

Q5 What Is a Spiritual Director?

“Get a spiritual director.”

These are words that every Catholic who has become serious about her faith journey and every person who begins to have serious questions while on her faith journey hears from all the ‘reliable’ sources. This is great advice. It is the two subsequent questions that create the angst: “What is a spiritual director?” and “Where do I get one?” We will begin with the first question and, of logic of progression, move naturally to the second. And here is the crux of the matter: having a spiritual director is something that is in accord with our nature as spiritual beings, and God has built into us both to seek a spiritual director and to receive one. This sounds pretty basic, and there is much more at play in this, yet the naturalness of it all is where we will begin.

Before going further, I refer the reader to Appendix C. In that appendix I have included a diagram and explanation of the human faculties. It is my version, and it is designed to be practical toward the work of this treatise. You may want to put a bookmark in that Appendix. I will be returning to its ideas throughout this treatise (as I already have under the previous Questions). The information I present is based on the Tradition of what the human person is in nature and essence. The current foundational understanding of this comes from the writings of St Thomas Aquinas. My recent study of these has been through the current and relevant writings of Fr Chad Ripperger in *Introduction to the Science of Mental Health and Dominion*.¹ Return to Appendix C as needed. You do not need to understand it all at once. Its relevance and understanding will unfold as you work through the various topics of this treatise and as you grow in virtue and perfection of your faculties. I invite the reader to take a few minutes to look at Appendix C before reading further.

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1 Both titles are available in various editions through Sensus Traditionis Press.