

Finding a spiritual director

Choosing a director is a very personal decision and an important decision as it can have a large impact on life. Therefore it is worth taking some time to think and pray.

You will need to reflect on what you are hoping for through the developing relationship, but also pay attention to your 'gut reactions' to both the promptings of the spirit and individuals you may meet.

Possible areas to consider are listed below. If any of them feel to be important to you, can you say why?

The person:

- Would you prefer them to be either a woman or a man?
- Does their age matter to you?
- Do you need them to be ordained or lay, or does that not matter?
- Is their own tradition important (eg evangelical, catholic, charismatic etc)
- **The role of director:**
- Is their background experience of importance to you?
- Do you need them to hold specific knowledge?
- Are they receiving direction and supervision?
- Do they have appropriate experience/training

The relationship:

- How formal or informal would you prefer meetings to be?
- Are you looking for a particular tradition within direction (eg Ignatian) or someone with a more eclectic approach?
- Is it better for your director to be someone you don't meet regularly in everyday life?
- What would you need to clarify with a potential director - such as your shared understanding of confidentiality?

Practicalities of meeting:

- Distance - how far realistically can you travel to meetings?
- Place - where the meeting will happen?
- How often would you hope to meet?
- Finance - are you able/willing to make a financial contribution if necessary? Some directors will need to make a charge for their work, whilst others may not need to do so.
- Would the relationship with a director be affected by any other one to one meetings you are having, for example counselling or therapy?

There is a network of directors within the Diocese of Peterborough, all of whom have their ministry recognised and affirmed by the diocese. They all have appropriate training and/or experience and supervision.

If you wish to make contact with a director through the Diocese of Peterborough, when you have spent some time reflecting on the areas above, then please make contact with the Bishop's Adviser for Spirituality, who will either speak with you or meet with you, and then make a suggestion of someone for you to make contact with.

An initial meeting with a director will be exploratory - an opportunity to begin to get to know one another and look together at what you are hoping for and what the director feels they can offer. Often the director will suggest that you meet a few times before reviewing the relationship. The relationship depends upon openness and honesty, so you must be able to say what you think and feel about your meetings. Indeed any on-going relationship should be reviewed from time to time.

If the relationship proves not to be helpful, then you can make contact with the Adviser again, who will help you review what you might be needing.

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