

Spiritual Direction: Outline of Presentation

1. What is meant by the term Spiritual Direction?
2. Meaning of the terms:
 - a. Spirituality
 - b. Direction, director, directee
 - c. Alternate terms: Spiritual Accompaniment, spiritual mentor, mid-wife to the Spirit
 - d. Spiritual Mother/ Father
 - e. Difference between spiritual direction, psychotherapy and sacramental confession
3. Beginning and unfolding of spiritual path: for both spiritual director and directee
 - a. Spiritual awakening (eg. Jesus Baptism in the Jordan)
 - b. Conscious call to Theosis/Deification (spiritual transformation)
 - c. Paradigms from Scripture:
 - i. Parable of the Sower and the Seed
 - ii. Woman: The Dough and Yeast
 - d. Early Christian 'spiritual directors' –Ammas, and Abbas (i.e. monastic context)
4. Spiritual Development: Growth in the Spirit
 - a. Grounding the Experience of God:
 - i. Prayer, meditation, liturgical life
 - ii. Understanding with the eyes of the mind/heart (=nous)
 - iii. Openness of mind and heart to an elder (*logismoi*)
 - iv. Self-knowledge: Know thyself and you will know God; To Thyself be true
 - v. Guidance: Need for an experienced guide - listening to the Spirit
5. Call to Ministry of spiritual direction:
 - a. "You feed them": inner attraction to this ministry
 - b. Caught or taught?
 - c. Ecclesial dimension: Service to the Church
 - i. Women in the Orthodox Church as spiritual directors (e.g. St. Melanie the Elder)
 - ii. Spiritual Director: a particular call, charism that is discerned and within the ecclesial context, blessed by the Church. As a formal ministry, this is in its embryonic stage.
 - iii. Why do we need this ministry?
 1. Certain women and others, who at certain times in their lives, need to have access to a spiritual director who is a woman who may be able to empathize better with their experience or questions.
 2. Not specifically gender related; there are men and women who also may be more comfortable with a particular spiritual director who happens to be a woman.
 - iv. Need for training programs for spiritual directors who are eventually certified. (In the ecclesial context, this would mean that the Church supports, acknowledges and confirms these persons, entrusting them with the authority to serve in this capacity.)
 - v. Need for responsible accountability and peer supervision. (In the ecclesial context, it is accountability to the local bishop and the Tradition of the Church.)