

DIOCESE OF MONTEREY
and
ST. FRANCIS RETREAT CENTER



An Invitation to Spiritual Direction

*Are you seeking a way to affirm and deepen your spiritual life?
To discern how the Holy Spirit is at work in your life?*

Spiritual direction/prayer companionship - a bridge to the sacred.

*Spiritual Direction throughout the Diocese of Monterey and at
St. Francis Retreat Center, San Juan Bautista*

What is Spiritual Direction?



Spiritual direction, also called spiritual companionship, is a traditional ministry within the Church where someone trained in theology and spiritual direction skills companions another on his/her faith journey. Spiritual direction provides a safe setting to talk about our relationship with God and search for meaning and purpose in life.

It is not always possible to look at what is happening in our life objectively or to be as sensitive as we would like to be to God's Spirit. We need a guide, a companion, to act as a mirror. Spiritual direction offers someone to accompany us on this adventure.

What Spiritual Direction Is Not:

Although spiritual direction uses some of the same techniques as counseling (active listening, self-disclosure), spiritual direction is not counseling nor therapy. In counseling, the focus is on the counselor/client relationship and concerned primarily with problem-solving. In spiritual direction, the focus is on the relationship between God and the directee, and is concerned primarily with the process of spiritual growth and prayer.

What Does The Spiritual Director Do?

The director or companion acts as a listening, supportive person who creates an atmosphere where one can look honestly at one's relationship with God as it is lived out in everyday life. She/he will ask questions—for clarification or to invite one to look more deeply. Suggested reading, forms of prayer, or spiritual practices may be offered.

Where Does One Begin?

Individuals come to spiritual direction with different needs and/or questions in their hearts.

- Experiencing a personal crisis?
- Longing to reconnect with God in a deeper way?
- Discerning a new direction in life?
- Desiring to deepen prayer?
- Going through a transformative experience still veiled in mystery?



Spiritual direction begins wherever *you are!*

What Is The Format?

Spiritual direction is usually held once a month in 50-60 minute sessions, by individual appointment. Sessions are usually held in churches, homes and retreat centers in each spiritual director's local area, and are also available at St. Francis Retreat Center.

Depending on the individual situation, you may agree to meet once every two, three or four weeks. For the sake of continuity, and for the building of trust, allowing more than a month to pass between meetings, especially in the earlier stages of direction, can be a deterrent to the process.

Subject Matter:

The subject matter is anything occurring in your life. Since spiritual direction deals primarily with your relationship with God, you might want to begin by speaking about your times of prayer. Some find keeping a journal and referring to it during the session helpful.

What Does Spiritual Direction Cost?

There is no fee for an introductory session. Many spiritual directors request a fee, some receive your free-will donation, and others offer their time to you. Together agree upon what is beneficial for your relationship. Cost should not be a deterrent to receiving spiritual direction.

Spiritual direction shines a flashlight on the movement of God in one's everyday life.

For further information or to talk to a spiritual director in your area contact:

Diocese of Monterey
Barbara Winston
485 Church Street
Monterey, CA 93940
Phone: 831.645.2841

St. Francis Retreat Center
P. O. Box 970
San Juan Bautista, CA 95045-0970
Phone: 831.623.4234