



10 STEPS  
TO FINDING A  
SPIRITUAL  
DIRECTOR

EBOOK



# 10 STEPS TO FINDING A SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR

*“Do you seriously wish to travel the road to devotion? If so, look for a good man to guide and lead you.” ~ST. FRANCIS DE SALES*

Let’s just say it right off the bat: finding a good spiritual director is not easy. However, for those serious about advancing in prayer and the interior life, it is important to keep looking until you find a good fit—not necessarily a “perfect” person, but somebody pursuing holiness, knowledgeable about prayer and the Catholic faith, committed to the Magisterium, and deeply desirous to help you grow spiritually and discern the movements of the Holy Spirit in your life.

There is no one right way to go about finding a Spiritual Director, but there are some tried-and-true steps you can take, beginning now, to find one.

## 1

### ASK GOD

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Pray each day that the Lord will grant you a spiritual director, if it be His Will. Petition Him with perseverance and trust, remembering that He cares far more about your spiritual growth than you do and is the one giving you the desire for direction and companionship on the journey to Him. Remember that His timing is perfect and that He works all things for good for those who love Him (Rom 8:28), even seasons of waiting.

## 2

### ASK YOUR PASTOR

.....

He may not be able to take you on as a directee, but as the spiritual father of your parish (and therefore you!) he is a good person to begin

with and may be able to suggest another priest, religious, or layperson from your parish or diocese. Even if your priest can't commit to long-term spiritual direction, but you really need guidance, he may be able to meet once or a few times to assist with a particular struggle. Don't be afraid to ask.

3

LOOK FOR A RECOMMENDATION FROM  
SOMEONE YOU KNOW AND TRUST

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Do you know anyone who is happy with their spiritual director? Ask about their experience. Can they point you in the right direction? Contact your diocese and see where they might suggest starting.

4

BE CREATIVE IN YOUR CONSIDERATION

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Ask the priest who has helped you in the confessional or whose homilies have really resonated with you. Retired priests have much experience—and may have more time. Are there religious orders established in your diocese? Perhaps a religious sister or brother in an active or possibly even a contemplative order would be willing to guide you. Be open to online meetings and contact convents or abbeys whose religious charisms resonate with you. Consider chaplains of schools, Newman Centers, or hospitals.

5

DON'T DISREGARD THE LAITY

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More and more lay people are gifted spiritual directors, and may have more training than even some priests. Pope Francis has reminded us that "Spiritual direction is not an exclusive charism of the presbytery: it's a charism of the laity!" (*Address to Consecrated Men and Women of the Diocese of Rome*)

## 6

### INQUIRE AT THESE RECOMMENDED REPUTABLE SCHOOLS OF SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

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- **Avila Institute and Heart of Christ in Ann Arbor, MI** ([HeartofChrist-SpiritualDirection.com](http://HeartofChrist-SpiritualDirection.com))
- **The Cenacle of Our Lady of Divine Providence School of Spirituality in Clearwater, FL** ([divineprovidence.org/school-of-spiritual-direction/](http://divineprovidence.org/school-of-spiritual-direction/))
- **Lanteri Center for Ignatian Spirituality in Denver, CO** ([omvusa.org/lanteri-center/](http://omvusa.org/lanteri-center/))
- **Institute for Ministry Formation at St. Vincent's Seminary in Latrobe, PA** ([imf.saintvincentseminary.edu/welcome/grow-2/programs/spiritual/](http://imf.saintvincentseminary.edu/welcome/grow-2/programs/spiritual/))
- **Divine Mercy University in Sterling, VA** ([divinemercury.edu/academics/spiritual-direction-certificate/](http://divinemercury.edu/academics/spiritual-direction-certificate/))
- **Franciscan University School of Spiritual Direction in Steubenville, OH** ([institutes.franciscan.edu/school-spiritual-direction/](http://institutes.franciscan.edu/school-spiritual-direction/))

## 7

### BE OPEN TO A SPIRITUAL MENTOR

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Be open to someone ahead of you on the journey with a pastoral heart who is willing to accompany you in the spiritual life. Perhaps that older woman in your mom's group or the wise member of your bible study who seems to live a balanced life of prayer and work. Perhaps there is a writer whose words have had an impact in your life. Is there a speaker, retreat master, professor, or teacher whose presentations have moved you? It may be worth asking whether or not they could mentor you, or suggest someone else who could.

## 8

### SEEK OUT HEALTHY SPIRITUAL FRIENDSHIPS

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Seek relationships with others who can walk by your side and join you in the journey. Attend a bible-study or faith-sharing small group

and get to know others who desire, like you, to draw closer to Christ. We were created for community, and while it can't take the place of true Spiritual Direction, it is also a necessary part of the Christian walk.

## 9

### KEEP GROWING IN THE MEANTIME

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Reading scripture, frequenting the sacraments, studying the lives of the saints, growing in virtue through service and self-sacrifice—these are fundamental and necessary for all Christians, regardless of whether or not one has a spiritual director. [SpiritualDirection.com](http://SpiritualDirection.com) is a regular source of carefully curated articles, reflections, books, programs and events designed specifically to help Catholics grow in their interior lives. Sign up for regular newsletters filled with rich resources for your interior life. While you are looking for a spiritual director, educate yourself about spiritual direction. Read books such as *Navigating the Interior Life* ([sophiainstitute.com/products/item/navigating-the-interior-life](http://sophiainstitute.com/products/item/navigating-the-interior-life)) by Dan Burke or *Spiritual Direction: A Guide for Sharing the Father's Love* ([stpaulcenter.com/product/spiritual-direction-a-guide-for-sharing-the-fathers-love/](http://stpaulcenter.com/product/spiritual-direction-a-guide-for-sharing-the-fathers-love/)) by Fr. Thomas Acklin, OSB and Fr. Boniface Hicks, OSB to learn more about what spiritual direction is and is not. Learn to spot false teachings and practices through documents such as *Jesus Christ, the Bearer of the Waters of Life* ([ewtn.com/catholicism/library/jesus-christ-the-bearer-of-the-water-of-life-2326](http://ewtn.com/catholicism/library/jesus-christ-the-bearer-of-the-water-of-life-2326)) so that you can be sure to select a solid director.

## 10

### DON'T STOP SEEKING

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Beware the thoughts that you should give up, or that no one has time. God has called people to be spiritual directors, and they need to fulfill their mission as much as you need to fulfill your own! Be patient and swat away the lie of the enemy of your soul who would suggest that it is all a waste of time. "Be confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it to completion until the day of Christ Jesus." (Phil 1:6)



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