

Contemplative Community

On each residential weekend the team and participants gather into an intentional contemplative learning community. The ethos of this community is modelled and nurtured by the team. It is “caught rather than taught” by the participants. As we operate on a four-year rolling cycle, as each new first year group joins the community, both the team and current participants impart the contemplative ethos to the incoming group. The community provides a place of invitation for participants to step more deeply into openness and the transforming agency of the Spirit.

Spiritual Direction Theory and Praxis

This is the main input each weekend and aims to provide specific knowledge and skills plus the deepening of the participants’ own spiritual journey.

Topics are selected from the following:

- Spiritual Direction – Introduction
- Spiritual direction as Storytelling
- Models of Direction - function and insight
- Contemplative Attitude
- Dreams and Dreamwork
- Art in Spiritual Direction
- Focusing – A Way of Growth Sexuality and Spirituality
- Ignatian Direction - insight and function
- Enneagram - insights for direction
- Spiritual Direction and Grief
- Journeying with those who have been abused
- Process of transformation
- Prayer - the heart of Direction
- Physicality and Spirituality
- Spiritual Direction and the Other
- Aboriginal Spirituality
- Scripture and Spiritual Direction
- Moving Images - the spirituality of Cinema

Peer Group

In Years 1 & 2, this unit provides specific input on practical direction skills as well as examining specific issues that can arise in a direction session.

Topics are selected from the following:

- Listening Skills
- Feedback
- Role of Director, Directee and Observer
- Movement in a Direction Session
- Working with a Dream in a Direction Session
- Working with a Image in a Direction Session
- Code of Ethics
- Recognising Resistance
- Self care
- Self Reflection
- Using Focusing in a Direction session
- Hospitality in Spiritual Direction
- Boundary Issues
- Recognising when to Refer
- Transference and Counter-transference in a Direction Session
- Movement and Countermovement in a Direction Session

Supervision

Quadrad

The practical experience of direction is done through Quadrads with participants functioning as Director, Directee and Observer with a program team member as Supervisor. Every quad involves a direction session followed by reflection and feedback on the experience by the members of the quadrad.

In years 3 & 4 there are two strands available.

Professional Development: Participants in this strand are required to have an outside directee. Supervision logs and verbatim of the sessions with their directee are prepared and used for individual and group supervision. Participants practice different group supervision models.

Personal Transformation: Participants in this strand explore principles and practice of contemplation in their lives. The program draws on the contemplative elements of various practices including Christian Meditation, Centring Prayer, Visual Journaling, Eco Spirituality, Body Prayer and Discernment.

Prayer/Worship

Each weekend participants are involved in leading morning and evening prayer and the Eucharist. Participants are invited to prepare worship reflecting their particular tradition. Diverse forms of worship are experienced over the four years.

Exploring Christian Spirituality

Exploring Christian Spirituality examines traditions of spirituality and spiritual direction within Christianity over the centuries. Notes and readings are emailed to participants who read and prepare a reflection on a selected text.

Topics for exploration are selected from:

- The Desert Mothers and Fathers
- Cassian, Benedict and Monasticism
- Rhineland Mystics
- Theresa of Avila and John of the Cross
- St Francis and St Clare
- English Mystics – Julian of Norwich, The Cloud of Unknowing
- 19th Century Spirituality
- Eastern Orthodox Spirituality
- Celtic Spirituality
- Protestant Spirituality
- 20th Century Spirituality – Thomas Merton
- Spirituality of Pilgrimage