**‘THE ART OF SPIRITUAL DIRECTION’ 2023-2024**

**(West Midlands Dioceses)**

This course is about the *purpose and practice* of Spiritual Direction. Drawing its inspiration from the insights of Ignatius of Loyola, the focus of attention is the person’s relationship with God. The core of each session will be threefold: the experience of prayer itself, listening to one another’s experience of prayer, and reflecting on the experience of listening. Plenary input and discussions will explore key themes in the process of spiritual direction. Participants will need to come with a willingness to be open about their own relationship with God, as well as open to others who may be very different to them.

Each participant will be expected to offer regular spiritual listening to one person for six months during the course. Guidance will be given on how to find a pilgrim, and regular group supervision will be given by the team.

Participants are expected to assign some time each day for their own prayer. A written or oral journal of reflections on listening experiences will be kept, and there will be reading/assignments to complete between sessions. Approximately 2.5 hours per week (in addition to personal prayer time) should be allowed for this.

**Course dates – Tuesdays 10.00am – 4.00pm:**

9 May 2023

13 Jun 2023

18 July 2023

10 Oct 2023

7 Nov 2023

5 Dec 2023

9 Jan 2024

6 Feb 2024

27 Feb 2024

19 Mar 2024

9 Apr 2024

16 Apr 2024

**Venue: Telford area, TBC (some sessions virtual)**

**The course will include a residential retreat, planned for 11-14 Sept 2023 inclusive, at Llangasty Retreat House.**

**The Course will be suitable for those who:**

* Wish to continue to reflect on and deepen their prayer life and faith journey;
* Have experience in a range of Christian prayer traditions (such as the ‘Soul Food’ or ‘Discerning Listening 1’ courses, or equivalent);
* Have some experience and training in Christian listening (such as the ‘Spiritual Listening’ or ‘Discerning Listening 2’ courses);
* Find themselves drawn to listening to others’ faith journeys;
* Sense a calling to a ministry of Spiritual Direction and wish to discern this further;
* Are accompanying others on their journey and wish to develop this ministry;
* Are lay or ordained;
* Have been, and remain in receipt of Spiritual Direction for at least the past year;
* Will be committed to attending all the course sessions.

**All applicants are asked to provide a reference, and selection will be by interview.**

**Interview dates are: Tuesdays 14 and 21 March 2023**

**To apply for the course** please email or write to Charles Ruxton (Lichfield Diocesan Spirituality Adviser, address below), using the form below. Please do contact Charles if you would like to discuss the course further before applying.**APPLICATION FOR ‘THE ART OF SPIRITUAL DIRECTION’ 2023-2024**

1. Name:
2. Address:
3. Phone:
4. email:
5. Church affiliation:
6. Any access requirements (e.g. wheelchair access, large text, etc.)?
7. What makes you feel this Course might be appropriate for you and what would you hope to gain from it?
8. Your experience of receiving Spiritual Direction (since when?, frequency. Please describe the model or style your director uses and the things you value (or don’t) about it.
9. Please describe your understanding of your own faith, how it has grown and how it is expressed now. How do you pray now? Have other ways of praying been significant before now?
10. What courses in Christian Spirituality and Listening have you undertaken?
11. What is your present and past involvement, formal or informal, in listening to others and/or accompanying them on their faith journey.
12. Name and address of someone who would write about your experience. This could be either your priest/minister or a ‘faith friend’ of some years’ standing.
13. Are you or have you recently been in receipt of any therapy or medication for your psychological wellbeing which it would be good for us to be aware of?
14. If cost is an obstacle for you we encourage you still to apply, as there may be bursary funding available (applications required by 20 March). Would you be interested in applying for a bursary if available?
15. Other information:

[charles.ruxton@trinitychurches.org](mailto:charles.ruxton@trinitychurches.org) New Place, Rowley, Westbury, Shrops SY5 9RY.

All of the information you provide will be confidential to the Tutor Team. It will only be used for producing course documentation and will not be passed on to anyone beyond the Tutor Team. If you would prefer your details not to be recorded in this way, please let us know.