

Spiritual Direction for Deacons

“Remain faithful to what you have learned and believed...” — 2 Timothy 3:14

What Is Spiritual Direction?

Spiritual direction is a grace-filled, confidential conversation with a trained and faithful companion who helps you listen more deeply to how God is working in your life. It is not therapy or counseling, but rather a sacred journey of discernment and prayerful reflection.

For deacons—called to serve the Word, the Altar, and the poor—spiritual direction is a vital part of staying grounded in Christ and discerning how best to live out your vocation amid the demands of ministry, family, and daily life.

Why Is Spiritual Direction Important for Deacons?

Deacons carry a unique blend of responsibilities: sacramental, pastoral, and often professional and familial. Without regular attention to your own spiritual health, ministry can become dry, isolating, or overly functional.

Spiritual direction provides:

- A space to encounter the Lord more personally
- Help in discerning God's movement in your life and ministry
- Support in seasons of transition, desolation, or growth
- A safeguard against spiritual burnout
- Accountability in your own prayer life and ongoing conversion

What Can You Expect in Spiritual Direction?

- **A Monthly Meeting:** Most deacons meet with a director once a month, for about 45–60 minutes.
- **Prayerful Listening:** Your director will help you reflect on your prayer, experiences, and sense of God's presence or absence.
- **Confidentiality:** All conversations are held in strict confidence.
- **Not a Problem-Solving Session:** Direction is not primarily about fixing things—it's about deepening your relationship with Christ.

Qualities to Look for in a Spiritual Director

Seek someone who is:

- Faithful to the teachings of the Church
- Trained in spiritual direction (ideally through a formation program)
- Prayerful, discerning, and a good listener
- Mature in their own spiritual journey

Your director might be a priest, religious, or qualified layperson. What's most important is their ability to help you listen to the Holy Spirit.

How to Find a Spiritual Director

1. **Pray:** Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you to the right person.
2. **Talk to Your Pastor or Deacon Mentor:** They may know trusted directors in your area.
3. **Contact the Diaconate Office or Deacon Council:** Many dioceses keep a list of approved or recommended spiritual directors.
4. **Reach Out to Retreat Centers or Religious Communities:** Many offer spiritual direction and can connect you with someone trained and trusted.

A Word from the Church

“Permanent deacons must attend carefully to their spiritual life. It is important that they regularly receive spiritual direction and seek moments of prayer, retreat, and formation.”
— *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States*, 76

Remember

You cannot pour from an empty cup. As a deacon, your spiritual vitality matters—not only for your own soul, but for the people you serve. Make spiritual direction a regular part of your journey. Christ wants to meet you there.

If you'd like help finding a spiritual director or learning more, please click the “email a question” tab on the Deacon Support Services Page.