

Montserrat Spiritual Companion Program  
Diocese of Tyler – February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2016

1. Opening Prayer
2. Review of Prayer
  - Spiritual 'check-in'
3. Role Play – Case Studies (Cecilia)
4. The basis for relationship between director and directee.
5. Cases – Role Play
6. Supervision & Peer Groups
7. Cases – Role Play
8. Review-Summation of the Barry & Connolly text
9. Cases & Role Play
10. March Assignment.  
Read: "The Foundational Theology of Spiritual Direction". J. A Tetlow, S.J



## **Case Study**

### **February 2017**

**Josie, Josephine, is a forty-five year old counselor at an elementary school. Her school district is filled with students who live in the projects. Their home life is often filled with chaos, drugs and violence. Josie began spiritual direction four months ago. She expressed a desire to find God in this world and draw close to him.**

**Laura, Josie's spiritual director, has worked with Josie on a weekly basis. Laura had learned that Josie is single and has been reared in a broken home. The father has been absent most of her life. The relationship between the director and the directee had been good until about two weeks ago. Josie canceled a meeting. This startled Laura as she felt close to Josie and thought that Josie looked forward to the meetings. Josie's prayer life had been routine, and when she had time. She attended weekly Mass but was not interested in reading scripture nor spiritual writings.**

**On their last meeting, Josie confessed that although she was a counselor she did not feel close or bonded to the children she counseled. In fact, she simply couldn't feel anything. At this point she started crying and sobbed that she had never told anyone about this before. Laura explained that with the amount of case load that Josie had, she couldn't emotionally become involved with the students. The position of counselor shaped her responses and her emotions.**

**Later, Laura was bothered about her own response to Josie's revelation. She called her spiritual supervisor and explained the last session she had with Josie and asked his direction.**

January, 2017

Cecelia, a middle aged woman and cradle Catholic seeks spiritual direction to help her discern leaving her church, St. Gregory. Cecelia is a faithful and prayerful Catholic who varies her prayer between the Divine Office and Lectio Divina. She is a trained musician, however, it is not her vocation, and has been singing in choirs (school, university, and community) since she could stand on two feet. Recently, she had to move to a different part of the country for a job opportunity. In her former parish, she sang almost two masses per weekend for years, one mass with the "professional musicians" where they would sing cantatas and motets for the prelude music and again with a 50-plus full choir at the high mass. The music director of her former parish was a professional composer and would often compose new music for each season of the church which kept everyone challenged and involved in the music ministry. She even enjoyed singing Gregorian chant mass (once/month) for a couple of years to "mix things up". Her current parish choir consists of about 10 mature, dedicated people who try very hard to support the liturgy with beautiful music (predominantly from the 1870's, 1880's, 1970's, 1980's) most of which does not encourage the congregation to join in and sing. To Cecelia, singing in the choir on the weekends is the most depressing activity of her week, when celebrating mass should be the most uplifting event of a Catholic's week (which it was for Cecelia for 15 years). She has tried other mass times at St. Gregory's and believes that St. Gregory himself is probably turning over in his grave, covering his ears, crying and praying. Should she use weekend mass as a penance? Please help her discern or send money to support the [StGregsMusicMinistry.com](http://StGregsMusicMinistry.com).

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**Montserrat Deacons' Seminar**  
**Spiritual and Pastoral Direction**  
**August 14-16, 2009**

Spiritual Situation: Maria

Background: Maria is a very attractive 20 year old immigrant from South America. Her mother, Juanita, a divorcee, met an American, John, via the internet, got married and moved to Oklahoma with four children. John is not a Catholic. Since arriving in America seven years ago, they have all learned to speak English well, and the children have achieved academic excellence, graduated from their high schools as valedictorians, and received university scholarships. The mother and children seem to be very loving, and devoted to their faith. They attend Mass regularly. Maria is working at a local restaurant.

Recently, Juanita called me, crying on the phone; she was having a problem with Maria. Juanita had gone through her daughter's purse and found birth control pills. When the mother confronted the daughter, an argument arose to a fevered pitch. Juanita was very upset that her daughter would use birth control and talk back to her.

Juanita would like me to discuss the situation with Maria since I am "the Deacon and Maria respects me."

But Christians profess that this god is subordinate to the God of gods. Our God governs success, giving or withholding its fruits, as His wisdom and love guide our coming to be. "Glory be to him whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine; glory be to him from generation to generation in the Church and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever. Amen" [Eph 3:20].

*[Redacted handwritten notes]*

Spiritual Situations: Olivia finds another little god

You knew Olivia through a deacons' ongoing formation program that you two couples did together. You grew rather close, sharing experiences and goals in life. All four of you were serious about serving Christ in the Church. You shared spiritual conversations a lot, and helped in Church ministries.

You were impressed with her husband's career and with the fact that he could hold down a high-pressure job and yet find time to be a deacon. You found Olivia unusually intelligent and engaging, so that you were not surprised when she began training for a career of her own once her children had moved into college. She got very enthusiastic about her subject and decided that she had a real calling. She became strongly feminist and began speaking rather dogmatically about the way women are treated. She conveyed a sense that her husband's ordination was his business entirely, and one that she did not much care about. You and your spouse grew really concerned about her marriage.

Olivia and her spouse moved away but from time to time, you'd connect. You found that Olivia completed a doctorate in economics, specializing in personal relationships within corporations. Then you discovered that, over some time, she had really developed a career of her own. You would meet and talk perhaps every year or so, and you found a real change in her. She had moved full-time into work, even though the children were not entirely away from the family. She traveled a good deal and often enough was away when the children needed her. In fact, she had begun drifting away from her spouse. When you would talk with her, you would leave with the impression that the only things really important to her was the work she was doing. You were interested in personal relationships within organizations, yourself, and found her interesting. At the same time, the woman you had known much earlier on had more or less disappeared. This was somehow a new person.

You were hardly surprised, then, at the news she gave you when you met one time in Chicago, both of you on business trips. She had moved away from the family home into an apartment nearer her corporation. She insisted that her relationships within the family were fine, every one of them. However, she had no stories to tell about the children, who were all now married with families of their own. And she had very little to say about her spouse. You left your luncheon with her somewhat disturbed.

You had gathered the clear conviction that Olivia has turned away from her earlier spirituality.

What were you hearing to bring you to that conviction? What might you have been listening for?

*[Redacted handwritten notes]*