LISTENING HEARTS MINISTRIES

COMMUNITY DISCERNMENT FOR CALLS TO MINISTRY

To Implement the Title III Canons on Ministry

PROGRAM SUMMARY

OVERVIEW

This program gives Diocesan Commissions on Ministry the resources to provide opportunities for discernment of call in community to all baptized persons. It carefully prepares diocesan facilitators to train and mentor parish discernment committees in the practice of spiritual discernment. It includes format and materials to support the work of these committees.

INTENDED AUDIENCE

Diocesan Spiritual Discernment Facilitators need to possess leadership ability and to be conscientious, diplomatic, and spiritually mature. They must be committed to the basic principles put forth in *Listening Hearts* and *Grounded in God*. Each training group consists of six people recruited by the diocese to serve as facilitators. One staff person may be designated to audit the training, observing the discernment sessions and fully participating in all other aspects of the two weekends.

SUMMARY OF PROGRAM CONTENT

Diocesan Facilitators attend two consecutive two-night overnight retreats at a retreat facility. Workshop sessions, creative meditation exercises, and supervised discernment sessions provide an immersion experience in discernment that is rooted in classic spirituality. Participants leave with program materials that equip them to teach spiritual discernment to congregation-based discernment committees and thereafter provide guidance and encouragement to the groups as they carry out their responsibilities.

Cost: $5000 for the two training weekends for a training group ($1200 deposit required), plus travel for the Listening Hearts Trainer. The diocese arranges for the retreat center and assumes the expense of the food and lodging.

To discuss the program in more detail, call the Listening Hearts office at (410) 366-1851.

LISTENING HEARTS MINISTRIES

SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT
TRAINING FOR DIOCESAN FACILITATORS

PARTICIPANT COMMENTS

"This program has refined some of my rough edges and pointed out some growing edges. I have learned so much! And will be processing all of it for some time."

"This training has helped me to listen, to listen to the other person without thinking of what I'm going to say. And to trust—trust in the Spirit without thinking I need to have the answers—to relax in that knowledge."

"You have provided an excellent foundation."

"I really liked the meditation time. . . .Wrapping everything in prayer is really neat. I felt like I was on retreat."

"I really liked the materials, and your creativity and intentionality. . . . Also we all benefited from the depth and breadth of your experience."

"[The materials are] well written, on task and helpful."

"I feel very equipped—this is to say, I believe I have access to the tools needed and I believe that the Holy Spirit will continue to guide me and the Diocese."

"I have been given the structure and substance to proceed and the assurance of help if needed."

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PARTICIPANT COMMENTS

"I feel this program has given me perspectives, tools, and understanding that will be invaluable to me as a Diocesan Spiritual Discernment Facilitator. Thank you!"

"I feel the whole weekend was covered in prayer."

"I'm . . .energized in heart and mind."

"Thank you for your modeling of prayerfulness and graciousness."

"We were on Holy ground."

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Soon…any committed Christian can receive individual guidance in hearing and heeding God's call. The buzzword is "discernment." Peggy Hombs, Coordinator for the Ordination Process, defines "discernment" as "a way to prayerfully listen for understanding about what God is calling you to do.…What we used to call 'discernment' was actually 'screening,'" explains Peggy. "We plied you with medical and psychological tests, asked you for transcripts and references, and did several rounds of interviews." She pauses a beat: "You may notice God is missing from all that."

The Rev. Torrence Harman of St. James's, Richmond…says, "This makes so much sense. It's a change in how we look at in- and outreach in the Church. We used to slot parishioners into needs, given their skills.…It's a new paradigm."

Excerpted from an article by Susan Thieleman