



Sacred Ground Spiritual Direction Formation Program

Who We Are Sacred Ground Center for Spirituality is a community of compassionate listeners that has been training and supporting spiritual directors since 1996. In addition to training spiritual directors, Sacred Ground is a center for spiritual enrichment, professional development, and peer supervision for our community of practicing spiritual directors and for spiritual seekers in the Twin Cities area.

Ignatian Spirituality is the heartbeat of our spiritual direction formation program. Being rooted in the Ignatian tradition means, in part, that:

- We are ***Grounded in Transformational Love***.
- We practice ***Finding God in All Things***.
- We practice ***Discernment***—paying attention to what leads to deeper love and deeper life and noticing what blocks us from giving and receiving life and love.
- We become ***Contemplatives in Action***—we desire to react with the mind and heart of Christ to heal our past, grow from every present situation, and engage in God’s work in the world.

Our Three-Year Cohort Formation Program

Graduates of our program often speak about their sense of community and support that they experienced during their time as students at Sacred Ground.

- **During the First Year**, students meet each semester for in-person, monthly weekend retreat days and also meet online, in real time, one evening a week for classes and for listening practice in small groups.
- During the **first semester** students are introduced to spiritual practices, with the aim of growing in both inner and outer freedom. Students practice deep listening, discernment, and “seeing God in all things,” through readings, conversation, practice sessions, and written reflections.

- The **second semester** involves an interdisciplinary approach with gleanings from psychology, theology, and sociology. Students immerse themselves in the history and wisdom of Christian spirituality, especially Christian mysticism. Students will also begin their relationships with their supervisors who are experienced spiritual directors who provide one-on-one mentoring as they begin the practice of spiritual direction.
- **During their second year** students actively practice the “three ears”: listening to God, self, and the directee. Along with regular in-person weekend seminars and online cohort meetings, students begin a spiritual direction practice with the support and guidance of their individual supervisors. Special emphasis will be placed on deepening the connections between students’ on-going experiences as directors with the wisdom of Ignatian Spirituality and the Spiritual Exercises.
- **In the third year** students deepen their practice as they continue their training and hone their skills as spiritual directors. Students meet twice a month as a cohort in facilitated supervision with a trained supervisor.

The Ignatian Spiritual Exercises are a transformative experience of contemplative practices developed by St. Ignatius of Loyola to help people deepen their relationship with God through personal discernment and meditations on Christian scripture. They consist of one-on-one weekly sessions and regular daily prayer time made over a 32-week period with a trained spiritual director. Students should complete the Exercises any time before the beginning of their second year in the program.

Our Faculty are experienced in both teaching and in the art of spiritual direction. Most have master’s degrees in theology and divinity, and all are practicing spiritual directors.

Our Supervisors are also highly experienced spiritual directors who will guide and mentor students one-on-one through their time at Sacred Ground.

For more information and for an application visit our website at sacredgroundspirit.org. We’d also love the chance to chat with you. Feel free to contact Peter Watkins peterlwatkins@gmail.com or Jessica Sanborn jessica.sanborn@sacredgroundspirit.org.