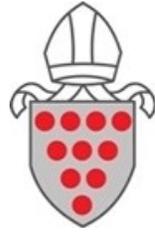


Worcester Diocesan Spirituality Network



A spiritual direction network has been active within the diocese for a number of years.

The Bishop of Dudley has overall oversight of the network, and the bishop's secretary enables liaison with its members. The Bishop's Advisor for Spirituality chairs a steering group of clergy and lay people which, on behalf of the bishop, seeks to:

- accredit and support those engaged in spiritual direction;
- facilitate ongoing training and supervision for the 'community of practice';
- ensure that this ministry is understood by, and accessible to, those who are seeking this kind of accompaniment;
- provide diocesan events which explore and nourish aspects of spirituality for a wider network of those interested.

If you would like to be included in the diocesan spirituality network mailing list, please contact the Bishop of Dudley's PA: Mrs Helen Shakespeare - 0121 550 3407
bishop.dudley@cofe-worcester.org.uk

Finding a Spiritual Director

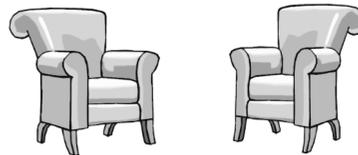
The Bishop of Dudley keeps an updated list of those registered as spiritual directors in the diocese. In the first instance, we invite you to contact Mary Flitcroft, the Bishop's Advisor for Spirituality, who can provide you with this register (which includes pen portrait details of each director) together with some guidance about choosing someone right for you.

Her contact details are:

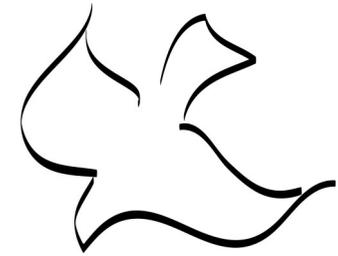
Mary Flitcroft - maryba4s21@gmail.com

Through your own prayer and discernment, you may feel happy to identify and contact someone from this list. If not, Sue and the steering group will be happy to provide more specific guidance and discernment for you.

Your first meeting with a spiritual director will provide an opportunity for you both to discern and decide whether or not the 'match' is likely to be a helpful one.



Growing into Wholeness



Discovering Spiritual Direction

This leaflet has been produced by the Steering Group of the Spiritual Direction Network in the diocese of Worcester. This network consists mainly of Anglican clergy and lay people concerned with spiritual direction and growth.

Growing into wholeness

All of us are invited to discover and search for what it means to grow into an ever deeper relationship with Christ, who came to lead us into fulness of life. So each of us is called into a richer and more balanced experience of God.



This search is often accompanied by questions such as these:

How can I deepen my experience of prayer?

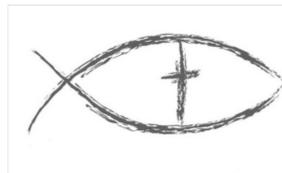
- What does God want of my life?
- Why do I find it so difficult to bridge the gap between my praying and the rest of my life?
- How can I discover a deeper experience of God?
- How can I become a more committed disciple of Christ?
- Where is God at work in my life?

Discovering spiritual direction

For an increasing number of Christians, one of the most helpful ways of exploring answers to questions like these has been the discovery of spiritual direction. Spiritual direction has been an important part of Christian ministry (for lay people as well as clergy) since the early Christian centuries. In recent years its value has been rediscovered by Christians from all traditions.

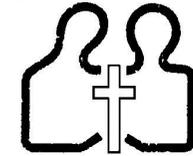
Various terms have been used to describe those who offer this role in the Church. These include, 'spiritual director', 'spiritual companion', 'prayer guide', and 'soul friend'. What is in mind is not an authoritarian relationship, but rather a special kind of companionship on the Christian journey.

Spiritual direction is concerned with the life of the whole person: body, mind and spirit, with finding and listening to God in the whole of life.



What does a spiritual director do?

Spiritual direction has been described as "the art of contemplative listening". Listening to you - and listening to God with you - is the most important thing a spiritual director can offer.



It is not the spiritual director's job to try to answer all of your questions and solve your problems! Rather, as a companion on a journey, he or she will help you to be attentive to your relationship with God and to discover ways of nurturing this. The aim is to help you grow in discerning God's ways and purposes for you.

The Holy Spirit is the 'director' par excellence. A spiritual director trusts God to do His work in you, as you open your heart to Him.