly feel it; for the Lord has taken away from him his great fervor, abundant love, and intense grace, leaving him, however, sufficient grace for eternal salvation.

"God never gives us more than we can handle"

These incidents are like training, to strengthen us for future battles with the evil spirit.

Spiritual Direction varies in intensity and duration

- could be a moment
- could be months, or even years

Be aware that many people feel ashamed of being in Spiritual Desolation. *"Handle with care."*

*****HWK: Read Rules 5-9 in Gallagher (p72 - p124)**

Put together one case study based on Rules 5-9.

Next month - we will work on cases.

Next meeting - September 10; Saturday only.