



St. Peter upon the Water:
A Center for Spiritual Direction and Formation

Spiritual Director Toolkit



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ST. PETER UPON THE WATER

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Dear Spiritual Directors:

This Spiritual Director (SD) toolkit is an offering from St. Peter upon the Water to assist you in growing, sustaining, and creating fellowship throughout the San Antonio Archdiocese SD Community. It offers ideas, suggestions, and opportunities to expand your focus and deepen the connection between all called to this ministry. I hope you find it useful along your spiritual journey.

The Toolkit includes options for relationships with your pastor and church, recommendations on such items as brochures, contact cards and websites, SD supervision guidelines, and the benefits of SD small communities. We look forward to growing this ministry with you.

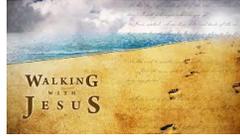
Sincerely and in faith,

+ Mike Boulette

**Bishop Michael Boulette
St. Peter upon the Water**

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

‘Walking with others on their journey to God’



Tenets of Spiritual Direction

1. *Paying attention to God’s personal communication to the directee ... then helping him/her to articulate that experience.*
2. *Responding to this personal communication from God ... then helping the directee think about the experience and discover its meaning.*
3. *Growing and maturing in intimacy with God ... then helping the directee relate this experience and communication to God*
4. *Living out the consequences of this relationship with God ... then helping the directee with making a response to the Lord.*

REMEMBER: There are always three people involved in Spiritual Direction...
The Director, The Directee and the Holy Spirit

Spiritual Direction touches the heart...



- *It helps individuals place themselves before God.*
- *It keeps the focus on the directee and the way God relates to him/her.*
- *The focus is ‘not’ on ideas, theories, jargon, sentimentalism, fixes, etc.*
- *It’s empathetic listening, paying attention, affirming, assisting in clarification, raising questions, and helping the directee recognize feelings that affect his/her attitude toward God.*

The First Session



It's important to set the stage and expectations with a new Directee.

I will mostly listen – for the voice of God in your life ... as I listen for it in mine.

I will care for you, encourage you and give you feedback.

I will not tell you what to do – but rather work to let God help you discover the way forward.

This process will unfold over time. I will get to know you and you me...so trust can build.

I will ask questions but will not push you. If you feel I am...please let me know.

At the end of a session, I may ask for feedback about how it went for you.

The On-going Process

There is no part of your life that's irrelevant – life, work, struggles, joys & dreams.

We will work to discover where God is in all these circumstances.

Wherever the action is in your life – this is where God is speaking to you.

This is where you are making the choices that determine who you are becoming as a person.

Regular prayer is essential, along with spiritual reading (Bible, devotionals, etc).

Surrounding yourself with other spiritual seekers is also spiritually helpful.

Prayer

We will usually start and end our sessions in prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to be with us.

If appropriate, we may stop during a session and pray for guidance or strength.

You can be assured that I keep you in my prayers daily – for the fullness of our relationship.

I may give you a prayer to reflect on – or add to your daily walk with God.

Mutual responsibility

You and I are both responsible for our time together.

If you are unhappy about how the session is going - please let me know.

If I'm not giving you enough feedback or we are not connecting, please let me know.

We will both learn from examining our time together.

If we come to the conclusion this isn't a good match, we will close things in mutual way.

At all times, I will reflect back what is happening in your life and share impressions.

Spiritual Direction Agreement

Spiritual Direction is the art of Christian conversation and listening carried out in the context of a trusting relationship. A spiritual director is a faith companion who listens to your life stories with an ear for discerning the movement of the Holy Spirit in your life. God is the true director, while the human spiritual director assists you in noticing and responding to the inner voice of God. The director is primarily interested in your experience of God and how you can follow God's call. That process is a spiritual journey into the truth about God, yourself, your relationships, your work, and the world.

The premise of Spiritual Direction is that God is present and active in your daily life in a multitude of (usually unnoticed) ways. When you slow down, begin to reflect, and take a long, loving look at what is happening around you, you begin to become aware of the experience of the presence of God. The more you know yourself the more you know God; and the more you know God, the more you know yourself, your direction, and your purpose. Intimacy with God leads naturally into transformation, healing, and action.

My work as your director is to focus my attention on your spiritual experience and points of self-discovery, to explore with you God's will and purpose in your life. Therefore, I will not try to analyze or fix you, even though our conversations may involve deep personal sharing and exploration of personal crisis and suffering. Spiritual Direction is a conversation of the heart and uses all our human faculties (intuition, emotion, imagination, senses, and intellect) to discern God's presence and will for you as you understand it. Spiritual Direction is not psychotherapy or counseling. If it seems like the issues that surface would be better dealt with in psychotherapy or counseling, I will recommend that you seek such services, and I will offer some referral resources for you.

Sometimes our paths may cross outside of our meetings. The existence of dual or multiple relationships is often unavoidable in a small town or within organizations. This can be positive, neutral, or possibly negative, and it's not always possible to know ahead of time how it will affect spiritual direction. I want you to know that I will never acknowledge working with you without your written permission. If, or when we are aware ahead of time that our paths will cross, we can discuss the complexities. If we are unaware of it ahead of time and our paths cross unexpectedly, we can discuss it after the fact. If this becomes uncomfortable for you in any way, please talk with me about it. I will always listen carefully to your feedback and will work with you to make the situations as comfortable for you as possible. This may include terminating the dual or multiple relationships or referring you to other spiritual directors. My commitment is to your well-being.

Our conversations are always confidential; however, I ask your permission to share pieces of information in my supervision group without using your name. It is necessary for directors to be in spiritual direction and supervision as part of our commitment to our own continuing formation and growth in the ministry. I am required by law to report suspected cases of child or elder abuse, and professional ethics regarding confidentiality do not apply to self-endangerment or harm to others.

In agreement (Directee) _____ Date _____

In agreement (Director) _____ Date _____

Spiritual Direction Inventory

Name_____

Address_____

Zip Code_____

Email_____

Contact Phone No_____

Emergency Contact Information (Name/Contact Phone No)

Occupation_____

Relationship Status _____

Children & Ages

Church Affiliation

Health: Do you have any health concerns about which the spiritual director should be aware? If so, please describe

Are you presently or in the past been involved in therapy or professional counseling?

In what ways do you connect with God?

Briefly describe your current prayer life.

Describe any past experiences of being in spiritual direction.

What are you currently looking for in a spiritual director?

What prompts you to seek spiritual direction at this time?

Complete the following sentence with 5 responses. I am someone who is

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

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SPUW Spiritual Director Tool Kit

Growing and Sustaining our Ministry

The toolkit is designed to help grow, sustain, and create fellowship among the San Antonio Archdiocese Spiritual Director community

1. Seeking Relationship with the Pastor
 - a. Invitation for a bi-annual meeting with all spiritual directors
 - b. Talking points for growing the relationship
2. Seeking Relationship and Offerings in the Parish
 - a. Invitation for annual pulpit talk, with template & talking points
 - b. Suggested meeting with parish secretary and front office
 - c. Possible bulletin announcement with spiritual director names, contact info, and short paragraph on '*what is spiritual direction*'?
 - d. Space for Spiritual Direction-options
 - e. Potential parish offerings or talks by SDs
 - i. Spiritual direction 101
 - ii. How to pray?
 - iii. Types of prayer
3. Brochure/Contact Cards/Website
 - a. Samples of brochures (PDF and MS Word)
 - b. Samples of contact cards (Zazzle/Office Depot, etc.)
 - c. Building and sustaining a website
 - d. Using a separate email for SD relationships
 - e. Spiritual Direction International (SDI) profile
4. Spiritual Director Peer Supervision
 - a. What is peer supervision?
 - b. Meeting agenda
 - c. Preparation checklist
5. Spiritual Director Small Communities
 - a. What is a SD small community?
 - b. How to start a SD small community
 - c. Growing and sustaining the small community

PART 1: Relationship with the Pastor

What: The on-going relationship between the parish's spiritual director(s) and the pastor/priest can play a significant role in the growth and sustainment of this important ministry, to the benefit of the entire parish.

Why: The level of trust and spiritual alignment between spiritual directors and the pastor/priest and front office staff can sometimes impact other things such as making space available for spiritual direction or allowing for such things as a pulpit talk or bulletin announcement.

How:

- The best approach here is to ask for a meeting between all parish spiritual directors and the pastor. If you are the only spiritual director, it would be a one-on-one. If not, it's important to have all parish SD's present to gain, grow and build upon this relationship, encouraging commonality between all directors.
- Consider setting this up somewhere on-site in the parish.

When:

- The optimum here would be a bi-annual meeting, although an annual meeting would easily suffice and achieve the goal.
- Bi-annual meetings afford parish spiritual directors the opportunity to address ever-changing conditions like CV-19 (in-person or Zoom) or other issues.

Meeting talking points:

- After initial greetings, clearly state the purpose of the meeting,
 - To seek/gain/sustain pastor support for spiritual direction.
- Provide Pastor with list of parish spiritual directors with contact info.
- Each spiritual director introduces themselves, sharing where they were formed and where they do spiritual direction.
- Be prepared to talk about the SD ministry and its value to the parish.
- If appropriate, thank the pastor for use of parish rooms for SD, the ability to hold a pulpit talk, or to place something in the bulletin.
- Thank the pastor for the time and his support for this ministry.

PART 2: Relationship with the Parish **and Spiritual Direction Offerings**



What: Seeking, growing, and sustaining a strong relationship between the parish's spiritual director(s) and the overall parish community of faith can be of great spiritual value to both SD's themselves, as well as across the congregation of believers. This could include the following:

- Pulpit talk
- Bulletin announcement
- Options for spiritual direction meetings
- Meeting with the parish front office and admin personnel
- Periodic SD offerings, such as prayer, spirituality, etc.

Why: The ability to have a common understanding across the parish of what spiritual direction is (or isn't), your role as a spiritual director, and if appropriate to talk about periodic spiritual director offerings (spirituality, prayer, contemplative life) will create greater awareness of this ministry.

How: Pulpit talk: A pulpit talk is recommended as an annual occurrence in the parish. There's no particular liturgical time period, although during the seasons of Lent and Advent might be of great benefit. It would generally be done after mass, but before the closing hymn.

Pulpit talk template and talking points

1. Thank the parish for the opportunity to speak on spiritual direction.

2. Indicate what you are going to speak about (what you will cover).
 - a. Definition of spiritual director (what it is and isn't)
 - b. Your role as a spiritual director (you, directee and Holy Spirit)
 - c. Meeting location, length, periodicity, and other details
 - d. Your contact information (also found in the bulletin)
3. Give the talk covering the above items. Allot no more than 5 minutes total for the entire talk. Once complete, indicate that you will remain in the foyer, entryway, or parish hall after mass to answer any questions or take any comments from parishioners.
4. Thank the parish and pastor for the opportunity to speak about SD.

Meeting with Parish Front Office/Administration

1. After meeting with the Pastor, consider setting up a meeting with the Parish front office and/or administrative personnel. This unique relationship will be extremely important to your ministry, especially when it comes to placing an announcement in the church bulletin, scheduling parish space/location for spiritual direction, and your overall success as a spiritual director.
2. The purpose of this meeting is purely relational - that is to ensure you can gain and sustain the support of these parish personnel.
3. Be very flexible with the time and date of this meeting - so as not to impinge on or disrupt the front office schedule. Be sure to thank all front office staff and be very grateful for this relationship.
4. Leave your cards and contact information at the front office. The people who work at the front desk are the contact to the people. They can refer you people that seek spiritual direction.
5. A yearly or bi-annual Thank You card to the front office is of value.

Bulletin Announcement

1. Consider asking the front office staff/ admin personnel to place a quarterly or bi-annual announcement in the parish bulletin.
2. The recommended information for the announcement follows:
 - a. Short paragraph on 'what is a spiritual director'
 - b. Names of parish spiritual directors and contact info
 - c. Invitation to those seeking greater spirituality

Meeting Space for Spiritual Direction



1. There are several options for conducting spiritual direction meetings with directees, to include using a virtual tool – such as Zoom.
 - a. Oblate Renewal Center (ORC): ORC has a few rooms available for conducting spiritual direction sessions. If interested, please contact Ruben at ORC at 210-349-4173.
 - b. Parish conference room / offices: Some parishes have small conference rooms or offices that can be used for spiritual direction. Call the front office in advance.
 - c. Residence: Some spiritual directors use his/her residence to conduct spiritual direction, although this must be done with sensitivity to the length of time with a directee, male-female director-directee pairings and particular directees.

- d. A final option and one that has been of value with CV-19 is using a tool like Zoom. Again, consider the particular directee, physical location and any other pertinent factors.

Spiritual Direction Offerings

1. Finally, partner with other parish spiritual directors, your pastor and if applicable, the parish faith formation leader – to offer short, periodic talks or get-togethers on the following subjects:
 - a. Spiritual Direction 101 – potential one-hour session that goes into more depth than a pulpit talk on the tenets of SD.
 - b. How To Pray? – this is one of the most common questions asked by lay people and that draws the most interesting responses. This could be two or three sessions over a couple weeks – that might allow for an initial large group talk and then break out into smaller group discussions.
 - c. Types of Prayer – With so many different types of prayer (Lectio and Audio Divina, Ignatian, Taize, Centering, etc.) there’s much opportunity here for growing spirituality.
 - d. Contemplative life – Many wonder about what living the life of a contemplative means or why it matters. It’s a phrase often heard in the church, but likely not many fully understand or appreciate what it might mean.
 - e. Recommended reading on spirituality: One final offering, either in the church bulletin or through some other medium – would be a recommended reading list on spirituality in general or on some type of spirituality (Carmelite, Ignatian, etc.).

PART 3: Brochures/Contact Cards/Website

Brochures

Why: When someone asks about spiritual direction, types of prayer, etc., brochures are an easy way to provide concrete information to take with them. Always include your contact information on the brochure. It is highly recommended you have 1 or 2 people proof-read it before you print.

Where:

- Always carry some with you, opportunities abound.
- Ask your pastor if you can put some in the church office, hall, etc.
- Senior Centers and Community Centers will often allow you to place brochures there.
- Where do you do volunteer work? It may be possible to place your brochures or contact cards there.

How:

- There are a myriad of ways to proceed here, but it is recommended doing it yourself so that you can update as needed.
- Best program is MS Publisher, it is specifically designed to make brochures and provides ease and greatest flexibility when moving things around. It has quite a few options for templates; and a finished brochure can also be converted to .pdf file. If you subscribe to Office 365, you have access to this program.
- As an alternative to MS Publisher, MS Word works well; however, this program is primarily a word processor and does not give you a lot of flexibility when you want to move things around or place text or photos in a specific place. It can be extremely cumbersome to use. It does allow for converting to .pdf file.
- There are many free online services such as Canva that can make impressive-looking brochures. I find them difficult to use and you must go online if you want to make changes.

Costs:

- This really depends on how you decide to make a brochure - but DO invest in high quality brochure paper!! Brochure paper is heavier than regular paper, prints photos better and is pre-scored if you make

a trifold or booklet. All in all, a much more professional product than using plain paper and much more durable than plain paper.

- You probably don't need to print a lot at one time unless you choose to have a service print for you (Office Depot, Kinko's). As an example, you can buy high quality, glossy, trifold brochure paper for about \$30 for 100 sheets. Then the only other cost is ink – this depends on the layout and color of your brochure.

[This link will take you to a SD website where you can view/download a brochure](#)

Contact Cards

Why:

- It is very common for people to ask for your contact information when they find out you are a spiritual director. Contact cards (don't call them business cards as SD is not a business) are an easy way to have your information written down and the cards don't get lost or crumpled, which can happen if you just write your information on a piece of scrap paper.

Where:

- Even though all your contact information is in your brochure, attach one of your cards to your brochure.
- Can be placed anywhere you place your brochure, e.g., church office.
- Always carry some with you; invest in a case to carry your cards so they don't get dirty or bent.

How:

- It is highly recommended that you design your own using an online service. The online service you choose will have a myriad of templates for you to choose from, and the program they use for you to design your card is usually quite simple and easy to use. Additionally, these services will usually give you the flexibility to upload your own designs or photos.
- Some use Zazzle to design and print cards and have been very happy with the paper choices and designs. All you do is query any online

search engine (Google, Bing, etc.) for companies that make business cards. Pick a few to look at, search reviews for those companies and then make your choice. Most of these services will hold your account indefinitely so you can re-order cards or make changes.

Costs:

- Costs vary depending on the number of cards you order, type of paper you use, if you print on one side or two, etc. On average, you can expect to spend around \$20-\$25 for 100 cards (printed on one side), plus shipping.

Example of a contact card (two-sided). Note that a QR code has been added that takes a person to the profile on the SDI website.



Website

Why:

- Websites are a nice way to direct people to learn a bit more about you and Spiritual Direction, in general. Depending on the type of webpage you have, you can upload articles and resources for people to peruse, you can have a multiple-page website for different kinds of information, you can set up payment, etc. To be honest, a website will, in all probability, NOT be the primary way you find directees – unless you plan to do some marketing. Finally, consider putting some information on the parish website to reach a broader audience.
- *Caveat:* Please be judicious in the amount of information you put on your website. It's very possible that you will get an uptick in

phishing emails, calls, etc., which is one more reason to have a separate email for Spiritual Direction (next section).

Where:

- Before you invest in your own website, consider talking with your church administrator/secretary and pastor about having your own page on the parish website. In this way, you and other spiritual directors in your parish have a free and easy way to direct people to your ministry.
- Should you wish to have your own domain, you will need to do a thorough web search on all the many companies that offer websites. Each is priced differently depending on how many pages you want your website to have. Rock bottom prices are for one-page websites, and these are usually more than sufficient.
- GoDaddy is one option.

How/Costs:

- It is usually cheaper to buy more than one year at a time. If you are someone who will aggressively market your website, you will be able to attract advertisers to your website and then it can potentially be free, or reduced in price, for you.
- Each domain has an easy and basic program for you to use to design your website.
- The domain site you use will send you a bunch of promotional emails-another reason to have a separate SD email (following section).
- If you go with having a Spiritual Direction page on your church's website, you are only limited by their contract. Many times, the person who administers the website will do the designing for you – this can be a positive or negative, depending on your preferences.

[Link to an active SD site](#)

Other Considerations

The following are a few other things you may want to consider:

1. Separate E-Mail for Spiritual Direction and SD-related information

You will be emailing back and forth to your directees, potentially setting up Zoom meetings, receiving inquiries from your website, brochures or contact cards. You will also be receiving information about on-going formation from St. Peter upon the Water or other spiritual direction sites. Having a separate email is a great way to keep all this information in one inbox, not intermingled with your personal email. This is incredibly easy to do through any email server.

2. Other SD sites

You may want to consider joining Spiritual Directors International (SDI) or getting on their email list. Subscription prices vary. Benefits of membership include:

- access to "Presence" magazine
- savings on books, webinars, and conferences
- ability to post your profile on their website, which gives you greater exposure than just your website alone

You will get A LOT of emails from them, (some are the same email sent numerous times) which is why Gmail is a good email server--they put all those emails in a 'Promotions' box rather than your Inbox!

Please be aware that this site is not exclusively Catholic; it is a place for all faiths, Christian or not, to explore deeper connection with God (or whatever term their tradition uses). Some have attended very good Christian webinars at greatly reduced prices. Take a look and see if this organization is for you.

Finally, expand your horizons by finding out what is out there!

- connect with other Spiritual Directors from around the world
- connect with potential directees from around the world
- continue your on-going formation
- if you are unsure if a particular website is good, contact St. Peter upon the Water

PART 4: Peer Group Supervision

The Growing Edge for Spiritual Directors

Introduction:

The overall goal of supervision is to help Spiritual Directors grow in self-awareness and interior freedom in order to stay with the directee's experiences and to be attentive to God during the direction session. (Looking into the Well: Supervision of Spiritual Directors, p. 9, Maureen Conroy)

The Guidelines for Ethical Conduct published by Spiritual Directors International state: Spiritual directors engage in supervision by:

- Receiving regular supervision from peers or from a mentor.
- Seeking consultations with other appropriately qualified persons when necessary.

I. Peer Group Supervision

- A. Both individual and peer group supervision are important--they are not the same thing but very similar.
- B. Peer supervision groups form a community which is a relationship of companionship in which the spiritual directors seek the help, insight, and exploration of their interior life with the accompaniment of other spiritual directors.
- C. Christian Spirituality is radically communal. St. Francis de Sales (1607) says: *"For those who live in the world and desire to embrace true virtue it is necessary to unite together in holy sacred friendship."*
- D. Jesus himself gathered a small community. (Mark 3:32-35)

II. Forming and/or Joining a Group

- A. If you form or join a group within the same parish, you must commit to strict confidentiality. Change the facts about the directee such as sex, age, or ministries in which they serve.
- B. Ask yourself the following questions when forming or joining a group:
- Do I prefer a group with spiritual directors outside of my parish?
 - How diverse is the group? How important is this to me?
 - How large is the group? Limiting the size of the group to five or six participants allows for good group dynamics.
 - Ask yourself: “Do I feel free being in this group?” “Can I be vulnerable?” It is important to make a personal discernment about the group and evaluate after sessions if this is a “good fit” for me.
 - Discuss certain guidelines about the structure of the group such as: “What happens if a member of the group has no directees?” “What are the guidelines about bringing in a new person into the group?”

Good Reference Book: Group Supervision Method & Practice: A Small Handbook for Spiritual Directors by Ellen Tomaszewski

Peer Supervision Group Meeting Agenda

For each meeting, assign one facilitator and one presenter (not the same person.) Rotate so each member of the group gets a chance to facilitate and present each month.

1. Opening (1 minute)

Facilitator reminds group of intent, focus, and attitude of meeting. For example... “I want to remind you that the focus for both the presentation and discussion should be on the presenter and not the directee. The intent of this meeting is to be open to the Holy Spirit with a contemplative and evocative attitude.

2. Prayer/Silence (2-4 minutes) – Prayer involves silence and can also include scripture and/or spoken prayer.
3. Presentation (up to 15 minutes) – Other members listen silently while presenter presents the spiritual direction session that he/she has brought to supervision.
4. Clarification Questions (1-2 minutes)
5. Silent Prayer and Reflection (2-4 minutes)
6. Discussion and Questions (up to 30 minutes)
 - a. Focus on presenter, not directee
 - b. Seek discernment of Spirit, not problem solve
 - c. Spiritual Direction for the presenter
 - d. Identify and assist the director in recognizing, addressing, or dealing with issues.
7. Silent Prayer (1-2 minutes)
8. Process the meeting (5 minutes)
 - a. Facilitator asks presenter and supervisors what the experience was like. (How did presenter/supervisors feel about the meeting?)
 - b. How well did the group stay focused on the presenter (as opposed to the directee)?
 - c. Any places where the discussion seemed to be “off track” (problem solving, too analytical, not attentive to the Spirit)?
 - d. How and in what moment(s) did we sense the presence of the Spirit?
9. Silence/Reflection/Sharing (1-3 minutes) – “How has this session impacted me as a director?”
10. Closing Prayer (1-3 minutes) – silent or verbal.

What is one word or phrase that each of you will prayerfully take away from this session?

11. Business (optional) – Set next meeting date, time, location, facilitator, presenter.

(Adapted from Group Supervision Method & Practice: A Small Handbook for Spiritual Directors, Ellen Tomaszewski, p. 31)

Outline for the Various Roles in the Group

I. Facilitator

- a. Select a prayer to begin the session.
- b. Be prepared to guide the group in a different direction if the conversation shifts into situations such as consultation, judgment, or making the presenter feel good.

II. Presenter

- a. Brainstorm possible sessions to bring to peer supervision (use initials of directee to be safe).
- b. Write a Focus Statement or Question based on the session you are presenting to the group. A good focus statement/question typically involves “I” statements, feelings, and body sensations. (“I still have a question around...” “I am curious about...” “I want to explore...” “I really felt...”).
- c. Plan how you will maintain confidentiality (change name, sex, eliminate identifying details).

III. Peer Supervisors

- a. Remain Contemplative and Evocative:
Contemplation is a way of gazing lovingly, without judgement, on the fellow spiritual director who is presenting.
- b. Evocative or Open-Ended Questions: These invite the presenter to go deeper into the situation. When asked well, these questions:
 - Leave the power for change and insight with the presenter.
 - Are free of judgements and call on the presenter’s inner wisdom.
 - Cannot be answered with a simple “yes” or “no”

- Most often begin with “how” “what” “when” “where” or “can you describe...” “tell me about...”

Choosing an Experience for Peer Supervision

“Supervision works much better with the purpose established.”

Ellen Tomaszewski

- You noticed a strong or overwhelming inner movement...boredom, anger, frustration, shock, repulsion, fear, sadness, etc.
- You lost presence during the session and moved into fixing, parenting, teaching, preaching, or giving advice.
- The energy in the session shifted from the directee to you, and you noticed that you talked too much.
- You had a similar experience that the directee brought to direction, and you struggled to stay present or lost presence.
- You “bracketed” what came up for you internally and now sense that what came up needs your attention and reflection.
- Your directee’s issue was of a serious nature, and you felt you were in over your head.
- You were not able to access the Spirit’s guidance.
- You did not or could not lift-up the experience of God.
- You are concerned about a boundary issue or the intensity of the relationship.
- You felt inadequate, confused, or uncomfortable.

PART 5: Spiritual Director - Small Community (SD-SC) Guide



*"Where 2 or 3 are gathered in my name,
I am there among them" (Matthew 18:20)*

Spiritual Director – Small Community (SD-SC)

Spiritual Director Small Communities are designed to assist SD's in coming together in a sacred environment that promotes small group faith sharing and support for each other in our SD ministry. These small groups encourage members to share with one another his/her own faith journey as a spiritual director. Second, it allows members to support one another and to encourage outreach as we continue to grow as directors. SD-SCs share the characteristics common to "church": prayer, faith sharing, fellowship, and outreach. This SD-SC model will strengthen the entire San Antonio Archdiocese SD community, as well as each SD individually.



What is a SD-SC?



A SD-SC is a small group of directors (approximately 6-12 members) who gather to reflect on their spiritual director journey, in the light of the Gospel and to share their Catholic faith through prayer, fellowship, support and outreach.

- Historically, the early Christians gathered in small groups, most frequently in a home. That experience allowed for a deep sharing of faith and the spiritual life.
- SD-SCs facilitate deep sharing in the presence of other spiritual directors along the path to Christ. Relationships are formed in which sharing, listening and genuine communication are nurtured. The sharing of faith and life as a spiritual director leads to a richer spirituality and strengthens our overall SD community.
- A SD-SC is not a prayer group – but rather a SD community of faith.
- Although each SD-SC is unique in its membership, style, and meeting format, every group is involved in the following activities:

1. Faith sharing and message of the Gospel
2. Mutual support for each other as spiritual directors
3. Strengthening of the Spiritual Director community

How Often Do SD-SCs Meet?



- The average is monthly; however, this should be tailored to the specific group. It could be bi-monthly or even quarterly. It is usually held in the homes of SD-SC community members. New SD-SCs may want to meet in a neutral environment in the beginning. Remember, faith sharing is very personal, and at times emotional, so gathering in a public setting may not be ideal.
- Your individual SD-SC group may be undecided about an ideal time/date. If this is the case, whoever is the facilitator should choose a time for the meeting. At this first meeting, the group will come together and work out individual details related to time and day. This method has been found to be much easier than multiple email chains. Once you gather the group for the initial meeting, you will find things flow much easier from there.
- Most SD-SCs utilize a rotating schedule between homes. In doing so, everyone will have a chance to lead a meeting when they host. Please be cognizant that leading a SD-SC meeting may be overwhelming to some individuals. Please see the section below on tips to help make leading stress free and enjoyable.

- Most SD-SCs will have some type of food at a gathering. This can range from a meal or just some dessert or snack munchies. The group will decide what's best.
- Meetings are typically 1-2 hours, including an opening prayer, scripture reflection, faith sharing, mutual support for each other and refreshments.

Role of an SD-SC Facilitator



The role of the SD-SC facilitator is to gather the group for the meeting. This includes working out the specific details of the meeting, including date, time, location, etc. You may consider making a somewhat more formal invitation for your first SD-SC. It is a great way to serve as a reminder to the group and allows everyone to see the details.

As facilitator, you may feel that the success or failure of the meeting rests on your shoulders. That is not the case! Though you will get things started, provide direction, and lead the gathering, remember that a SD-SC is a community! As a community, the SD-SC requires commitment on everyone's part.

As facilitator you will provide some form of structure and organization to the group, often serving as the point of contact when questions arise for the meeting. As the facilitator you will also play an important role in moving the group forward, but all decisions should be made as a group so that every member feels as if he/she has a voice.

For more information contact:

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