

## *Canadian Anglican Cursillo*

### **SPIRITUAL DIRECTION**



Spiritual Direction is one of the tools of the Cursillo Method. It is a ministry of the church and is available to anyone.

#### **What is Spiritual Direction?**

It is a process in which one person (the directee, the mentored) meets regularly with a competent person (the director, the mentor) in order to seek guidance, reassurance, discernment, and affirmation in developing a deeper, richer relationship with the Lord. It is different from pastoral counselling. Its goal is not problem-solving.

#### **Why Bother?**

As Christians, we are prompted to continually cultivate the "mind of Christ" in our lives. The focus of spiritual direction is aimed at assisting an individual in cultivating a more mature union with the Lord. In effect, we can never go on the journey alone.

#### **Who is Spiritual Direction For?**

Often we feel a greater need for guidance if we are to grow spiritually in these days of change and uncertainty. Do we personally need spiritual direction? Would it help us to grow in our relationship with the Lord? Do we feel isolated and alone in striving to live our daily lives according to the Lord's will? Think about this statement: "Spiritual direction is sometimes necessary but always useful."

We can all benefit from the process of using this tool for direction in our walk with Christ.

#### **What Happens in Spiritual Direction?**

Spiritual direction is a faith-sharing process. The one seeking guidance relates what the Lord seems to be doing in his or her life. After listening carefully to these experiences, the director may offer some enlightenment and encouragement. A more comprehensive understanding of this process can be seen by viewing the procedure that is used in the directing method.

- Spiritual direction requires regular meetings of the directee with the director.
- Spiritual direction is a one-to-one relationship.
- Directors should never impose their ideas of spirituality upon the persons they direct.
- Ideally, spiritual direction is a face-to-face encounter.
- The objective, purpose, and procedure of spiritual direction is focused on the spiritual growth of the person seeking direction. Remember that God is the true spiritual director of each one of us. Earthly directors are merely God's tools to aid us in this process.

## *Spiritual Direction*

### **What's The Goal?**

The ultimate goal of spiritual direction and growth is for each of us to become who God intends us to be; the person He has in mind when He speaks our name. God guides us in this process of transforming union by three means: revelation, human experience, and prayer. Each one is a way in which God speaks to us. Spiritual direction enables us to answer the question, "Who am I?". It sets us on the path to becoming that unique person God created each one of us to be.

### **Where To Find Spiritual Directors?**

Some people immediately consider a priest or a member of the religious as the only qualified persons to guide a soul in the spiritual life. This is by no means true. In addition to competent priests and other religious leaders, many lay men and women are potential spiritual guides. A Spiritual Director does not have to be a Cursillista.

### **What Qualities Should We Seek In a Spiritual Director?**

A good Spiritual Director will have the following qualities:

- an abounding trust and confidence in God.
- a genuine happiness reflective of their interior joy.
- prayerfulness.
- be under the guidance of a competent director him or herself.
- although he or she may not be formally trained, be somewhat knowledgeable in the areas of theology, scripture and psychology.
- a well-balanced understanding of the spiritual life.
- general life experience.
- ability to inspire trust and confidence.
- willingness to listen carefully and

prayerfully.

- not desiring to impose his/her ideas.
- willingness to be there for "the long haul."
- both passion for the faith and compassion.
- respects and lives confidentiality.
- is not easily shocked, judgmental or manipulative.
- is able to see Christ in him or herself and others.
- is willing (but not too willing) to play "devil's advocate."
- above all else, someone who is fully alive in Christ!

### **Conclusion**

As we journey in our lives as Christians, it is good to seek out the guidance of others along the way. Spiritual Direction is a very important resource. Consider how your life with God is right now . . . Consider how your life with God could be . . . How are God and we going to get there?

### **Further References**

*Beginning Spiritual Direction*, David E. Rosage. Servant Publications: Ann Arbor, Mich., 1994.

*Holy Listening: The Art of Spiritual Direction*, Margaret Guenther. Cowley Publications: Boston, Mass., 1992.

National Episcopal Cursillo Library. *Spiritual Direction*.

*Toward Holy Ground: Spiritual Directions for the Second Half of Life*, Margaret Guenther. Cowley Publications: Boston, Mass., 1995.