



**ART & PRACTICE OF SPIRITUAL DIRECTION**  
**Program Dates And Fees**  
**Frequently Asked Questions**

**Art & Practice Format and Sessions**

Art and Practice of Spiritual direction is a two-year contemplative program for the formation of spiritual directors which is focused on interior growth and discernment. Each year consists of 4 weekend residential intensives. The program begins in August 2018 and ends in May 2020. We have found this structure to enhance learning, community building, and personal transformation.

**Year One: 2018-19**

- **Session 1** Thursday August 23 - Saturday, August 25
- **Session 2** Thursday November 8 – Saturday, November 10
- **Session 3** Thursday February 28 - Saturday March 2
- **Session 4** Thursday May 9 - Saturday May 11

**Year Two: 2019-20**

- **Session 1** Thursday, August 22 – Saturday, August 24
- **Session 2** Thursday, November 7 – Saturday, November 9
- **Session 3** Thursday, February 27 – Saturday, February 29
- **Session 4** Thursday, April 30 – Saturday, May 2

Check in time is 2:00 pm on Thursdays. Program begins at 3:00 pm Thursday and ends at 3:00 pm on Saturday. Meals and lodging included in your fees.

**Cost of the 2018/19 program year**

The fee for 2018/19 – 4 weekend intensives – including overnight stays and meals = \$2,700

**Cost of the 2019/20 program year**

The fee for 2019/20 – 4 weekend intensives – including overnight stays and meals = \$2,800

**Additional costs both years**

- Separate nonrefundable program application fee for the first year only (\$50)
- Your personal supervision (9 per year, \$50/session, paid directly by you to your supervisor)
- Books and materials – can be purchased at Mercy Center or Amazon (about \$175/year)
- Registration and fees for Don Bisson's January workshop (required) (\$75-\$100)
- Travel, incidental expenses, and any additional nights you may need to stay at Mercy Center



## Art and Practice FAQ

### **I completed Sacred Journey. Will I automatically be accepted to Art & Practice Year 1?**

Sacred Journey is one requirement for application to the spiritual direction program for most people who do not have an extensive ministry or theological background. We consider all elements of each individual's application package, including completion of Sacred Journey, as well as other preparation and evidence of call to the ministry, personal interviews and mentor assessments.

Completion of Sacred Journey by itself does not guarantee acceptance to Art and Practice, but assures us that you have had focused reflective learning as well as contemplative listening experience that can prepare many people to discern their life vocation - whether or not it is related to the ministry of spiritual direction.

### **Do I need to be in spiritual direction?**

Being in ongoing spiritual direction is a requirement for application to this program. You must have been in one-on-one spiritual direction for two years prior to the start of the program in August 2018. ***This is a firm requirement.*** If you don't currently have a spiritual director we're happy to help you find one. Call 650-340-7416 or send an email to [Marilyn Granucci](mailto:mgranucci@mercywmw.org) ([mgranucci@mercywmw.org](mailto:mgranucci@mercywmw.org)).

### **I am not a Christian or Catholic, may I still apply?**

Of course! We have welcomed people of a variety of denominations and faith traditions for over 30 years. While our program is based in the Judeo-Christian tradition, we welcome people of all faiths who can honor our approach and use the formation to support their specific spiritual practice. Our Mercy charism of hospitality means loving respect and welcome for all.

### **Who should do my recommendation form?**

We suggest that you ask a mentor, ministry, or work colleague or current or past spiritual director to fill this out for you. It needs to be someone who knows you very well.

### **How many applicants will be accepted to the program in 2016?**

We have found that a group of about 28 people is the right size for our experiential formation program to support our ratio of mentor staff to participants and to maintain the contemplative spirit of the group.

### **Are payment plans available?**

Tuition can be paid all at once or in two installment payments, due in August and February.

***For Year One*** we require a \$500 deposit due between July 1 and July 15 2018 which will be applied to your tuition. After that, you can make either one additional payment of \$2,200 due in August or two installments of \$1,100, the first due in August and the second due in February.

***For Year Two*** we require either a full payment of \$2,800 or two installments of \$1,400, the first due in August and the second due in February. We appreciate your cooperation in meeting the payment deadlines.

### **Must I stay overnight at Mercy Center for the intensive sessions?**

Yes Over the years, we have found the benefit to forming a contemplative learning community in the beautiful space of our retreat setting. It enhances prayer and promotes the silence and space needed to support the learning and practice of the program.



**Are there assignments or other work between the weekend sessions?** Yes. You will be assigned reading, reflection papers, mentor work, and also doing your own spiritual direction with others just a few months after beginning the program. You will also be seeing an individual supervisor and doing verbatims and reflective work related to the supervision process. In addition to the reading, reflection, mentor work, spiritual direction session, and supervision, each participant is required to attend the Don Bisson workshop focused on spiritual direction held at Mercy Center in January.

**Once I am accepted to the program, what else will I be required to do?**

- Continue to be open to the process of prayerful discernment with staff and others about your call to the ministry – it is ongoing
- Continue in monthly spiritual direction
- Be in supervision with a Mercy Center-approved supervisor
- Attend all sessions and complete all assignments by deadlines

**What are the topics covered in the Art and Practice program?**

Mercy Center integrates our long experience in formation of spiritual directors, presenting a contemplative program that is focused on interior growth and discernment. While we continue to refine the new format with our intensives, know that most and more of these topics will be included in our learning structure.

Contemplative Attitude/Graced History

Contemplative Attitude toward our growing edges

Directing Another in Prayer

Director's Psychological and Spiritual Growth

Human Experience/Religious Experience

Interior Movements

Theological Presuppositions

Directing Another in Discernment

Addictions and Spiritual Direction

Generation and Culture in Direction

Integrating Spirituality and Social Structure

Sexuality and Spiritual Direction

Marginalization and Spiritual Direction

Initial Spiritual Direction Session

Finding directees for the practicum component

Supervision and its gifts

Discernment of call

Professional considerations and ethics of the ministry of spiritual direction



### **Who is on the Art and Practice team?**

Core team will include Maggie Arbino, Suzanne Buckley, William Dohar, and Liz Lawhead. Presenters and mentors will include other very experienced Mercy Center adjunct staff and experts in spiritual direction.

### **Why did Mercy Center change the format of the program to intensives?**

The spiritual life is about listening deeply to reality and responding in a loving and practical way. The signs of the times have shown us that we need to be even more mindful of the impact of our overly busy culture. We are inviting our participants to enter even more deeply into the formation process by this time commitment and slowing down the pace a bit.

We are also at a point in our ministry where we need to pay even closer attention to our future sustainability. Mercy Center, like all organizations, faces resource limitations. This schedule is a much better use of our retreat space, staffing, and appropriate supporting technology, and allows us to continue to present this very important program in an era of limited resources.

### **What are the program's admissions criteria?**

You have completed Sacred Journey or an equivalent contemplative spiritual formation program. You are currently in direction, and will be in ongoing spiritual direction for at least two years by August 2018. You have an active prayer practice and participation in a faith community.

Your educational background includes some study of scripture, contemporary theology, spirituality, or psychology that supports a ministry of spiritual direction. You can access the Internet and comfortably use email and websites for program communications.

You have reviewed the 2018/2019 and 2019/20 schedules of intensive sessions and are able to attend ALL sessions. There is enough spaciousness in your current life and commitments that you can be fully present to program work and interior processes.

You have a conviction that you meet all the criteria described above.

### **I won't be able attend all of the sessions. Can I still apply for Art and Practice?**

No, and there are no exceptions. Attendance at all sessions is mandatory. You must be able to attend all days of all sessions. The staff puts a very high priority on attendance for the sake of the integrity of the program. Sessions are always process oriented and cannot be made-up if missed.

### **Are there any scholarships/financial aid available?**

There is very limited financial aid for this program, some partial scholarship grants are available each year. Separate application process after acceptance to the program.

Please read and review all of this information carefully. These are the most common questions related to our program. We are always happy to help you if you need more information.