



## **DIPLOMA IN SPIRITUALITY (SPIRITUAL DIRECTION)**

We believe there is a need for spiritual guidance in our society, for people willing to walk with others in their journey of faith. If you find yourself drawn to help others in their search for God or are a person others tend to confide in, training in spiritual direction might be for you.

Training in spiritual direction has been offered in Manresa for almost 40 years and is currently given in the form of a two-year course consisting of seven weekends each year. Drawing on the insights of spirituality, psychology and scripture, this two year course will prepare you for the ministry of guiding others in their faith lives. This unique offering, with ongoing supervision and mentoring over two years, allows participants to develop and deepen their skills over time. Applicants following the course at Manresa are resident during each of the weekends which offers the added opportunity of an important group experience which significantly enhances the learning experience. We work within the Ignatian tradition which is a rich source of guidance in discerning the ways of God and which equips participants in the course to help others find their way in our sometimes confusing world.

This course is offered in Manresa, Jesuit Centre for Spirituality, Dublin. Students successfully completing the course will receive a Diploma in Spirituality (Spiritual Direction) from St. Patrick's College Maynooth.

### **Programme Content**

This is, at its core, a formation programme, fostering a reflective approach to life and noticing God at the heart of it. During the first year of the course there is a focus on deepening your own spiritual life and prayer experience, furthering your capacity to reflect, developing your listening and communication skills and learning to accompany others. From the second term of the first year, you will accompany two people, under supervision.

Topics covered in the first year include:

- The scope and limits of the ministry of spiritual direction
- Personal history and the role of narrative in spiritual direction
- Development in prayer: Theology & Practice
- Psychological, Biblical & Theological aspects of spiritual direction
- Following Christ and the cost of discipleship
- Introduction to discernment

During the second year of the course central aspects of spiritual direction are re-visited and deepened with a more specific focus on the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola, on discernment, and on the reflection on your ongoing practice of spiritual direction. The second year is characterised by an integration of learning.

Topics in the second year include:

- The roles of 'director' and 'directee' in spiritual direction
- Human frailty and the need of God
- Understanding the human person & the meaning of Christ's coming
- Christ's call to work for justice and peace
- Growing in freedom; discerning good choices
- Contemplative prayer

The programme is interactive, experiential and will engage participants at a personal level. Different methods are employed such as: input; case studies; 'real' plays; triads; discussion; guided reading; written reflection; group work and ongoing supervision on a one-to-one basis that continues throughout the two years of the programme.

### **Entry requirements**

The programme is open to Christians of any denomination.

Ideally, candidates for the programme:

- Experience a call to help others in this ministry and find themselves approached by others to talk about issues of faith
- Have experience of receiving spiritual direction over a period of time
- Demonstrate a reflective capacity, personal maturity and awareness of God in life
- Have sufficient theological and scriptural knowledge to participate in the course
- Give commitment to meeting all the requirements of the programme

**Programme dates**

At Manresa in Dublin each weekend begins on Friday evenings at 5pm and ends after 1pm lunch on Sunday. There are seven weekends per year, starting in September and concluding in April or May.\*

**Applications**

If you are interested in applying, we invite you to contact us for an application form. Applications are generally accepted between January and April for the course starting in September. An application form is submitted, together with a brief autobiographical account of your faith journey and recommendations from two people who know you well. All applicants will be invited for interview but as places are limited not all applicants can be accepted.

**Cost**

The programme fee\* includes all meals and en-suite accommodation for two nights on each of the weekends, tuition, reading materials, books and the registration fee for St. Patrick's College Maynooth.

\* Dates and cost may be subject to change. Final confirmation of both will take place upon offer of a place on the course.