

Human Faculties and Spiritual Direction

You are human. You have a set of faculties which include material, also called physical, aspects as well as spiritual, often referred to as metaphysical or immaterial, aspects. Two of your faculties, the two through which you are truly in the image of God, your intellect and will, are purely spiritual. God created you this way, and the highest part of your created being is in these two parts that are uniquely God's own image. All of the other faculties are subject in some way to the intellect and will, and each faculty has its own distinct nature of operation and its own natural object of function.

It is reasonable and expected that God has set things up in such a way that all of your faculties can eventually operate at the fullness of their natures. Our fallen nature works against God's Plan, as does actual sin. Because of this, God has 'resources' in place to help you on the journey. One of these is called **spiritual direction**. A person, someone who has ordered authority over another person under the Natural Law or the Divine Positive Law, who can both make available and discern spiritual direction for this other person is called a **spiritual director**.

The Guide in the Forest

St Teresa of Avila wrote that if you have a choice of a spiritual director who is more holy or one who is more knowledgeable, take the one who is more knowledgeable. The Church has affirmed this viewpoint as a solid criteria of reference when choosing a spiritual director.

One thing about this sounds quite fascinating in the world and circumstances from which I am writing, namely, the idea that I can 'choose' a spiritual director. The lived reality in my local neighbourhood of the Church, and in the majority of Church neighbourhoods in the world today, is that it is apparently difficult to find a spiritual director at all. This is one of the reasons I am writing this treatise: to help those on the faith journey find the spiritual direction they need, including finding a spiritual director when they need one. I am of the belief that God will not leave His faithful abandoned in this necessary area of the spiritual journey, and it is both my personal experience as well as the witness and testimony of the Saints that gives me good cause to