



## **Spiritual Direction in the Diocese of Coventry**

### **What is Spiritual Direction?**

Spiritual Direction - sometimes known as Spiritual Accompaniment – is the prayerful ministry by which one Christian accompanies another, seeking to assist them to discern the place and work of God in their life and to deepen their relationship with God.

### **What is a Spiritual Director?**

A spiritual director is an individual, ordained or lay, who has discerned with others that she or he has a ministry of holy listening and empathy. The joy and purpose of a spiritual director is to enable another person to discern God at work in their lives, and to hear God's call and direction. The spiritual director does not lead or decide for another (despite the implication in the word *direction*), but accompanies that person prayerfully.

### **What is needed in a Spiritual Director?**

Spiritual directors are people of prayer and integrity who are self-aware and conscious of their own relationship with God. They will be aware of the riches of spiritual wisdom to be found in scripture and in our Christian heritage. Their love for God and their experience of the love of God will enhance their openness in their care for others and enrich their listening and their empathy. They offer a sacred and safe space to help the other person deepen their personal awareness of themselves and of others in all areas of life. In the spiritual direction conversation, the guide is the Holy Spirit, and so the relationship is one of coming alongside another and exploring the movement of God within. Spiritual directors minister out of their awareness of their own humanity, and their consciousness that we all stand in need of God's love and forgiveness.

# Code of Practice for Spiritual Directors

It is expected that every spiritual director will:

1. be committed to a regular pattern of prayer, engage in the wider life of the Church and be regularly receiving spiritual direction themselves
2. have been through a process of discernment which is recognised by this diocese and which has concluded that they are suitable for this ministry
3. have attended a training course which is recognised as appropriate, or can demonstrate appropriate experience in this ministry
4. be connected to a network, in which there is some regular accountability (e.g. an annual return), usually the sponsoring Diocese of Coventry network\*.
5. recognise the safeguarding issues which may arise in the course of spiritual direction and abide by the safeguarding policy of the Diocese of Coventry\*
6. undertake DBS clearance through their own church, **as there is a requirement that all spiritual directors have current DBS clearance**
7. engage in regular supervision for this ministry, either in a group or in a one-to-one setting
8. participate regularly in events for their own growth, training and development, as well as continuing to read and reflect by themselves
9. be aware of the differences and boundaries between spiritual direction, counselling, coaching and mentoring; be clear about the distinctive nature of the ministry of spiritual direction; and be willing to assist people to seek appropriate help elsewhere when necessary
10. discuss expectations, boundaries and confidentiality at the beginning of a new spiritual direction relationship; notify new directee of confidentiality unless a legal obligation is involved. Other disclosures may be made in certain cases of serious harm in agreement with a directee.
11. review the spiritual direction relationship with each directee on a regular basis (e.g. annually)
12. not ordinarily relate to the directee in another context (e.g. friend, colleague, supervisor)
13. at all times act in a way that respects the personal and spiritual integrity and wellbeing of the directee
14. have knowledge of, and abide by legal and ethical guidelines - for instance in relation to safeguarding

\*Diversity is welcomed, and it is recognised that some spiritual directors may be from a different denomination or location. However, the Diocese of Coventry has authorised the network to which commissioned Spiritual Directors belong.