

Spiritual Direction Formation 2022

Thank you for your enquiry about this course. This information package includes the following information for your consideration:

- 1. Application Process.
- 2. The Story of the Living Well Centre.
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- 5. The Curriculum
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- 9. Assessment and discernment of charism.
- 10. Is this for you?
- 11. Application papers to be completed and returned.

This program has been designed in accordance with the requirements of the Australian Ecumenical Council for Spiritual Direction and has been granted their formal Recognition.



1. Application Process

Our desire is to discern with you your readiness and suitability for this course. In your written material we will seek to reach a decision which will reflect our mutual understanding of what God is calling you to at this stage of your life and ministry. So in the material you send please tell us everything you can which will help us in our mutual discerning. To further assist us, if necessary, we may invite you to an interview.

- Complete the application form. It will be assumed when you apply that you consent to attending every session of the course as well as undertaking reading and writing and other work as required.
- 2. Write a personal essay, telling us what you can about yourself in support of your application. You will find Guidelines to assist you in writing this piece.
- 3. Contact three referees who can also tell us something about you one of whom should be the person who is currently your spiritual director. We need to alert you to the fact that the Ethical Guidelines for the Australian Ecumenical Council for Spiritual Direction (AECSD) advise directees and directees that the personal identity of people in these relationships should not be divulged. In principle we support that position. However, on this occasion we believe that the person who is your spiritual director might be in the best position to help us discern your readiness for this program. Therefore we encourage you to contact them for a reference unless in conscience you choose to comply with the AECSD Guidelines.
- **4.** Send all this information, when it is ready, back to us. **Final date for applications is 30 November 2021.**
- 5. We will call you for a personal interview where the material you have presented will be explored, if we think it necessary.

Successful applicants will be advised after decisions about applications have been made. With the advice of your acceptance into the program, you will also receive an Invoice with options for paying the required fee.

The recommended fee for 2021 per student is \$1500 pa. However we have a number of options which you may consider when thinking about paying your fees.

- 1. If you are able to pay this amount then please do so. You may arrange with our administrator to pay by instalments through the year if that is necessary according to your circumstances.
- If you are feeling called to participate in this program but cannot afford to pay our suggested fee, then please feel free to discuss with the administrator what you would be able to afford. It is our belief that anyone who is called to the program should

participate and ability to pay should not be a barrier. Anyone who desires to enter the program and has limited financial resources will still be welcome.

3. We also suggest to those who have extra financial resources that you reflect on what you might be able to pay over and above the recommended fee. In this way surplus funds can be made available to assist applicants with limited resources.

In 2022, the dates are:

February 22, 23, 24 May 24, 25, 26 August 23, 24, 25 November 22, 23, 24

Each day runs from 9am to 5pm with a 2-hour break for lunch.

The location for these three-day gatherings is St Stephen & St Mary Anglican Church, 383 High Street Road, Mount Waverley, Victoria. The centre has excellent facilities and provides everything we need. There is plenty of off street car parking at the Church.

When you have completed all the application papers please return them to:

The Administrator,
The Living Well Centre
30 Waterside Drive,
Waterways. Vic., 3195

Or you might email it to:

administration@livingwellcentre.org.au

We look forward to the next steps of this journey with you.

Cath Connelly and John Stewart
Co-Directors



2. The Story of The Living Well Centre for Christian Spirituality Inc.

For over fifty years the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne offered at the Retreat House in Cheltenham a ministry of spirituality, direction and retreats. At the end of 2000 the Retreat House was closed. After a period of discernment the ministry was transferred to a new base in the context of an inner city parish, Holy Trinity East Melbourne. For ten years the ministry was developed as a partnership between the Diocese and the parish community. The Vicar of the parish, John Stewart, was also the Director of the Centre. At the start of 2011 John Stewart retired from the ministry at that parish and moved to become Associate Priest at St George's Anglican Church, Malvern. The ministry of the Living Well Centre also moved and has been based at St George's Centre, Malvern since then.

At the end of 2018 the decision was made to leave St George's Malvern and move our formation programs to a new home at The Community of the Holy Name Spirituality Centre in Cheltenham. This brought us back to where this ministry began in 1993 at the former Retreat House. Recent changes have led to a move to our new location, St Stephen & St Mary Anglican Church, Mount Waverley. We are most grateful to the members of this parish for the generous hospitality they provide.

In 2011 The Living Well Centre became an Incorporated Association with the aims of

- a. providing opportunities for exploring the Christian Spiritual Tradition through seminars, workshops, lectures and retreats;
- b. encouraging the exploration of spiritual practices and faithful living; and
- c. offering the ministry of spiritual direction to all who seek it and to encourage the ongoing personal, spiritual and professional development of spiritual directors.

The image of the Living Well is a familiar one from John's Gospel where Jesus encounters a foreign woman at the well. They have a discussion about human thirst, longing, meaning and direction in life. This centre seeks to offer a place where people might still meet Jesus and share with him the deepest places of their lives. The image is also ambiguous, having many layers of meaning. For some it will evoke some thinking about 'living well' as opposed to living badly, or living half-heartedly or barely living at all.

3. The Story of This Spiritual Direction Formation Program.

Whilst we were at the Retreat House we offered a Program called Spiritual Companioning Formation. It was an eight day residential intensive Program introducing people to the theory and practice of the ministry of spiritual direction. Over the six years the Program was run, more than one hundred people attended. Invariably we were asked for something to follow on. When we moved to East Melbourne we took that request seriously and began a process of discernment about what was needed.

By the end of 2003 we were ready to advertise for participants and the response was far more than we expected. It has remained so for each subsequent year and more than 100 people have participated in the program.

From 2004 to 2012 the program focused around a number of strands, which drew heavily on the tradition of spiritual direction received from the spiritual fathers and mothers of the church. During 2012 the leadership of the program was drawn to consider making changes to the structure and content of the program, to draw upon both the tradition and contemporary contributions to thinking about the spiritual life. The result is this program, offered for the first time in 2013 and commenced its second four-year cycle in 2017.

Towards the end of 2017 a number of circumstances called us to make some changes to the program as it moves into the future. Changes have been made to the input text we use, our way of exploring the spirituality writings from the centuries, and some of the approaches we use for supervision of spiritual directors in training. All these new details are incorporated into this document.

4. The Ethos of the Program

When the program was first offered in 2003 it was the result of much prayerful planning. We sought to design a program to meet the following needs:

- A course that was spread over a longer period of time so that participants could still
 engage in employment and life commitments and to allow the learning to be
 integrated more deeply.
- A course that made it possible for people in rural and remote areas to attend.
- A course that was financially accessible to people with limited means.
- A course that was based in an Anglican ethos whilst welcoming members of other faith traditions.
- A course that would complement the other courses being offered in the city.
- A course where people might grow in their understanding of what this ministry is about and how it works.
- A course which provides an ongoing discernment process where participants can work with us to discern whether they are called and gifted by God for the ministry of spiritual direction.

The principal theological affirmations we bring to the formation of spiritual directors in this program:

- 1. God acts concretely in our world.
- 2. God is present in all human experience and can be experienced in our hearts, minds, imaginations, psyches, and bodies. God is in us and with us.
- 3. God is always giving Godself away in loving self communication. God wants to be known.
- 4. God is always taking the initiative in coming to us.

- 5. The communication of God is loving and kind and for the good, even in times of challenge. God desires us and this desire finds a home in our own desire for God.
- 6. It is possible to know this God. Wherever love is, there is God.
- 7. Human beings can refuse this communication and relationship.
 Brokenness, blindness, unfreedom can keep us from noticing and responding.
 Resistance is part of the human territory. We have freedom to go with God and our most authentic self or we can move away.

In the direction conversation we hear both the inbreaking of God and the full range of human response.

The principal assumptions about spiritual direction we bring to this program:

- 1. There is a great desire for more in the directee; she wants to grow in a relationship with God and the director has a desire to facilitate this-
- 2. The starting point of the direction conversation is the human experience of the directee.
- 3. In that conversation the director is listening for the traces of mystery/the experience of God wherever it is being experienced.
- 4. This relationship is different from other one-on-one helping relationships.
- 5. The director behaves and acts on the belief that every human being is basically good.
- 6. Spiritual directors are called and graced (vocation and charism) from within a community of faith.
- 7. A spiritual director maintains the health and freedom needed to engage in this community through practices which are ethical, and include a commitment to one's own spiritual direction and to the process of supervision.

The precursor to formal spiritual direction is what God has already been doing in our lives - and before our formal understanding of spiritual direction - the Spirit has been involved with us, leading us, inviting us, gracing us - whenever we experience goodness, beauty, or depth; whenever we experience and come up against our limitations - of being small, powerless, bewildered, discontent or mortal; whenever we experience or feel an inner nudge of conscience, of turning toward or doing the good; whenever we experience special graced moments of wonder and awe and astonishment, of deep union or conversion.

5. Curriculum.

We remain open to the development of the program in the light of ongoing review and reflection on the experience of the leaders and the participants.

At the start of 2018 we commenced working with the writings of Dr Andrew Mayes. Andrew is an Anglican priest working in the UK. He was for many years in Jerusalem where he worked

as Course Director at St George's College. He was Advisor for Spirituality and a parish priest in the Diocese of Chichester and was guest presenter at our ANSD Conference in Sydney in 2014. During 2018 he moved to a similar position in the Diocese of Cyprus.

He is the author of many books and we use four of them – one for each year of our program. We continue to follow a four-year cycle in that throughout all human experience there are four great paradigms. Our aim is to honour these four paths by selecting each year the Mayes book that specifically addresses each of these paradigms.

The plan is as follows:

2022 (Year 2) Reflecting on the human condition of suffering and the role of spiritual directors accompanying such people:

Spirituality of Struggle – pathways to growth.

In this book Andrew examines many biblical characters who struggle with God as well as great spiritual writers. He proposes that the tussles which make up such a part of our lives can be the very way we find God. They can help us work out a mature and reflective faith.

2023 (Year 3) Reflecting on the human need to slow down, take stock, look inwards and find our centre and the role of spiritual directors accompanying such people:

Learning the Language of the Soul – a spiritual lexicon.

Andrew explores creative and inspirational metaphors to equip those wanting to communicate effectively about their spiritual journey. The book will loosen our tongues as we discover images from both the Christian tradition and contemporary culture that help us express and develop a spiritual literacy by which we share the joys and struggles of inner life.

2024 (Year 4) Reflecting on the questions: "What is it the Divine wants to be made known through me?" and "How do I grow in Christlikeness in order to serve in God's world as a spiritual director?"

Another Christ - re-envisioning ministry

Growth in Christlikeness is a goal for all Christians. Andrew explores how the first-century setting of Jesus reveals him as gutsy, provocative and forever breaking out of boxes and titles. This work can help us re-imagine our service of others today.

2025 (Year 1) Reflecting on the human experience of change and the role of spiritual directors accompanying such people:

Beyond the edge – spiritual transitions for adventurous souls.

Andrew wrote this book for those who wish to go deeply into the spiritual life, for spiritual directors, and for those who walk with others on their prayer journey. Responding to Jesus' summons to follow him, we find ourselves leaving familiar certainties and securities behind as we step out boldly in faith. Old boundaries dissolve as we are led into liminal spaces – exhilarating situations, new places of discovery and radical spiritual growth. The place of risk is the threshold of the divine.

On Tuesday afternoons we have a session looking at one of the great spiritual writers from history – focusing on something of their life story and their writing then looking specifically at their contribution to the work of spiritual direction and the human journey of transformation.

The program for those commencing in 2022 is:

Year 1 2022

February St Francis of Assisi 1181 to 1226
May Meister Eckhart c1260 to 1327
August St Julian of Norwich c1342 to 1413
November The Cloud of Unknowing 14th century

Year 2 2023

February St Ignatius of Loyola c1491 to 1556
May St Teresa of Avila 1515 to 1582
August St John of the Cross 1542 to 1591
November Evelyn Underhill 1875 to 1941

Year 3 2024

February Thomas Merton 1915 - 1968 May John O'Donohue 1956 - 2008

August Richard Rohr 1943 -November Rowan Williams 1950 -

Year 4 2025

February The Desert Tradition 3rd and 4th centuries
May The Celtic Tradition 4th – 7th centuries.
August St Benedict of Nursia c480 to c550
November St Hildegard of Bingen 1098 to 1179

On Thursday mornings we have skills development, looking at the essential skills spiritual direction need to be developing. Each session comprises some input, reading, observing role plays and sharing responses and questions.

What is spiritual tradition? Explored by input, reading and role plays.

The initial spiritual direction conversation.

Contemplative listening in spiritual direction.

Preparing for supervision of direction.

Telling the Sacred Tale.

Comparing and contrasting the approaches of therapy, pastoral counselling and spiritual direction.

Working with *Images of God.*

Enneagram as a resource for working in direction.

The AECSD *Code of Ethics* document.

Working with our vulnerable spots.

Working with the voices of our inner village.

What to expect from Christian spiritual direction.

Paying careful attention to our identity and role in a multi-faith and multi-national context.

Projection, transference and counter-transference.

Living the Paschal Mystery.

On Thursday afternoons we explore a range of prayer practices and resources which director can use for themselves and also offer in direction sessions when appropriate.

Praying in a time of change.

Praying in a time of blessing and growth.

Praying with the Beatitudes

Music as spiritual practice.

Meditation leading to self knowledge and speaking the truth.

Imaginative prayer.

Breath prayer.

The Jesus prayer.

The Examen or Review of the Day of St Ignatius of Loyola

Poetry as spiritual practice.

The prayer of St Brendan

Praying with John's Prologue

St Francis of Assisi Prayer of the senses

Pilgrimage as prayer

Praying in nature and creation

Praying from a risky and scary place

Prayer using creative materials, drawing, painting, clay, beholding postcards.

6. Structure of the Days

In the sixth century a man named Benedict who was from Nursia in Italy designed what he termed "a little rule" in order to help the monastic community that he founded to better love God, self and each other. The Rule fosters a way of life that is rooted and grounded in Christ and becomes a tool that we can use to find a centre of stability and balance so needed in today's world. The Rule assists by giving "tools," in Benedict's words, "to open our eyes to the light that comes from God.

The course runs over four years, with four sets of three days each year. The course runs sequentially. So a person commencing in 2022 will do years 2, 3, 4, 1. A person commencing in 2023 will do years 3, 4, 1 and 2. And so on.

The pattern for each three day session is as follows:

Each day begins with worship prepared and led by participants in turn.

Tuesdays

Exploration of the human journey and our particular theme for the year:

- What is the teaching offered by Andrew Mayes?
- Personal and spiritual direction experiences of this pathway.

In the afternoon we will reflect on some of the key writers of the History of Christian Spirituality in chronological order.

Wednesdays

Everyone is in supervision for the whole day. These sessions allow supervisors and participants to work closely together on individual needs, growth points and so on. In the first year or so, participants will belong to a group of four plus a supervisor. They take it in

turns to direct a member of the group, and then reflect on the experience of what happened. When moving into year two and beyond, participants will be required to be directing some people outside the contact of the programme. They bring to the supervision group prepared reflections on what has been happening in their actual directing of people.

Thursdays

The mornings focus on skills training, addressing specific spiritual direction practices which are arising in the Wednesday and Thursday work. The afternoons we exploring different ways of praying and spiritual practices. We conclude our three days together with brief worship and a closing ritual.

7. Expectations for Written Work

Each participant is required to submit, by email in the month following the three-day session, a 1,000 word written response to the input and experience of the days.

At the end of each of the first three years the requirement is a piece of 3,000 words. We provide specific guidelines for this writing closer to the time, e.g. understanding of the nature of this spiritual pathway (from personal experience, input, directing others); connections with a piece from the wider tradition and theology as appropriate; spiritual practices appropriate for this pathway; things to keep in mind when directing people on this pathway.

This written material becomes the focus of our annual conversation about your progress and your growing sense of yourself being called and equipped for the ministry of spiritual direction.

9. Assessment and discernment of charism for spiritual direction.

Assessment of a student's progress is an ongoing process which is addressed in an annual conversation, comprising the following steps:

- Participation in the lectures, small group and plenary discussions. We recognise that
 people come to these activities in a variety of modes and moods and yet we do look
 for an active entering into all that is going on.
- Submission of written work progressively throughout the course. This is to show understanding and integration of the input, from the reading and reflection sheets provided, and from personal prayer and ministry. This growing body of writing will reveal the journey being undertaken over the four years and especially the changes occurring in understanding, competence and charism.
- 3. Supervision of ministry as a director. As the course proceeds we expect students will be actually engaged in directing people and we recommend three directees as an acceptable number. The supervision practicum in years one and two offers opportunity to take turns as a director under the observation of other members of a small group, together with an allocated supervisor. In years three and four, when we

expect that each student will be directing outside the sessions, these small groups will each have an outside supervisor who will work with verbatim presentations prepared by each member in advance. The reports of the supervisors will be another part of our assessment process.

4. Our discernment of the charism for spiritual direction. Those who meet the practical and academic criteria, and in whom we discern the presence of this charism, will be issued with a Certificate of Accreditation to that effect. These people will be commended to their faith communities for this ministry and for further licensing or authorising according to their local provisions. Those who have participated and whom we have discerned are not called to this ministry will be issued with a Certificate indicating they have completed the Requirements of the Course. This discernment is not simply reducible to satisfactory fulfilment of the formal work-requirements. For some members it brings the affirmation of a call. For others, it means coming to a peaceful (if also painful) recognition that God does not seem to have gifted the person with the charism or readiness to be publicly and formally recognised for this ministry. His or her gifts and calling lie elsewhere. We understand that vocation is in the end a mystery and the discernment of it is fallible. But we do desire to see how God is present and calling a person, in this Program and beyond, and after consultation we do our very best to make a decision that is Spirit-led.

9. Is spiritual direction formation for you?

This program has been designed in accordance with the requirements of the Australian Ecumenical Council for Spiritual Direction and has been granted their formal Recognition.

Accordingly, admission to the program requires applicants to be able to demonstrate:

- a sense of call to the ministry of spiritual direction and evidence of their giftedness for this vocation;
- a capacity to listen empathically and enter sensitively into spiritual conversation;
- sufficient life experience to enable them to respond with wisdom to a wide range of people;
- an openness to learning from their own and others' experience; as well as to learning from scripture and tradition, study, reflection, written and group work;
- a mature and committed Christian faith, an openness to struggle, a preparedness to embrace paradox and mystery, a willingness to change in response to the call of God, and on openness to the whole community of faith;
- a love of and commitment to prayer;
- that they have been receiving direction for some time and they are currently in direction.

Integral to personal growth are the nourishment of a prayerful and contemplative approach to life, self-awareness and sensitivity to the movements of the Spirit. Personal and spiritual growth is the most important source of knowledge for the person training to be engaged in the ministry of spiritual direction. Therefore, each student is required to have regular spiritual direction throughout this program.

The process of spiritual direction requires appropriate relationships between directors and directees. The development of personal self-awareness and relational openness of the student is an essential requirement in formation.

The interpersonal relationship is a core element in the spiritual direction process. If it becomes apparent during a formation program that a student has major psychological issues to be attended to, he or she will be encouraged to undergo appropriate counselling or therapy as a way of deepening personal congruence and self-awareness.



Spiritual Direction Formation 2022 Application Form

Name:	
Address:	
Phone	Age:
Email address	
Faith Community:	
Current Occupation:	
Educational Background:	
Your Vocational Journey:	

Referees:

Please list the names, addresses and telephone numbers of two or three people whom you would trust to know your work and potential as a spiritual director/guide. Ask these people to send us a letter of recommendation for you before the application deadline, following the enclosed guidelines. We recommend that one of your referees should be the person who is currently your spiritual director. However, as spiritual direction relationships are confidential and protected under the AECSD code of ethics, it will be necessary for you to authorize your director to communicate with us about your application. We recommend that you do this by

providing them with the following written statement: "I authorize you to communicate with the leaders of the Living Well Centre for Christian Spirituality for the purposes of my application for admission to their formation program." If you do not wish to provide a reference from your spiritual director, you will still need to supply the contact details of three referees, and you will also need to name your director and estimate the length of time you have been in a direction relationship.

1.
2.
3.
Name of your spiritual director (if they are not one of the referees listed above):
How many years have you been in this direction relationship?



Spiritual Direction Formation 2022 Personal Essay

As part of your application form, we ask you to prepare a personal essay telling us what you want us to know about yourself. Our task at the outset is to discern with you about your readiness and suitability for this course – so include in your essay everything you think will help us in our discerning.

In particular we want you to comment on these points which are requirements for all applicants. Please demonstrate for us how you understand for yourself

- your sense of call to the ministry of spiritual direction and evidence of your giftedness for this vocation;
- your capacity to listen empathically and enter sensitively into spiritual conversation;
- your life experience which enables you to respond with wisdom to a wide range of people;
- your openness to learning from your own and others' experience; as well as to learning from scripture and tradition, study, reflection, written and group work;
- your mature and committed Christian faith, an openness to struggle, a preparedness to
 embrace paradox and mystery, a willingness to change in response to the call of God, and
 an openness to the whole community of faith;
- your love of and commitment to prayer;
- your experience of receiving direction for some time and your current direction relationship.

Please ensure that your essay has your name on every page.



Spiritual Direction Formation 2022 Guidelines for Referees

You have been asked to furnish a personal recommendation for an applicant for this course. The application process seeks to discern the readiness and suitability of applicants for the course. We ask you in this reference to tell us whatever you can about the applicant which will inform our discernment. We thank you for your willingness to assist in this important way.

If you are the applicant's spiritual director, before you release any information to us the applicant should provide you with the signed authorization below.

AUTHORISAT	TION TO RE	ELEASE INFORMA	ATION		
release infor Well Centre	mation rel for Christia	ated to our spirit	corporated for the pu	authornship to the leaders of my applicat	_
Signature of	applicant:				
Date:	/	/			