

**St Peter upon the Water**  
**Spiritual Director Toolkit**  
**V2.0 (Aug 2023)**



# ST PETER UPON THE WATER

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**Dear Spiritual Directors:**

**This Spiritual Director (SD) toolkit 2.0 is an offering from St. Peter upon the Water to assist you helping us grow, sustain, and create deeper 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 creating SD small communities of faith. We look forward to growing this ministry with you.**

**Sincerely and peace,**

*+ Mike Boulette*

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

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## 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 \_\_\_\_\_

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## Spiritual Direction Inventory

Name\_\_\_\_\_

Address\_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code\_\_\_\_\_

Email\_\_\_\_\_

Contact Phone No\_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact Information (Name/Contact Phone No)

---

Occupation/retired \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship Status \_\_\_\_\_

Children & Ages

---

Church Affiliation/Parish

---

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

---

Are you presently or in the past have you 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 qualities 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.

# 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 respond authentically 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 and dreams.*

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

*Wherever there are movements 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.*

*A regular prayer life is essential, along with spiritual reading (books, devotionals, etc).*

*Surrounding yourself with other spiritual seekers is also very 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.*

*Be assured I will keep you in my daily prayer – 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 discerning 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.*



# SPUW Spiritual Director Toolkit Overview

## *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. Spiritual Direction Documents
  - a. Agreement and Inventory
  - b. One page overview
  - c. The first meeting
  
2. Seeking Relationship with the Pastor
  - a. Invitation for a bi-annual meeting with all spiritual directors
  - b. Talking points for growing the relationship
  
3. 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
  
4. Brochure/Business Cards/Website
  - a. Samples of brochures (PDF and MS Word)
  - b. Samples of business 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
  
5. Spiritual Director Peer Group Supervision
  - a. What is peer group supervision?
  - b. Meeting agenda
  - c. Preparation checklist
  
6. 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

# SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR TOOLKIT

## 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 parish pastor 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 is 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 inviting the parish deacons to the meeting.
- 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.

# SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR TOOLKIT

## Part #2

### Relationship with the Parish and SD 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 SDs themselves, as well 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 (Knights of Columbus, ACTS, St. Vincent de Paul, etc.) 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 perhaps before the closing hymn.

### Pulpit talk template and talking points

1. Thank the parish for the opportunity to speak on spiritual direction.
2. Indicate the points 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, entry way or parish hall after mass to answer any questions or take any comments or feedback from parishioners.
4. Thank the parish and pastor for the opportunity to speak about SD.

### **Meeting with Parish Front Office/Admin**

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 very much 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 spiritual direction’
  - b. Names of parish spiritual directors and contact info
  - c. Availability of spiritual directors outside the parish
  - d. Invitation to those seeking greater spirituality

## Meeting for Spiritual Direction / In-person or Hybrid

1. There are several options for conducting spiritual direction meetings with directees, to include using an in-person or hybrid approach – with such internet tools as Zoom or Facetime.
  - a. For in person, Oblate Renewal Center (ORC): ORC has a few rooms available for conducting spiritual direction sessions, face to face. 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. Seek out the parish front office for assistance and/or scheduling.
  - c. Residence: Some spiritual directors use his/her residence to conduct spiritual direction. However, this must be done with great sensitivity to the length of time with a directee, male-female director-directee pairings and the particular personality of the directee.
  - d. The virtual or ‘hybrid’ approach (Zoom and/or Facetime) has become more mainstream since the onset of COVID-19, with some spiritual directors having directees in another city, state, or even country. Some factors to consider in determining the beset approach for spiritual direction will of course be distance, but also the directee’s availability to meet in person (other life commitments), convenience, driving time between the director and directee (even locally) and what’s most comfortable/convenient for the directee. Be patient and flexible here.
  - e. To be sure, the most ideal option for spending sacred time between a director and directee remains a face-to-face meeting. Our ministry continues to be one focused on the presence of God and the Holy Spirit.

## Spiritual Direction Offerings

1. 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 Prayer, 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.).

# SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR TOOLKIT

## Part #3

### 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 I highly recommend doing it yourself so that you can update as you need.
- Best program is MS Publisher, it is specifically designed to make brochures and provides ease of use when moving things around – and the greatest amount of flexibility. 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. They are sometimes 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.

## Contact Cards



Why: It is common for people to ask for your contact information when they find out you are a spiritual director. Contact cards are an easy way to have your information written down/in print 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, paper clip 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.

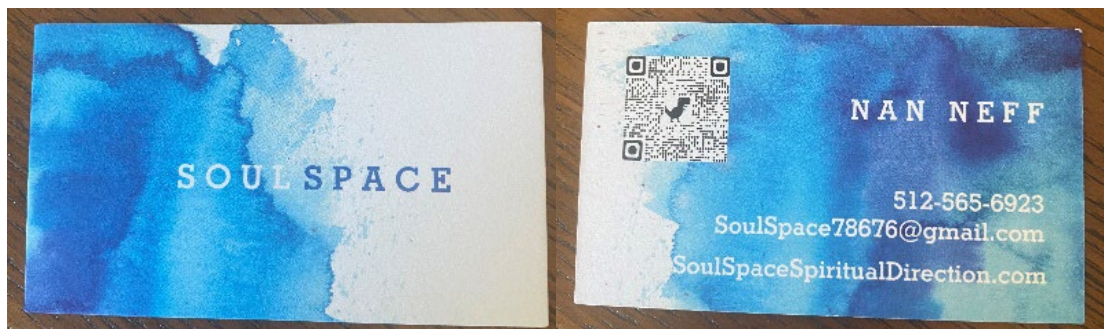
How:

- 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.
- Consider using Zazzle to design and print cards. All you do is query any online search engine (Google, Bing, etc.) for companies that make business/contact 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 a profile on the SDI website.



(Front)

(Back)

## Websites

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.

- *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 SD (next section).

Where:

- Again, 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 are usually more than sufficient.
- GoDaddy is one option to consider; buying a website domain for XX years.

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 for you.
- Each domain will have an easy and basic program for you to use to design your website – it is really quite easy.
- The domain site you use will send you a bunch of promotional emails-another reason to have a separate SD email (following section).

## Other Considerations

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

### 1. Separate E-Mail for SD 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). There are also some 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!

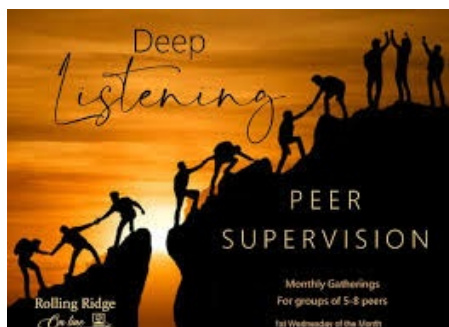
- connect with other SDs from around the world
- connect with potential DEs from around the world
- continue your on-going formation
- If you are unsure if a particular website is good, contact St. Peter upon the Water

# SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR TOOLKIT

## 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.

(Maureen Conroy, *Looking into the Well*, p. 9)

In the Guidelines for Ethical Conduct published by Spiritual Directors International, it states: 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 by Ellen Tomaszewski

# PEER SUPERVISION GROUP

## MEETING AGENDA

For each meeting, assign one facilitator and one presenter (not the same person.) Rotate these duties each month so every member of the group has an opportunity to facilitate and present at the supervision sessions.

1. Opening (1 minute)
  - a. 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 explains the spiritual direction session that he/she has brought to supervision. The presenter will conclude with a focus question/statement that explains what he/she is seeking to discover during the supervision session.
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 solving.
  - c. Spiritual Direction for the presenter
  - d. Identify and assist the director in recognizing, addressing, or dealing with issues by asking evocative questions that allow the director to look deeper at the issues brought to supervision.
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. Were there 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.
- a. 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, and presenter.

# PEER SUPERVISION 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 in a way that could hinder the process of looking at the deeper issues.

### II. PRESENTER

- a. Evaluate recent direction sessions in order to discern which session had the most energy and the one you want to discuss in peer supervision.
- 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, occupation, and any other important identifying details).

### III. PEER SUPERVISORS

Remain Contemplative and Evocative:

- a. 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 A SESSION 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.

(Adapted from Group Supervision, Method & Practice, Ellen Tomaszewski, p. 31)

Bonnie Caruso  
SPUW Team Member  
Coordinator of Supervision

# SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR TOOLKIT

## Part #5

### Spiritual Director Small Communities (SD-SC)



*"Where 2 or 3 are gathered in my name,  
I am there among them"*

*~ Matthew 18:20 ~*

# **Spiritual Director – Small Community (SD-SC)**

## **Introduction**

Spiritual Director Small Communities are designed to assist formed SD's in gathering in a sacred, safe space that promotes small-group faith sharing, spiritual growth and support for each other in our SD ministries. These small groups encourage members to share with one another his/her own journey of faith, challenges in our walk, blessings as a spiritual director and one's sacred interiority. Further, it allows members to support one another and to encourage outreach as we continue to grow as spiritual directors. Finally, over time, sacred trust builds between the SD-SC members which then allows for unarmored vulnerability and openness among faithful disciples of Christ.

SD-SCs share the main characteristics common to "church": prayer, faith sharing, fellowship, and outreach. This SD-SC community model, if implemented across all spiritual directors, will strengthen and nourish our entire spiritual director community, each spiritual director and by way of this, our directees.



## What is a SD-Small Community (SD-SC)?



A Spiritual Director Small Community (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 faith groups, most frequently in a home or common meeting area. That spiritual experience allowed for a deep sharing of their walk with God and their interior spiritual life.
- SD-SCs facilitate this deep sharing in the presence of other spiritual directors along his or her path to Christ. Trusting relationships are formed in which sharing, listening and genuine communication are nurtured. The sharing of faith and life as a spiritual director can lead to a richer spirituality and interiority - and then strengthen our overall SD community.
- A SD-SC is not a prayer group or supervision group - but rather a more intimate community of faith. It's a community where trust relationships build over time.
- Although each SD-SC is unique in its membership, style, periodicity of meetings and meeting format, every group is involved in the following activities:
  1. Faith sharing and breaking open the message of the Gospel.
  2. Mutual support for each other as spiritual directors.
  3. Deepening of interiority, self-awareness, and trust.
  4. Strengthening of the Spiritual Director community.

## How Often Do SD-SCs Meet?



- The average frequency for the group to gather is monthly; however, this should be tailored to the specific group. It might be bi-monthly or even quarterly. And while it is usually held in the homes of SD-SC community members, the location could also be at the parish or other common meeting place. In fact, new SD Small Communities may want to meet in a neutral environment in the beginning of the formation to see if the membership dynamic is a good fit. However, remember faith sharing is very personal, and at times emotional, so gathering in a public setting may not be ideal for all involved.
- Your individual SD-SC group may also initially be undecided about an ideal time/date. If this is the case, whoever is the facilitator should work with the group members to determine a best day/time for the initial meeting. At this first meeting, the group can work out individual details related to frequency of meetings and day/time. This method has been found to be much easier than multiple email chains back and forth. Once you gather the group for the first time, you will find things flow much easier from there.
- Most SD-SCs do utilize a rotating schedule between who will host the gathering, regardless of location. In doing so, everyone will have a chance to lead the meeting when they host. Please be cognizant that leading a SD-SC meeting may be more of a challenge for some than for others. Please see the section below on tips to help make leading a SD-SC as stress free and enjoyable as possible.
- Most SD-SCs will have some type of food and drink at a gathering, to either open or close the meeting. This can range from a full meal or just some dessert and coffee - or even just snack munchies. The group can decide what's best for all. This could also be tailored for different members. Some may indeed want to provide a meal, while others just donuts and coffee. It's very beneficial to allow flexibility and freedom here - to keep the focus on the spiritual sacredness of the time together, rather than on the food options.

- Meetings are typically 1-2 hours, including an opening prayer, scripture reflection, faith sharing, mutual support for each other and some type of refreshments. Again, depending on the group and members, this could adjust over time and with different members and locations. Be open to the movement of the Holy Spirit in this space and holding the group together if possible.
- Bottom line, the intent and goal remains as stated above: sharing our Catholic faith, prayer, fellowship, mutual support, and outreach. As long as these remain central to the SD Small Community, it's likely to flourish and grow deeper in spirituality, trust and interiority with Christ.

## Role of an SD-SC Facilitator



The role of the SD-SC facilitator is to gather the group for the meeting, lead the time together and act as a sort of facilitator for the spiritual sharing and related discussions. This also includes working with the group on the specific details of the meeting, including date, time, location, and spiritual content/prayer. Your group may consider making a somewhat more formal invitation for your first SD-SC. This formal invitation is a great way to gather and serve as a reminder to the group, allowing everyone to see the details.

As facilitator, you may initially feel that the success or failure of the meeting or gathering rests on your shoulders. This couldn't be further from the truth. Though you will get things started, provide direction, promote faith sharing and lead the gathering, the Holy Spirit remains the true guide and leader. And most of all, remember that a SD-SC is a faith community! And as a faith community, the SD-SC requires commitment on everyone's part.

As the SD-SC meeting facilitator you will provide some form of structure, meeting theme/ subject and organization to the group gathering, 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 during a gathering. Yet any important decisions should be made as a group so that every member feels as if he/she has a voice.

A sample agenda is listed below (though the food could be near the end)

- Gathering
- Opening Prayer
- Meal/snacks/coffee
- Faith sharing
- Gathering theme (e.g. listening, silence, interiority, boundaries, etc.)
- Closing Prayer
- End of the SD-SC gathering

## **Points of Contact**

**Relationship with the Pastor: Cecilia Von Bertrab (210) 260-7376**

**Relationship with the Parish: Cecilia Von Bertrab (210) 260-7376**

**Brochures, Contact Cards, and Websites: Nan Neff (512) 565-6923**

**Spiritual Director Supervision Group: Bonnie Caruso (210) 323-8977**

**Spiritual Director Small Communities: Marco Aldaz (210) 240-4120**