

PREPARING FOR SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

It's important to know that this is YOUR life with God and you are bringing some aspect of that to your spiritual direction session. A Spiritual Director does not provide spiritual experiences for people. He or she opens up space for you to bring something to explore and hear God in. Through deep listening, questions, pausing in silence to hear within what you bring, a spiritual director is a companion and witness to your inner experience with Jesus.

Here are some ways to know what to bring to your session:

General

- Take notes during the month. Note your experiences with God, in prayer, in nature, in Scripture, in times of solitude, in unexpected times. Before your scheduled time with your spiritual director spend some time reflecting back on your notes. Do any themes rise to the surface? Do any of your experiences surprise you? Is there something God is trying to say? Is there an emotion that stirs in you as you think back over the month? As you read through your notes are you disappointed? Frustrated? Pleased? Grateful?
- Spend some quiet time before your session. Consider what is taking up space inside you? What thoughts or feelings are consuming you? Write these down in a journal or notebook. Is any one of these especially “noisy”? Do any one of these feel particularly weighty? Make a note of it and consider bringing that to Direction to explore with your Director.
- As you think back over the past month, week or day, has there been an aha moment or celebration that you would like to spend time savoring with your Director? Has there been a serendipitous gift or an unexpected grace that you'd like to bask in?
- As you meander back through the past couple of days is there a comfortable or uncomfortable emotion that rose up in you that took you off guard? What happened just before you noticed the emotion welling up? Consider inviting your Spiritual Director to sit with this memory with you.

Questions that Can Help Identify What to Bring:

Take some time to reflect on the following questions. Perhaps something might be stirred up in you that you would like to further explore with your Director.

- What has been the general spiritual “tone” of your life lately? You might express this in terms of colours, temperature, aromas, shapes—anything that helps you to articulate your experience.
- What events, experiences or relationships have communicated to you a sense of God's presence? Or of God's absence?
- Describe your manner of prayer lately. How well does your prayer help you to experience a sense of union with God?
- What kinds of decisions in your life have you searching for a sense of God's will?
- In what areas of life do you sense God calling you to growth? What can you do to honor this?
- Have you read a moving passage from scripture or from a spiritual book? Is there a quote or a poem that has meant something to you this month? This might be a good starting point.
- Is there an image or a picture that comes to mind that encapsulates something new that God might be leading you into? Is there an image that comes to mind to describe what you've been learning of late? Is there a piece of music or art, a photograph that speaks to you in a new way?

This document has been adapted from Robynn Bliss. The reflection questions come from Shalom place: Preparing for Spiritual Direction.