

STUDENT SYLLABUS



SSD

School of
Spiritual Direction
Year 2



SustainableFaith
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Our Curriculum

In our Year 2 curriculum we wanted to keep five things squarely in focus: simplicity, greater depth with the themes and topics of Year 1, your spiritual formation, theological grounding and, not least, your skill development. The last three in this set of goals often overlap and feed into each other. In fact, exercising patience and holding silence are more accurately seen as fruits of spiritual formation, i.e., growth in humility and the experience of God's patience. We also know that our theological grounding brims over the borders of our brains. For instance, a trinitarian starting point (image of God) and biblically rooted view of humans (image of man) — something more ancient and orthodox than what we're typically given! — have real consequences for the way we actually experience both the God we seek to know and love as well as the directee who sits in front of us. Theological grounding is meant to impact us at the formational level and aid in skill development. So although we talk about spiritual formation, theological grounding and skill development as tidy categories, that's simply for convenience. In real life, the distinctions are messier.

Simple

What's simple is memorable and transferable. Simplicity enhances focus. Good directors pose one simple question to their directees rather than two (or more!) as a way of winnowing attention. Likewise, we'd rather you hold fewer things but hold those few things well. In short, we want this Year 2 curriculum to have a kind of hospitality. We want it to be easy to read, easy to understand, easy to execute. Consequently, each module has:

- A theological focus
- A formational focus
- A skill developmental focus

- 1 book (module 3 excepted)
- 1 chapter per module of Pickering's *Spiritual Direction: A Practical Introduction*
- Group supervision

Deepening

In the Year 1 curriculum, *stories* served as the centerpiece of Modules 1-2. We used them as a training ground to ask good questions, make observations, notice interior movements, and have conversations around the nature of spiritual direction. In Module 3, we encountered the Enneagram as a tool for gaining *self-awareness*. In Module 4, we covered *discernment*, using Ignatian spirituality and group spiritual direction as a way of delving into the topic. And in Module 5, we looked at *stages of faith*, using "Critical Journey" language.

Except for transposing the modules on *self-awareness* and *discernment* (which are certainly related), Year 2 follows the same outline. Stories figure prominently in Modules 1-2, but we push deeper into ways of listening. Module 3 goes further with discernment, strongly accenting desire and Ignatian spirituality. Module 4 continues with *self-awareness* by coming back to the Enneagram, broadening the latter by considering Instinctual Variants, Harmony Triads, and its use with directees. Module 5 again picks up the topic of faith development, filling out our understanding of "the critical journey" by looking in greater detail at how we accompany directees through stages 3-5 and "the Wall" (where most of our spiritual direction occurs). So all in all, Year 2 feels like circling back to familiar places, yet this time going much deeper.

Transforming

Our curriculum is intended to form us as children of God, followers of Jesus and those who “temple” the Spirit. Content matters, of course, and we’ve always wanted “good stuff” to put into our brains. But more so we want to engage the *whole* person, including heart and body. The very experience of God (knowing God / being known by God) is appropriately at the forefront. Consequently, Year 2 is full of transformative exercises and practices that engage you holistically. Among these is the 18th Annotation of the Ignatian Exercises, the crown jewel of our formational practices in Year 2. (This is a 12-13 week version.)

We *will* make exceptions on a case by case basis for you to do the 19th Annotation (about 9 months) provided: 1) you have adequate time and energy; and 2) you meet *weekly* with a spiritual director who is specifically trained in accompanying others through the Ignatian Exercises. (We ourselves have a number of capable directors who have been trained to do exactly that.)

Grounding

The Year 2 curriculum deepens our *theology of spiritual direction*. Without a healthy theological grounding or spiritual philosophy, our direction is untethered from distinctives of the Christian faith. Without this grounding our direction devolves into a fruitless introspection whose goal is mostly self-improvement and the alleviation of pain — which is a far cry from the greatest distinctive of our faith: the bedrock confession of the resurrected Jesus as Lord (Kyrios) and the life-altering implications of that embrace ... which may certainly not alleviate our pain or even look like self-improvement, though it will always be an increase in love.

So we need help to consider (in the light of Scripture and the church’s historic reflection) questions like: *What’s the Kingdom of God and how does it come to us?*

What’s spiritual formation and how does it relate to the Kingdom of God? Where does spiritual direction fit in the context of spiritual formation? What’s our controlling, operant image of God? Of Jesus? Of the Holy Spirit? What’s our view of humans and human nature? How do Scripture, conscience and community play into discernment? What are the means and tools of spiritual transformation? And to what end?

Consequently, Year 2 puts us in front of Jesus and invites us to theological reflection via books, exercises and videos ... but without the dryness and heaviness often associated with “doing theology.” We think this will be an enlivening, formative and integrating experience.

Developmental

Our Year 2 Curriculum (inside and outside our time together) pushes *skill development*. Group supervision is the most robust and obvious place for that to occur. Consequently, it’s a key element of every module. Yet it also occurs in moving through Pickering’s excellent book chapter by chapter, in the way we are guided to listen to stories, and in the teacher-student feedback loop, especially as it pertains to offering direction to others.



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Since Year 2 involves more field experience and includes the 18th Annotation, the reading material is kept to a useful minimum. Accompanying the books are reflective exercises to help you consider your understanding and experience of, say, the Kingdom of God, the Trinity, etc. We also consider the implications of each topic for the ministry of spiritual direction. Additionally, we have short videos available where various teachers share about the intersection of these important topics with spiritual direction.

The books for Year 2 are presented below module by module. Not included is Sue Pickering's excellent book, *Spiritual Direction: A Practical Introduction*, which is "trans-modular" and spans all five modules. Chapter 1 goes with Module 1, chapter 2 with Module 2, and so on.

Module 1

Renovated: God, Dallas Willard & the Church That Transforms

– Jim Wilder

The ministry of spiritual direction is pastoral in nature and has its eye on forming directees. But pastoral, spiritually formative ministry is guided at a higher level by meta-questions, the principle of which is, "What's the nature and scope of this 'Kingdom of God' (so often on the lips of Jesus!) that's meant to show up in the directee's life? What exactly are we talking about?" But there are other big questions, like, "What is the human experience of 'salvation' and 'spiritual maturity'?" Building on Dallas Willard's theology of the Kingdom of God and spiritual formation, Jim Wilder integrates what we now know from the field of neuroscience to align our practices for spiritual transformation with how the human brain works.

Module 2

God's Many-Splendored Image: Theological Anthropology for Christian Formation

– Nonna Verna Harrison

Nothing says it better than the title, and almost no one talks about it better than Harrison. We need a strong dose of the ancient and orthodox view of humans to correct the "depraved sinner" narrative that many Christians still carry. As an Eastern Orthodox Christian and patristics scholar, Harrison does just that. A slow and reflective reading of this book has the effect of overhauling the way we see ourselves, our directees, and people in general. Additionally, it expands our understanding of what human flourishing looks like.

Module 3

God's Voice Within: The Ignatian Way to Discover God's Will

– Mark Thibodeaux

As *discernment* (especially as practiced in the Ignatian way) is the central focus of Module 3, these two books are superb additions. Thibodeaux gives a classic exposition of the Ignatian model. It is our primary book this module.

The Way of Discernment: Spiritual Practices for Decision Making

– Elizabeth Liebert

Liebert builds out these ideas, giving greater attention, for example, to traditionally neglected sources of discernment like the body, intuition and nature. We read the intro to Liebert's book ("An Invitation to Christian Discernment") and some handpicked chapters of Part 2.

Module 4

You Are What You Love: The Spiritual Power of Habit

– James K. A. Smith

Module 4, with its accent on self-awareness, builds on Module 3's discernment theme. In offering direction, we recognize that a directee's willpower, sense of duty and espoused theology will carry her only so far before slowly evaporating and leaving her spiritually stagnant. James K. A. Smith makes a powerful case that above all else we're lovers, creatures of desire. Additionally he uncovers the power of implicit and explicit liturgies in directing and refining our loves. Smith's work grows our self-awareness by exposing our hidden liturgies and uncovering deeper desires.

Module 5

The Critical Journey

– Janet Hagberg & Robert Guelich (*Revisited*)

Module 5 is about the recognizing and working with directees in various stages of faith. The Critical Journey, already familiar to our students, is listed here in order to concentrate on stages 3, 4, 5 and "The Wall" (where most directees are located). Consequently, those particular chapters are the focus. We want to explore in greater detail what it looks like to accompany directees well in each of these stages.

Student Agreements

Here's an overview of what you'll need to complete in order to receive a certificate. Box contains a checklist you can use to chart your progress.

Receive Spiritual Direction

(5 sessions minimum). You meet monthly with your regular spiritual director during Year 2. This is suspended during the 18th Annotation when you meet regularly with a director to whom you and others in your cohort are assigned.

Offer Spiritual Direction

(10 sessions minimum). The generally recognized U.S. standard for spiritual direction formation requires you to have 20 sessions under your belt over *two years of training*. This, however, is a *minimum* requirement. If you met the 10-session requirement of Year 1, you need 10 additional sessions for Year 2. With 2-3 directees per month in Year 2, our students typically exceed this.

Receive Supervision

(6 sessions minimum). The goal is 10 supervised sessions over the course of Yrs 1-2. You likely had 3-4 supervision sessions in Year 1 (via debriefing of recordings and supervision during the last two modules). In Yr 2 you'll have 6-7 additional opportunities to be supervised. Most of these (4-5) happen in group supervision (Modules 1-5); the others happen in one-on-one meetings with the teacher (or supervisor) outside cohort time. You'll use the *Contemplative Reflection Form + Dialogue Form* to help you prepare for these sessions. (forms in Box)

Complete the 18th Annotation

(Standard Option) You'll begin the 18 Annotation in either the Fall or the Spring. Your teacher will let you know your cohort's schedule. Your cohort will be divided into smaller subgroups and you'll be assigned an Ignatian director. The director will host a 1-hr weekly online meeting with your group. The monthly cost for meeting with the Ignatian director is comparable to that of a "normal" director (\$60-80 per month).

Complete the 19th Annotation

(Special Consideration) You may feel very drawn to do the 19th annotation (9 months). In this case you would meet *weekly*, with your Ignatian director and start during the very first month. If this is something you want to pursue, *first*: 1) get a green light from your teacher, and 2) get a "yes" from your Ignatian director (who has discerned a spiritual readiness). Keep in mind that you can always do the 19th Annotation later. We just want to make sure you're spiritually ready, sufficiently motivated, have adequate margin, and can afford it. (The cost is \$143 per month.)

Complete the Core Reading / Reflections

(Six). You agree to upload a 1-2 page reflection on each required book (As a repeat book, *The Critical Journey* is an exception.) The teacher / facilitator determines the schedule for submissions.

Complete Summary Reflections

(Four). As in Year 1, upload a 2-page *maximum Summary Reflection* prior to Modules 2-5. Reflect on your experience of receiving direction (or supervision), offering direction, and going through the Ignatian Exercises. Additionally you can comment on life circumstances and share questions that might be fodder for the upcoming Module intensive.

Attend All Module Intensives

(Five). The face-to-face modules are critical. In the event of sickness or emergencies, form a plan with your teacher for making up missed work. You can do some through additional supervision and 1-on-1 time with another teacher in our organization. (There may be an extra cost for this, especially if you meet online with another one of our expert facilitators to cover material you've missed.)

Timely Payment

If you didn't pay the full balance up front but chose instead to spread out your tuition payments, please stay on top of it. It's a matter of personal integrity to make timely (i.e., monthly) payments. Keep in mind that *if you fail to pay for a month or more, then your teacher doesn't get paid*. As we're sure you can appreciate, we want our teachers to teach, not be bill collectors. Thanks for your attention to this.

MODULE 1 Kingdom of God & Formation

Theological Focus

The kingdom of God, spiritual formation and spiritual direction

Formational Focus:

Experiencing the Triune God; adopting a 3-month spiritual practice

Skill Development:

Listening to stories, developing selective attention

Practices / Exercises:

Group supervision; others TBD

Reading Debrief:

Renovated, Wilder

Video Clip:

The Kingdom of God and Spiritual Direction (Sharon Wada)

Sue Pickering:

Chapter 1: "What is Spiritual Direction?"

Going Deeper:

Surprised by Hope, Wright

Resource:

Spiritual Disciplines Handbook, Calhoun

MODULE 2 Image of God & Humankind

Theological Focus

The image of God & humankind; human flourishing

Formational Focus:

Explore espoused vs. operant images of God; God's hidden, manifest glory in ourselves and others

Skill Development:

Stories, applying selective attention

Practices / Exercises:

Image of God, Image of Humankind, Visio Divina, Group supervision

Reading Debrief:

God's Many Splendored Image, Harrison

Video Clip:

The Image of God (Kris Miller)

Sue Pickering:

Chapter 2: "Listening to God"

Going Deeper:

Healing Our Shame, Au & Cannon

Resource:

A Guide to Christian Spiritual Formation, Howard

MODULE 3 Discernment & The Spirit

Theological Focus

Biblical discernment

Formational Focus:

18th Annotation of Ignatian Exer.

Skill Development:

Learning various modes of discernment; applying in direction

Practices / Exercises:

Group supervision; others TBD

Reading Debrief:

The Voice Within, Thibodeaux
The Way of Discernment, Liebert

Video Clip:

Discernment (Kris Miller)

Sue Pickering:

Chapter 3: "Responding to God"

Going Deeper:

Weeds Among the Wheat, Thomas Green

Resource:

The Discernment of Spirits, Timothy Gallagher

MODULE 4 Self-Awareness & Desire

Theological Focus

Knowing Self, Knowing God

Formational Focus:

18th Annotation of Ignatian Exer.

Skill Development:

Probing for desire, liturgical awareness, using Enneagram in direction

Practices / Exercises:

Group supervision; others TBD

Reading Debrief:

You Are What You Love, Smith

Video Clip:

Instinctual Variants / Harmony Triads (David Nixon)

Sue Pickering:

Chapter 4: "Listening and Responding to Ourselves"

Going Deeper:

The Enneagram: A Christian Perspective, Richard Rohr

Resource:

The Wisdom of the Enneagram, Riso & Hudson

MODULE 5 Theosis: The Journey of Love

Theological Focus

Theosis

Formational Focus:

18th Annotation of Ignatian Exer.

Skill Development:

Refining the practice of direction in various faith stages

Practices / Exercises:

Group supervision; others TBD

Reading Debrief:

The Critical Journey, Hagberg & Guelich

Video Clip:

Theosis: Our Present and Future Glory (Kris Miller)

Sue Pickering:

Chapter 5: "Listening and Responding to Others"

Going Deeper:

Til We Have Faces, C. S. Lewis,
City of God / Confessions, St. Augustine

Resource:

Streams of Living Water, Foster

Structure & Flow

The basic structure and flow of each module is easy to grasp and follow, regardless of the content. This “sameness” to each module will help you get in the groove quicker and know what to expect. It will, in short time, become like a liturgy you’ve learned. In a summary glance, it looks like this:

- we begin each day with a practice or exercise
- mornings are largely devoted to *skill development* / lab work in the larger group
- we begin each afternoon with a very brief centering practice
- afternoons are largely devoted to *group supervision* in triads & quads
- the theology piece is in the afternoon of Day 1, right before supervision work
- we close Day 1 with Pickering
- we close Day 2 with prep for next module

Meta-Objectives

Each module, of course, has its own objectives, but there are three meta-objectives that are part of every module and, consequently, won’t be listed under each module.

- acquire a theological foundation for the ministry of spiritual direction
- deepen our own spiritual formation via contemplative practices & the 18th Annotation
- grow in skills needed for spiritual direction (through group supervision, triads, feedback on field experience, Pickering’s book and other work done in modules)

Module 1 Kingdom of God & Spiritual Formation

Theological Focus:

The kingdom of God, spiritual formation and spiritual direction

Formational Focus:

Experiencing the Triune God; adopting a 3-month spiritual practice

Skill Development:

Listening to stories, developing selective attention

Practices / Exercises:

Group supervision; others TBD

Reading Debrief:

Renovated, Wilder

Video Clip:

The Kingdom of God and Spiritual Direction (Sharon Wada)

Sue Pickering:

Chapter 1: "What is Spiritual Direction?"

Going Deeper:

Surprised by Hope, Wright

Resource:

Spiritual Disciplines Handbook, Calhoun

Objectives:

- define the kingdom of God
- define spiritual formation; place spiritual formation in the context of the kingdom
- define spiritual direction; place spiritual direction in the context of spiritual formation
- grow in understanding / experience of Trinity
- isolate and develop listening skills
- acquire a model and experience of group supervision

In this module we return to telling our stories after having been apart for several months. Just as a tennis player improves his game by isolating and focusing on an element of it (e.g., the serve, the volley, the backhand, approaching the net, etc), so we isolate and focus on ways of listening, paying attention to things like divine initiative, good human response, body language, cadence of conversation, head-heart-gut focus, own internal movements, etc.

Module 2

Image of God & Humankind

Theological Focus:

The image of God & humankind; human flourishing

Formational Focus:

Explore espoused vs. operant images of God; explore God's hidden and manifest glory in ourselves and others

Skill Development:

Listen to stories, applying selective attention

Practices / Exercises:

Image of God exercise, Image of Humankind exercise
Visio Divina, Group Supervision

Reading Debrief:

God's Many Splendored Image, Harrison

Video Clip:

The Image of God (Kris Miller)

Sue Pickering:

Chapter 2: "Listening to God"

Going Deeper:

God's Unconditional Love: Healing Our Shame, Au & Cannon

Resource:

A Guide to Christian Spiritual Formation, Howard

Objectives:

- consider our own images of God
- contrast the ancient orthodox understanding of humankind with our own
- note differences between orthodox view and more contemporary ones
- examine our own experience / internalization of Harrison's "domains of flourishing"
- isolate and develop listening skills
- acquire more experience in group supervision

Module 3

Discernment & The Spirit

Theological Focus:

Biblical discernment

Formational Focus:

18th Annotation of Ignatian Exercises

Skill Development:

Learning various modes of discernment; applying in direction

Practices / Exercises:

Group supervision; others TBD

Reading Debrief:

The Voice Within, Thibodeaux

The Way of Discernment, Liebert

Video Clip:

Discernment (Kris Miller)

Sue Pickering:

Chapter 3: "Responding to God"

Going Deeper:

Weeds Among the Wheat, Thomas Green

Resource:

The Discernment of Spirits, Timothy Gallagher

Objectives:

- review Christian tradition of discernment; see examples in biblical text
- learn the Ignatian rules of discernment
- become more sensitive to the ways in which the Holy Spirit moves, guides, prompts
- identify areas of over-attention / under-attention to particular modes of discernment
- isolate and practice a single way of discerning
- learn background, purpose and structure of Ignatian Exercises
- prepare mind, heart, body for the Ignatian Exercises
- gain experience in using discernment process with directees

In this module we go deeper into Ignatian spirituality by learning the "Rules of Discernment" and laying the final foundation for beginning the 18th Annotation (if your cohort did not engage with the Exercises in the Fall). We also practice how to apply discernment in working with directees.

Module 4 Self-Awareness & Desire

Theological Focus:

Knowing Self, Knowing God

Formational Focus:

18th Annotation of Ignatian Exercises

Skill Development:

Probing for desire, liturgical awareness, using the Enneagram in direction

Practices / Exercises:

Group supervision; others TBD

Reading Debrief:

You Are What You Love, Smith

Video Clip:

Instinctual Variants / Harmony Triads (David Nixon)

Sue Pickering:

Chapter 4: "Listening and Responding to Ourselves"

Going Deeper:

The Enneagram: A Christian Perspective, Richard Rohr

Resource:

The Wisdom of The Enneagram, Riso & Hudson

Objectives:

- harvest fruit of 18th Annotation
- gain deeper appreciation for the role of desire in formation
- examine implicit liturgies
- choose a new and (very) simple personal or communal liturgy
- learn Instinctual Variants / Subtypes
- examine dominant and neglected Instinctual Variants
- learn Harmony Triads
- examine dominant and neglected "intelligence centers"
- learn to contour direction to specific Enneatypes

In Module 4, we focus on self-awareness through attention to 1) the role of desire; 2) liturgies; and 3) nuances of the Enneagram. Additionally, we explore how to apply these in spiritual direction.

Module 5

Theosis: The Journey of Love

Theological Focus:

Theosis

Formational Focus:

18th Annotation of Ignatian Exercises

Skill Development:

Refining the practice of direction in various faith stages

Practices / Exercises:

Group supervision; others TBD

Reading Debrief:

The Critical Journey, Hagberg & Guelich

Video Clip:

Theosis: Our Present and Future Glory (Kris Miller)

Sue Pickering:

Chapter 5: "Listening and Responding to Others"

Going Deeper:

Deification and Grace, Daniel A. Keating

Orthodox Thinking on Theosis, Norman Russell

Resource:

Streams of Living Water, Foster

Objectives:

- understand better early Christian thought regarding the concept of theosis
- acquire a clearer understanding of St John of the Cross's "Dark Night of the Soul"
- acquire a clearer understanding of the "Wall"
- learn to differentiate between the Dark Night and Wall
- refine spiritual direction work with a greater understanding of stages 3-5 + Wall
- develop a "Continuing Ed" / growth plan for post-Year 2: education, formation, practice, supervision, etc.

In Module 5, we pull the camera back and frame the arc of Christian spiritual development as a progression in love and the process of becoming like the One we behold. We also look at ways to accompany better those on this journey. We conclude by celebrating our own journey through the 18th Annotation and Year 2 as well as considering what the journey looks like going forward.