



REGNUM CHRISTI

Portrait of the Regnum Christi Spiritual Director

A Calling

Spiritual direction helps people grow in their personal relationship with God and assists them in discovering God's presence and will in their life. There are many programs being developed around the world for the training of spiritual directors in response to the growing demand from the faithful searching out learned men and women to accompany them in this discovery. As men and women of the Kingdom, we are all capable of accompanying others as spiritual friends and mentors as they journey through life. Serving as a spiritual director is a special calling. A calling that requires proper training, ongoing formation, exercising a committed and disciplined spiritual life. A spirit of generosity making yourself available to those you guide is a priority. You must be willing to invest yourself long-term in your people.

Regnum Christi does not mandate its directors to be trained by a particular institution, but all must complete a certified program before accepting the mission of accompanying others in their relationship with the Lord.

The Regnum Christi spirituality is centered above all on Jesus Christ and born from experiencing his love. We seek to respond to our Friend and Lord with a personal, real, passionate and faithful love. Through the action of the Holy Spirit, we are sons and daughters in the Son who becomes the center, standard and model of our life. We learn to encounter him in the Gospel, the Eucharist, the cross and our neighbor (SRCF 12).

A spiritual director in Regnum Christi is privileged to stand on hallowed ground as he witnesses the action of the Holy Spirit in the lives of those he guides.

The Mission

Pope Benedict reminds us the Church continues to recommend the practice of spiritual direction not only to those who desire to follow Christ closely but that every Christian who wishes to live responsibly his or her baptism, may be accompanied by a guide reliable in doctrine and knowledgeable about the things of God (Benedict XVI, *Teresianum*, 2011).

We believe spiritual direction is a participation in the work of the Holy Spirit that allows the directees to receive and live the gifts of the Holy Spirit in a personal way. The spiritual director in union with the Holy Spirit plays a distinctive role in helping directees participate in the mystery of Christ, to be living and active members of his Church, and to help discern their discipleship or apostolic response according to their particular circumstances.

The lifestyle of Regnum Christi members is characterized by: accepting that following Christ includes spiritual combat, the struggle marked by perseverance and trust in the Lord in the face of the reality of evil and sin in one's own life and in society, moved by the power of love to the extreme. (SRCF 10.1)

The spiritual director understands spiritual combat, the development of the spiritual life and the stages of prayer. He listens attentively, and offers himself as an intercessor who helps the directee discern and experience more tangibly the presence of God in the directee's life.

Although a spiritual director is a formator, the spiritual direction relationship is not a teacher/ student relationship. The spiritual director strives to know and love his directee, and to reflect God's presence and action in the lives of those he guides.



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Historically, spiritual direction was not an exclusive charism of the clergy: it's a charism first exemplified by the laity in early monasticism. Lay people were the spiritual directors sought out for their wisdom (Francis, 2015, Rome, Address to Consecrated Persons).

Qualities of a Spiritual Director

Regnum Christi seeks to offer its members the means to contemplate and live the charismatic gift we all share of "the mystery of Christ who goes out to people, reveals the love of his heart to them, forms them as apostles and Christian leaders, and sends them out and accompanies them to give Glory to God and make the Kingdom of Christ present in the hearts of all people and in society" (SRCF #8).

We discover this gift present within each one of us and as spiritual directors, we listen for this mystery revealed. How is Christ seeking out our directees, calling them into deeper union with him, revealing his heart to them and accompanying them?

The spiritual tradition of the Church offers a good summary of the qualities needed in a spiritual director; education and training both in the practice of spiritual direction but also on the growth, development and inner workings of the spiritual life, personal prayer and life experience, holiness and prudence. As Regnum Christi members, we speak of integral formation, the formation of the whole person: intellectual, human, spiritual and apostolic.

As spiritual directors, we must model the way for our directees, always looking to give witness to a life steeped in human formation, intellectual formation, spiritual formation and apostolic expression.

With regards to human formation, a mature spiritual director will exhibit a balanced personality, possess self-knowledge, the ability and willingness to listen deeply, maintain confidentiality, communicate effectively, and exercise prudence in judgment. The mature spiritual director takes seriously the mission of the spiritual director and commits him/herself to ongoing study of the spiritual life and means to growing as a director.

Key to an effective spiritual director is striving for a deep interior life and union with God. The personal commitment of every spiritual director to grow in personal holiness is of utmost importance.

Ongoing Formation and Accompaniment

In addition to their own ongoing spiritual direction, every spiritual director will be aware of the vital need of appropriate ongoing supervision in their own ministry as spiritual directors.

The need and importance of supervision are rooted in the spiritual director's own inner experience while in the process of directing. The long-standing tradition of the Church with the more recent contributions of the human sciences attest to the necessity of deep self-awareness and discernment in the life of the spiritual director. This will allow the director to remain at the service of the grace of God and never inadvertently seek to stand in its place. "He must increase; I must decrease," (John 3:30).

Through supervision, the director learns to sense and explore interior movements in their own spirits during their sessions. Subtleties like resistance, sadness, defensiveness, desires to protect, transference and countertransference, replaying his/her own experience in the directee, seeking to resolve his/her own situation through the directee, etc. can simmer below the surface of the director. Supervision helps the director explore these movements and grow in awareness and interior freedom. This interior freedom allows the director to be more receptive to the directees and frees directees in their encounter with the Living God who is pursuing them.



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Regnum Christi spiritual directors must have a willingness and availability to meet with directees on a regular basis. They should embrace the means of perseverance Regnum Christi presents them in serving their directees including but not limited to, monthly dialogue with their section directors, participation in team life, attendance at yearly spiritual exercises, supervision, and continuing education opportunities for spiritual directors and conscientious adherence to safe environment practices.

Resources:

Statutes of the Regnum Christi Federation, May 2019

Pope Benedict XVI, 2011 Address of His Holiness Benedict XVI to the Community of the Pontifical Theological Faculty "Teresianum" of Rome

http://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2011/may/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20110519_teresianum.html

Pope Francis, 2015 Address of Pope Francis to Consecrated Men and Women of the Diocese of Rome.

http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2015/may/documents/papa-francesco_20150516_religiosi-roma.html

Revised Standard Version Bible, Ignatius Press San Francisco, 2006