

# A Guide for Spiritual Direction

By Jim Seghers

Spiritual Direction is a dialogue in faith with those involved: the director, the one receiving direction and the Holy Spirit. The key is the openness and faith of the two people - the director and the one directed - who together seek to discover the will of God in concrete daily living. Keep in mind that there are three participants, therefore this interpersonal relationship is not primarily dependent on the influence the director exerts on the one directed, as it is on the light that the Holy Spirit sheds on them both.

## POINTS FOR SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

1. Take some time to **prepare** beforehand so your points are well ordered and as clear as possible.
2. Focus first on your efforts to overcome your **root sin** and the **fulfillment of the duties of your state in life**—usually the most important part of Spiritual Direction. It is particularly important to focus on specific recent examples of your root sinful tendency. General statements like "I've been proud" are valueless.
  - What progress have you made?
  - What difficulties have you encountered?
  - Has any part of the program become routine? Are you avoiding or ignoring some of your resolutions? Why?
3. **Resolutions**
  - In the last Spiritual Direction, what recommendations or resolutions were made?
4. **Prayer**
  - Have you been faithful to your prayer commitments?
  - Are you giving quality time to your acts of piety, or just fitting them in when most convenient?
  - Are you making sacrifices to get your prayer time in, or just doing it when other occupations don't take your time?
  - How are you doing your meditations?
  - Are you making concrete resolutions, checking them periodically, and keeping them faithfully?
5. What is the general **state of your soul**: dry, distracted, preoccupied; or serene, docile, confident and trusting in God's grace?
6. **Apostolic work**
  - Are you directing your time with real dedication, with a spirit of faith, hope, and love? Or does the spiritual life seem like an imposition on your time?
  - Are you working with purity of intention for the glory of God and the advance of his Kingdom, or for personal satisfaction, human respect, desire for the esteem of others?
7. Formation of the conscience:
  - Is your conscience lax and easy in giving you concessions?
  - Do you rationalize all your conduct away so you are always right?
  - Are you working to form a delicate, sensitive conscience that seeks to please God at every moment?
  - Do you tend to scrupulosity?

This material is modified from a retreat handout given by the Legionaries of Christ.

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