

Ministry Discernment

Discernment is a process which calls us to continual conversion as we search for God's will. By the practice of discernment we listen to God's continuing call and grow sensitive to the inner movements that prompt our actions. Discernment is both personal and communal. To practice discernment well as a Congregation, it must first become an integral part of our personal lives. Understanding the principles of discernment is essential in using the discernment process. Not only are we called to listen to persons, events, and circumstances of our lives, the signs of the times, and to dialogue with others to discern the will of God, but also to maintain a spirit of faith and openness throughout the discernment process.

Prayer is an integral part of the discernment process. In looking at a new ministry site or ministry, the sister reflects on the needs of the Church, and the community, as well as her own needs and gifts. The following questions will serve as a guide:

1. Does this ministry afford me opportunity to witness to Gospel values/evangelization?
2. What are the specific values promulgated by this ministry and can I articulate the practices that support and make public the direction and goals of the ministry?
3. Is it connected to the Congregation's vision and mission?
4. Who else (persons/entities) affirm this ministry as a needed service?
5. In looking at ministry sites, is my preference for the poor or underserved?
6. How does this ministry support the empowerment of the poor, enabling them to move toward self respect and self actualization?
7. Has the ministry shown proven financial stability over time and does it promise future stability and growth?
8. Am I satisfied that this ministry supports the promotion of social justice, e.g. in wages, benefits for all personnel, etc.?
9. Does the ministry fulfill or could it fulfill the professional standards for this area of service?

10. How am I suited for this ministry in terms of education, experience, skills, personal obligations and temperament?
11. How would taking the position be beneficial for the community and for me in terms of growth and development?
12. Does the ministry provide for clear position descriptions and accountability?
13. Does it allow me to participate fully in the life of the Congregation?
14. What changes in remuneration will taking this position imply?
15. What other changes do I foresee for me and for my lifestyle by taking this position?
16. How would you sum up your hopes for this ministry when you leave?
17. What will be the implications of my decision on the Congregation?

Recommendation:

What do I believe God is calling me to in light of the needs of the Church and the mission and needs of the Congregation?