

Application Information 2018

Tending the Holy

The Art of Contemplative Listening



A Two Year Part Time Course in preparation for

The Ministry of Contemplative Spiritual Direction

Personal formation and Ministry streams

Application Procedure

- Applicants complete the written application form, see p. 5
- Applicants write an autobiographical reflection, see p 6.
- Applicants require two referee reports to accompany their application, see p. 7
- Applicants also participate in a discernment interview, which may be by phone/skype if necessary.
- Application plus written reflection and referee reports are posted to Marg Trevethan House of Prayer 17 Thomas Street Townsville 4812 or scanned and emailed to houseofprayer@tsv.catholic.org.au marked *Attention Marg*.
- Applications should be received before the end of February 2018
- Applicants will be contacted in early March to arrange their interview.
- By end of March all applicants will be contacted by Program directors regarding admission to the program.
- 12/13-16 April first Intensive begins.

1. The House of Prayer.



Be still and know that I am God

The House of Prayer and Spirituality is a mission of the Catholic Diocese of Townsville. We offer to a busy world an oasis of stillness and quiet, in a natural and sacred environment, in the midst of everyday life in Townsville.

The formation of Spiritual Directors/Companions has been a ministry of the House of Prayer community since 1984.

2. This Program

Offers participants the opportunity, within a contemplative learning community, to depth their own spiritual life, discern their call to this sacred ministry and develop skills and knowledge in preparation for practice. It draws on the wisdom of the Catholic Christian tradition as well as the lived experience of participants.

Participants of all faiths and traditions are welcome to apply.

There is also a personal formation stream available to anyone in spiritual direction and that would support other listening vocations.

3. The Ethos of the Program.

Spiritual Direction/Companioning is a gift and call of God. It is uniquely concerned with facilitating a person's growth in relationship with the mystery of God, and living out the grace of this in right relationship with self, others and all of creation. This ministry has a long and respected history in the Christian tradition and is a means through which Christ continues to minister through God's Holy Spirit. Practiced by lay, religious and ordained ministers it is a sacred entrustment calling for the highest standards of formation, practice and accountability.

Our approach to formation invites participants to further develop the contemplative stance in his or her life by creating opportunity for personal transformational engagement. It reflects a practitioner-apprentice approach that acknowledges we are all on the journey. It invites honesty and vulnerability within a learning community that values openness to the presence of the transcendent within self and others, all creation and reflected in the wisdom of the Christian tradition.

4. The Curriculum .

Elements of the training include:

The Contemplative Attitude, a way to live.

Contemplative Prayer: the approach to prayer
different forms of prayer

Companioning: the place of gentleness,
compassion in the heart of the Companion

Scripture and Theological Reflection

Images of God

Centrality of the Religious Experience

Evaluating the Religious Experience

The “Empathetic” response

The Affective Response

Ignatius’ Discernment of Spirits

Ignatius’ Discernment of God’s will

Touching the Mystery: art/music/poetry

Christian Mystics

Movement towards insight

Ethics

Supervision

Set text: “The Practice of Spiritual Direction” Barry and Connolly

Structure of the Program:

This two year part-time process comprises 200 hours of outcomes-based contemplative learning across 4 intensives each year.

A 50 hour practical component involving group and individual supervision is required for those who discern a call.

A continuing personal formation stream is also offered.

The learning community gathers on the Thursday evening and then 9-4 each day from Friday to Monday.

Some personal engagement will be required between intensives.

5. Expectations for Assessment.

In this Practitioner-Apprentice model assessment of the contemplative learning outcomes is based around flexible assessment styles that respect the progressive nature of the participant’s growth in skill and understanding. It will seek to evidence transformation and openness to mystery as well as require the ability to communicate verbally and in writing and integrate the foundations on which Spiritual Direction practice is based.

Assessment may include written reflections, oral presentations (individual or group), book reviews, participation in group and individual activities/conversations, self-assessment/review, and discernment through discussion with program team members.

6. Is this for you?

This process opens the door to transformative experiences of life, creates space to encounter God, and supports the contemplation and honouring of the presence of the sacred in everyday life.

We are seeking applicants who

- Feel drawn to and value the ministry of soul companionship
- Demonstrate a capacity to listen
- Show an openness to learning from their own and others lived experience
- Have enough life experience to enable them to respond with wisdom to people of diverse backgrounds and experiences.
- Evidence a mature spirituality and openness to other worldviews
- Have a commitment to prayer and reflection and engage in spiritual direction themselves
- Are willing to discern their sense of call and giftedness for this ministry
- Understand the time commitment required, are able to attend all intensives

Proposed (Year One) 2018 dates:

12/13-16 April

21/22-25 June

27/28 Sept—1 Oct

One flexible unit (individually negotiated with the Program Directors)

7. Application papers to be completed and returned with referee recommendations by the end of February 2018:

By Post: Marg Trevethan
House of Prayer
17 Thomas street
Pimlico.Qld 4812

By email: houseofprayer@tsv.catholic.edu.au
Marked: Confidential Attn Marg



APPLICATION FORM

Name	
Address	
Phone	
Email	
Faith community	
Current occupation (optional)	
Any vocational/ listening roles	
Names of referees	<p>1 _____</p> <p>2. _____</p> <p>Please ask your referees to provide you with a one page recommendation (<i>see suggested guideline below</i>) and attach this with your application.</p>

Guidelines to assist the applicant with writing their Personal Reflection

(please write or type your response with double spacing and your name on every numbered page, suggested length 4/5 pages, 1000-1250 words approximately)

Please submit with the above application *a reflective piece of autobiographical writing*, concentrating on those aspects of your life which have been particularly special and memorable to you, in that you consider them to have been shaping you. Some of these experiences at the time may even have seemed to negate life but in hindsight have proved otherwise. Interwoven throughout this reflection let your relationships with God, yourself, others and creation, be of key importance.

The following guidelines MAY be of assistance but let your story flow and do not feel obligated to make particular reference to these:

- Demonstrate for us how you understand for yourself your sense of call.
- Tell us something of your giftedness?
- Talk about your capacity to listen empathetically and enter sensitively to meaningful conversation.
- Describe your life experience which enables you to respond with wisdom to a wide range of people.
- Reflect on your openness to learning from your own and others experience.
- Reflect on your openness to learning from scripture, tradition, study, group and written work
- Tell us about an openness to struggle, a preparedness to embrace paradox and mystery, a willingness to change in response to the call of God.

Please sign as below, to show us that you have considered and understood the time commitment and the scheduled dates for this program.

Applicant signature: _____

Date: _____



Spiritual Direction Formation Program 2018

Guidelines for Referees

You have been asked to furnish a personal recommendation for an applicant for this course. The application process seeks to discern the readiness and suitability of applicants for the course. In the course application, we have asked applicants to consider the following:

“This process opens the door to transformative experiences of life, creates space to encounter God, and supports the contemplation and honouring of the presence of the sacred in everyday life.

We are seeking applicants who

- *Feel drawn to and value the ministry of soul companionship*
- *Demonstrate a capacity to listen*
- *Show an openness to learning from their own and others lived experience*
- *Have enough life experience to enable them to respond with wisdom to people of diverse backgrounds and experiences.*
- *Evidence a mature spirituality and openness to other worldviews*
- *Have a commitment to prayer and reflection and engage in spiritual direction themselves*
- *Are willing to discern their sense of call and giftedness for this ministry*
- *Understand the time commitment required, are able to attend all intensives”*

We ask you in this reference to tell us whatever you can about the applicant that will inform our discernment with them.

We thank you for willingness to assist us in this important way.

Name of Referee: _____

Name of applicant: _____

In what capacity do you know the applicant? _____

How long have you known the applicant? _____

Please respond with a personal recommendation in about 250 words.