



Spiritual Counsel



When faced with difficult decisions St. Francis sought the prayerful counsel of others, most often St. Clare of Assisi. In every age, the Lord supports us with trustworthy laity, religious, and clergy who can help us discern God's grace in our lives and encourage a courageous response from us.

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The Prayer Before the Crucifix

by St. Francis of Assisi

*Most High, glorious God,
Enlighten the darkness of
my heart and give me
true faith, certain hope,
and perfect charity, sense
and knowledge, Lord,
that I may carry out your
holy and true command.*



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Living Fully in Christ



Franciscan Discernment



Living fully in Christ

means continually turning to God. Whether we are single, married, in a religious community, or in the priesthood, the process of discernment strengthens this relationship with our creator.

Discernment is an ongoing, even daily process that helps us seek the Lord's guidance in all our important decision making. It first helps us to discover our particular calling and then to entrust ourselves to God's loving care as this vocation develops over time.

Among the many Catholic ways of discerning God's direction for us, the Franciscan approach comes from the lived example of St. Francis of Assisi.



Silence

St. Francis spent countless hours in quiet prayer. He often retreated to remote places to better listen to the Lord's voice. For us today, seeking silence may begin with **limiting our time with technology and finding peaceful places** like an adoration chapel or outdoor sanctuary to be immersed in God's loving presence.

Scripture

The living Word of God guided St. Francis' discernment from the first moment of his conversion to Christ. **Regular reflection on the readings from Sunday or daily Mass** deepens our awareness of the Lord's saving action in both salvation history and in our own lives.



Sacraments

St. Francis encountered God's beauty in the sacraments and was awed by His humble and true presence in the form of simple bread. Nothing deepens our relationship with Christ more than **receiving Him in the Eucharist and seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Reconciliation.**

Saints

The Saints were a constant inspiration for St. Francis. He especially loved the Virgin Mary whose intimacy with God assured him of her powerful intercession. **We too turn to Our Lady and the Saints to help us remain fully united with the Lord.**