



*Spiritual Direction
at Christ Church*

*In addition to the
ministry of pastoral care
and counseling offered
by the ordained clergy of
Christ Church, we are
happy to announce a
new initiative—
spiritual direction.*

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What is Spiritual Direction?

From the time of early Christianity, people of faith have come together for “holy listening” where an experienced guide accompanies one who is seeking a deeper relationship with God. Spiritual direction creates a space for the seeker to explore her/his spiritual journey with the help of a trained director and discover God’s movement in her/his life. In spiritual direction there are always three people involved—the seeker, the Holy Spirit and the director.

Is Spiritual Direction for me?

If you are on a spiritual path, if you have and value a prayer life, spiritual direction may be a consideration. William Barry, SJ, noted spiritual director, writes, “The best candidates are those who have lived life and not been afraid of its joys and pains...they have strong desires for something more in their relationship with God.”

When Might It Be Appropriate?

We may have a longing for something more in life—but are not sure what this means or how to satisfy that desire; at times we may be faced with making important decisions and are unsure about how to discern our choices; we may experience a transition—at work, in relationships or in suffering a loss and are thrown off our spiritual track; there may be times when our prayer life feels “stuck” or seems to run dry and we don’t know what to do. These are but a few examples of when spiritual direction may be helpful.

How is it different from Psychotherapy and Pastoral Counseling?

There are some similarities in these ministries—all take place in an atmosphere of trust and confidentiality. Spiritual direction is distinctive in that it seeks to directly assist individuals in developing and cultivating their personal relationship with God. The relationship between the seeker and God is the sole focus of spiritual direction. Gerald May, psychiatrist and spiritual director, writes, “It is the function of the therapists to help patients solve problems” but the function of the spiritual director is “to attend to God’s power, love and grace in the directee’s situation.” Spiritual direction does not try to fix or solve problems but explores where God is in the midst of our lives as we live out our spiritual journey.

Spiritual director **Brian B. Pinter** has many years of experience with spiritual direction and is currently completing a certificate program in this ministry through Fairfield University. Brian serves as the educational associate at Christ Church and also gives retreats and days of reflection. He has degrees in theology from St. Joseph’s University, Fordham University, and has studied at the General Theological Seminary. For more information or to set up an appointment, email brian@christchurchnyc.org.