

"EARTH'S CRAMMED WITH HEAVEN  
AND EVERY COMMON BUSH AFIRE WITH GOD  
AND ONLY THOSE WHO SEE  
TAKE OFF THEIR SHOES—  
THE REST SIT AROUND IT AND  
PLUCK BLACKBERRIES."

- ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING



"NOTHING IS MORE PRACTICAL  
THAN FINDING GOD, THAT IS,  
THAN FALLING IN LOVE  
IN A QUITE ABSOLUTE, FINAL WAY.

WHAT YOU ARE IN LOVE WITH, WHAT SEIZES  
YOUR IMAGINATION, WILL AFFECT EVERYTHING.

IT WILL DECIDE WHAT WILL GET YOU OUT OF BED  
IN THE MORNING, WHAT YOU WILL DO WITH  
YOUR EVENINGS, HOW YOU WILL SPEND YOUR  
WEEKENDS, WHAT YOU READ, WHO YOU KNOW,  
WHAT BREAKS YOUR HEART, AND WHAT AMAZES  
YOU WITH JOY AND GRATITUDE.

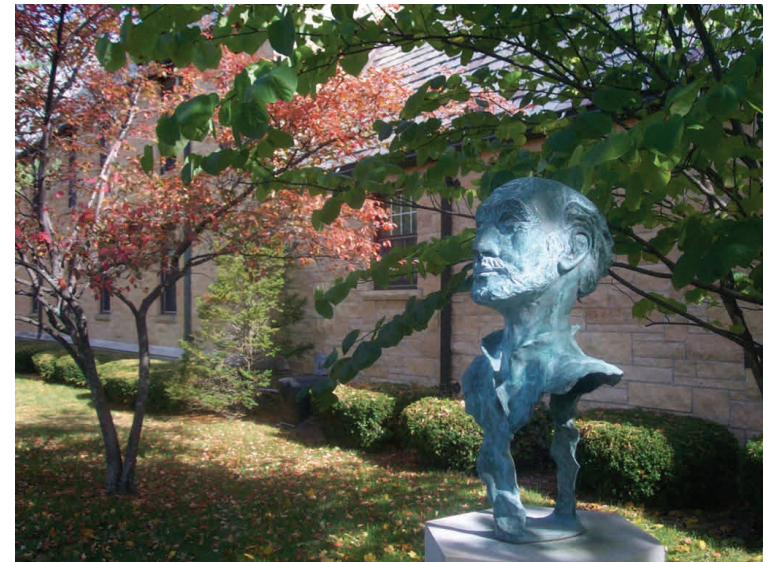
FALL IN LOVE, STAY IN LOVE  
AND IT WILL DECIDE EVERYTHING."

- FREQUENTLY ATTRIBUTED TO  
PEDRO ARRUPPE, SJ, SUPERIOR GENERAL  
THE SOCIETY OF JESUS (1965–1983)

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# Ignatian Spiritual Direction

## An Introduction



IGNATIUS FORMATION OFFICE  
MANRESA JESUIT RETREAT HOUSE  
BLOOMFIELD HILLS, MICHIGAN

## WHAT IS SPIRITUAL DIRECTION?

Spiritual direction is about intensifying one's relationship with God. It is noticing and savoring God's presence in everyday living.

A spiritual director is someone with whom you can talk about your spiritual life. Because every aspect of your life affects your relationship with God, ordinary concerns such as work, family, relationships, emotional hurts, joy, anger, fears, anxieties, addictions or dreams are shared in spiritual direction. A director helps you explore whatever may block you from knowing God's loving presence as well as whatever may increase that awareness. You are helped to truly see yourself through God's eyes as the gift you are.

Spiritual direction helps develop the skill of discernment, which enables you to be more attentive to how God is leading and guiding you. You grow in noticing the ways in which God is touching your life, directly or indirectly.

Some people prefer the term "spiritual companionship" because "spiritual direction" sounds like one person giving directions, or orders, to another. What you call it doesn't make any real difference. The reality remains: it is conversation about your life in the light of faith.

Spiritual direction is not counseling. It is not therapy. It is not financial advice. It is not a friendship.

## MUST I COME TO MANRESA TO MEET WITH A SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR?

While there are spiritual directors who meet with persons at Manresa, there are directors who meet with individuals throughout southeastern Michigan and Ohio.

## WHAT SHOULD I LOOK FOR IN A SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR?

A spiritual director is someone called to and well prepared for this ministry. She or he should be grounded in the Scriptures, sustained by a deep prayer life and carefully trained in the area of discernment. It may be helpful if she or he has experience or expertise in areas related to your life situation. But it is not essential.

The relationship between you and a director is based on confidentiality and a sense of trust, which enable you to be comfortable and open with your director.

## HOW OFTEN DO I MEET WITH MY SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR?

Frequency varies with individual need and circumstance. Generally, meeting every four weeks or so is ideal. More or fewer sessions may be appropriate for others.

## WHAT DOES IT COST?

It is customary to offer a stipend to support the spiritual director in this ministry. You and the director should discuss this during your first session.

## HOW DO I BEGIN?

If you are interested in learning more about spiritual direction or would like to meet with a director, contact Ann Dillon. She is a member of our staff who can answer your questions. She will also help you find a director who would be a good match for you. Ann can be reached by calling Manresa at 248.644.4933, Ext. 107 or you may email Ann at [adillon@manresa-sj.org](mailto:adillon@manresa-sj.org).