

BEGINNING SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

# MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR SPIRITUAL DIRECTION SESSION



Time spent reflecting is time well-spent

**What you receive from each spiritual direction session will be determined largely by two factors:**

**What you want to get from it and what you put into it.**

You set the agenda! e.g. *“Today I’d like to talk most about my sense of God’s presence when I was walking along the beach last Friday morning.”* However, what we get from a session is also influenced by what we understand spiritual direction to be. This is something to discuss with your spiritual director so that the two of you are working from a common understanding. You will probably need to talk about this again from time to time as your understanding may be refined as you have more experience of spiritual direction.

There are various ways of preparing for a spiritual direction session. Most people find keeping a journal useful in which to record regularly such things as:

- ❖ Inner events: prayer experiences, feelings, questions, dreams and insights
- ❖ Outer events: special Scripture passages, encounters with people that have affected you, special films/TV programmes/song music or lyrics/significant reading/worship/ aspects of creation that touch you.

All of these - and more - can be clues sent from God to show you the next steps in your spiritual journey.

These events are the manifestation of God’s presence in your life at this time. Our task is to say, “Where is God in this event?” or “What might God be saying to me through this event?”

Sometimes it is impossible to keep a journal, at least regularly. In this case, it is wise to spend some time before your spiritual direction session examining what has happened since your last visit. Use the ‘inner events’ and ‘outer events’ above as a check list.



## BEFORE THE SESSION

- ❖ **Reflect on the time between spiritual direction sessions, looking for connecting threads, themes, patterns or images.**
- ❖ **See if anything you set yourself to do last session has been done**
- ❖ **Prioritize what you would like to use the hour for. For example, of several different moments of awareness of God, what is the most important to explore? OR which of your questions needs quality attention?**

This preparation will ensure that what is most important will be discussed, if you are being honest. Sometimes the most important things are also the most painful and for that reason are easily omitted.

## AFTER THE SESSION

Record the major things that seemed to happen. For example, anything that you learnt about God and your relationship with God; your feelings; any challenges or questions; important discoveries or information etc. Check to see if you really talked about the things that you wanted to talk about? If not - how was that for you? Were there any God-surprises?

Was the session helpful? If so, why? If not, why not?

What did you learn from this session which will enable you to make the next session more helpful?

Time spent reflecting on the session is time well spent. Like the preparation for the session it will increasingly ensure the spiritual direction becomes a powerful means of deepening your relationship with God.

