



IGNATIAN COMMUNAL DISCERNMENT

A spiritual mission-centric approach to group decision-making

A Desktop Primer

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IGNATIAN COMMUNAL DISCERNMENT

1. BEGIN THE PROCESS IN A STATE OF IGNATIAN INDIFFERENCE

Approach the deliberation with an impartial mindset.

2. OUTLINE THE PRO'S AND CON'S OF THE DECISION

Weigh the issues, concerns, and values in light of the mission and vision.

3. BE A CONTRIBUTOR AND AN ACTIVE LISTENER IN BRAINSTORMING A SOLUTION

Share opinions and encourage the contributions of others.

4. PRESUME GOOD INTENTIONS ON THE PART OF OTHERS

Pay close attention to people with viewpoints that differ from your own by 'seeing through their eyes.'

5. NOTICE GOD'S PRESENCE AND WILL

Be mindful of Ignatian desolation, feelings of agitation or a disharmony of thoughts and feelings, and Ignatian consolation, feelings of peace and satisfaction. Recognize that moments of inspiration and gratitude are encounters with the Divine.

6. DELIBERATE UNTIL THERE IS A SHARED CONTENTMENT WITH A DECISION

When decision-makers have united around an outcome, communicate the decision to those that are impacted and help to bring the resolution to fruition.

TIPS ON LEADING AN IGNATIAN COMMUNAL DISCERNMENT

- Engage in the process when a true decision is to be made, that is, when a specific outcome is not predetermined or desired.
- State, up-front, that an Ignatian communal discernment process is being used to make the decision, review the steps.
- Use an unhurried attentive approach by determining the style and format of the discussion in advance of the gathering.
- Introduce and frame the options in a neutral manner.
- Solicit opinions from all members of the group; share your opinion after others.
- Attend to dissenting opinions to avoid group-think (i.e., the pressure to conform to group consensus).
- Ensure that no one person dominates the process.
- Foster an atmosphere which recognizes connectedness with transcendence beyond oneself (e.g., begin with a prayer, “give the decision up to God,” use silent reflection).
- If debate heats-up, call for a moment of silence; invite decision-makers to focus on their spirit of openness and freedom [to God’s presence and will].
- Remember that Ignatian Communal Discernment is a perspective not a set of rigid instructions; adaptation is to be expected based on situational circumstances.

A PRAYER TO START A DECISION-MAKING MEETING



*Good and loving God, our source of love and light,
Thank you for bringing us together today
in a spirit of generosity.*

*May we honor one another
by keeping an open mind.*

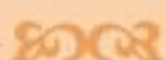
*May we voice our truth
and listen with an open heart.*

*May we discern your will
to unite in fruitful outcome.*

*We ask for your wisdom and grace,
to use our talents for the betterment of others.*

With gratitude, we offer this prayer for your inspirational guidance.

Amen



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