

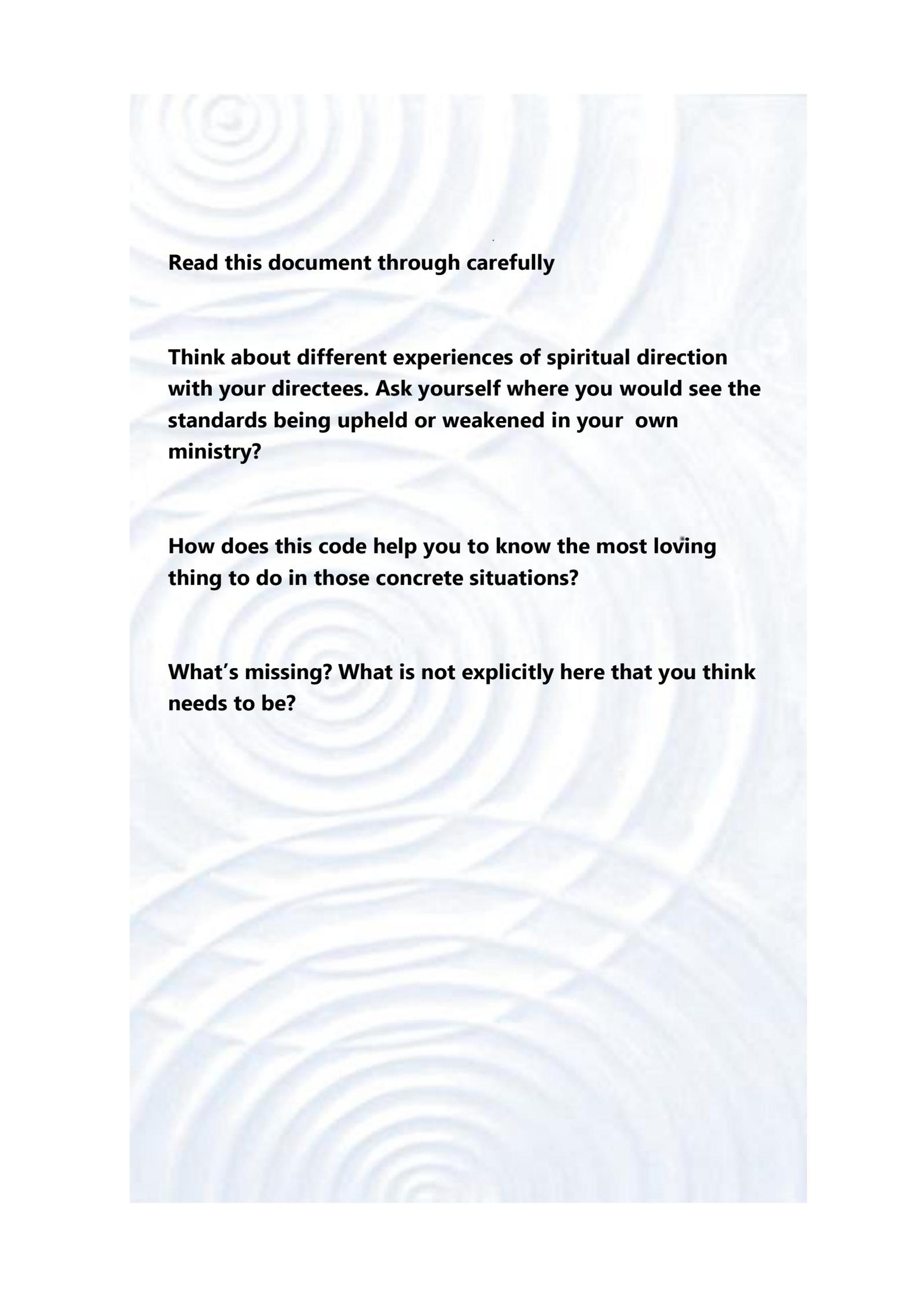


# **Threshold listening** listening to you listening to God

The logo consists of a stylized cross or plus sign with four colored arms (teal, orange, blue, and green) extending from a central point. Below the main title is a brushstroke graphic that transitions from blue on the left to green on the right.



Spiritual Directors  
Standards of Ethical Conduct February 2023



**Read this document through carefully**

**Think about different experiences of spiritual direction with your directees. Ask yourself where you would see the standards being upheld or weakened in your own ministry?**

**How does this code help you to know the most loving thing to do in those concrete situations?**

**What's missing? What is not explicitly here that you think needs to be?**

## INTRODUCTION

Spiritual Direction/accompaniment is an ancient practice in the Christian tradition, and is now popular across the denominations. It happens in groups or between two people, helping to create a wide, open and safe space, to encourage honest conversation with people/God and encouraging them to notice the movements of the spirit detectable in the changing feelings and behaviours in an ordinary day. The Spirit is always the one who directs. The spiritual director simply and sensitively helps pay attention to that Spirit.

This Code is for one-to-one direction. It is rooted in the values and attitudes of the Celtic Christian Church with its particular emphasis on:

- God present in all things; all of creation sacred.
- God's constant offer of relationship with us
- The Spirit giving each of us what's needed to be in that relationship.
- Welcome and active encouragement of difference and diversity

There is the utmost reverence and respect for each directee's individual and unique experience of life/God. Each person brings Christ to our door.

Jesus replied, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. The second most important is similar: ‘Love your neighbour as much as you love yourself.’

Matt 22: 37-39

Spiritual Direction is a charism and not a qualification. It needs nurturing to grow and to ensure that directors create healthy relationships with directees. To ensure this, the directors who covenant with us, or work alongside us, agree to standards of good practice, outlined below and based on Matthew 12: 30-31, Jesus’ invitation to love God, self and neighbour.



We want to help directors develop the character of Christ, to listen as he listened, to value what he valued when he walked the earth 2000 years ago.

Some of these values are presented in the booklet “well.com: values” for your prayer and reflection.

## LOVE GOD

- ❖ Your relationship with God is key to your call as director. Prayer doesn't have to 'feel good' but you do need to show up and pray regularly.
- ❖ Your location, its décor, privacy, etc need to show reverence and respect for the Holy Ground you are on with God and the directee.
- ❖ Your conversation needs to reflect an appreciation that God is doing the heavy lifting here. Follow. Don't lead. Let God be God.
- ❖ A call to this ministry comes with freedom to follow it through or to let it go. You bring to God (and supervision!) any anxious need to cling to the ministry or to look for "customers".

## LOVE SELF

- ❖ Be realistic about the number of directees you can take on.
- ❖ Care for yourself; ensure you have enough space to rest, pray and play.
- ❖ Nurture friendships. Avoid leaning on SD as an experience of intimacy.
- ❖ Have regular SD to remind you of a God who cares for you personally.
- ❖ Attend supervision to challenge and affirm your strengths in life/listening.
- ❖ Connect with other directors, an antidote to the isolation of this ministry.
- ❖ Operate within the limits of your skill/gifting. Supervision helps with this.
- ❖ Take seriously concerns raised about your mental/physical well-being affecting your availability to listen. You are surrounded by kindness and care in Threshold Listening. Any concerns raised are offered in that spirit.

## **LOVE OTHERS: Directees**

- ❖ The Holy Spirit is at work in the directee. Respect his/her beliefs, behaviour and freedom.
- ❖ Choose an appropriate location. Use home only if a quiet, safe, confidential space.
- ❖ Be clear about the time of sessions, donation, review etc.
- ❖ Keep minimal notes. Keep session content confidential.
- ❖ Disclose child/vulnerable adult abuse or potential harm to directee/others to the appropriate agencies.
- ❖ Use supervision to attend to a desire to influence a directee.
- ❖ Keep healthy physical and psychological boundaries. You are not friends. Take any strong feelings to supervision.
- ❖ Avoid dual relationships. If not possible, be clear about the purpose and boundaries of each relationship.
- ❖ Avoid contact via social media. Use text/email only to arrange appointments.
- ❖ Relationships change. Directees grow and outgrow us. Build in pauses to review and for the directee/you to decide to go on or stop.

## LOVE OTHERS: Colleagues

- ❖ Cultivate relationships with directors/ people from different disciplines.
- ❖ Respect other directors/professionals; avoid unsubstantiated criticism.
- ❖ Ask a directee in therapy to inform his/her therapist about being in SD
- ❖ Share helpful information with other professionals but only with the directee's permission.
- ❖ Talk *to* and not *about* other directors. Church settings tend to be awash with unspent anger, leaking out as gossip. Our training encourages openness and honesty in prayer. Let that be obvious also in how we relate to each other.

## **LOVE OTHERS: Wider community**

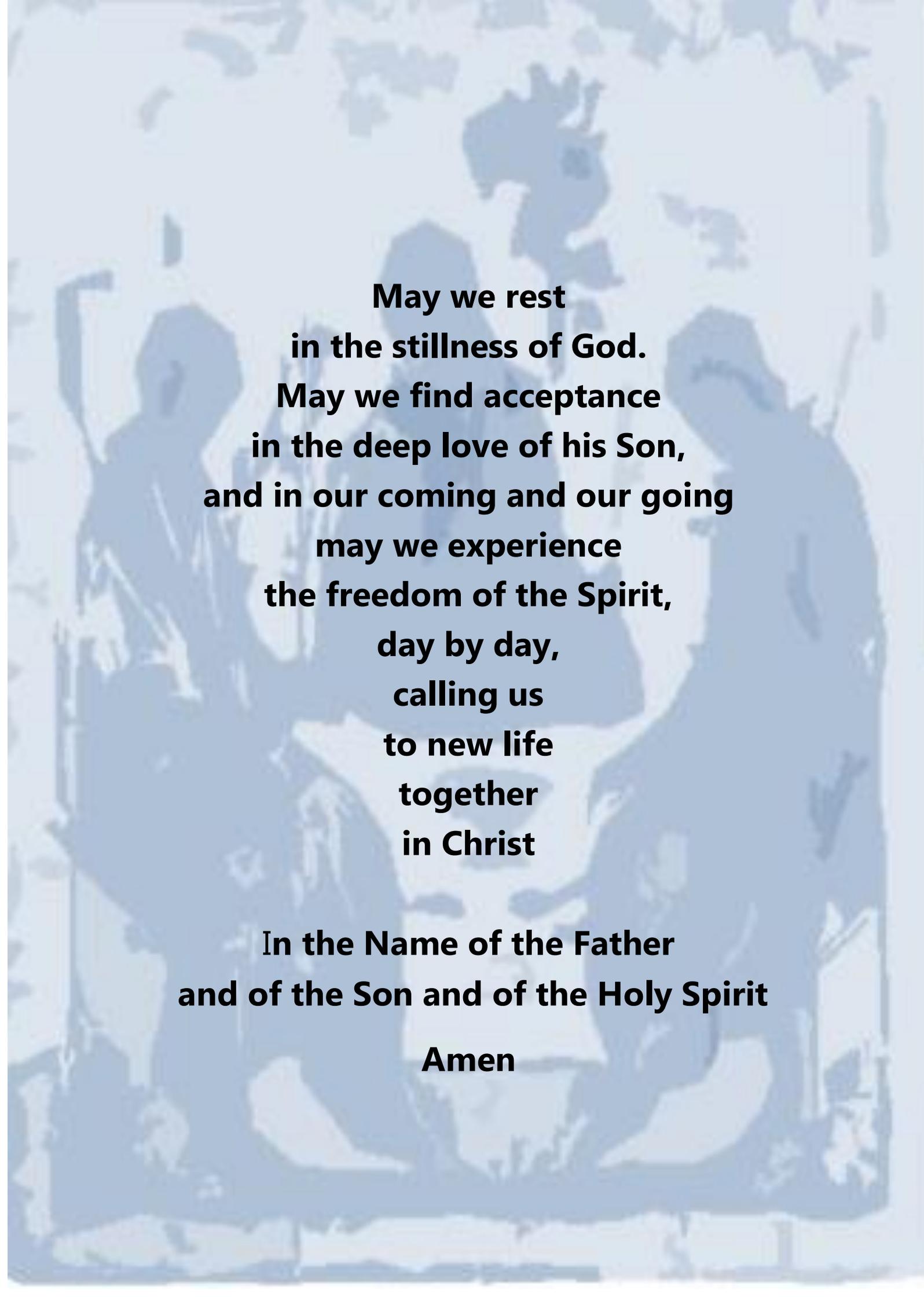
- ❖ Be honest and accurate in what you say about the purpose and limits of SD, your training and support. |
- ❖ Represent your faith tradition with honesty and integrity, respecting also the directee's relationship to his/her own faith community or tradition.
- ❖ Be open to any community discernment about your call to this ministry. Pray constantly for indifference and the freedom to follow God not ego.
- ❖ Welcome all as Jesus welcomed them - respecting all persons, regardless of race, colour, sex, sexual orientation, age, religion, national origin, marital status, political belief, psychological or physical challenge, personal preference, condition or status.
- ❖ A praying person is a person of love, doing his/her best to take on the character of Christ. Are you a person of love? Do Christ's values shape your character in relationships with others inside and outside of spiritual direction.

*<sup>12</sup> Since you are all set apart by God, made holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with a holy way of life: compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. <sup>13</sup> Put up with one another. Forgive. Pardon any offenses against one another, as the Lord has pardoned you, because you should act in kind. <sup>14</sup> But above all these, put on love! Love is the perfect tie to bind these together. <sup>15</sup> Let your hearts fall under the rule of the Anointed's peace (the peace you were called to as one body), and be thankful.*

*<sup>16</sup> Let the word of the Anointed One richly inhabit your lives. With all wisdom teach, counsel, and instruct one another. Sing the psalms, compose hymns and songs inspired by the Spirit, and keep on singing—sing to God from hearts full and spilling over with thankfulness. <sup>17</sup> Surely, no matter what you are doing (speaking, writing, or working), do it all in the name of Jesus our Master, sending thanks through Him to God our Father.*

Colossians 3: 12





**May we rest  
in the stillness of God.  
May we find acceptance  
in the deep love of his Son,  
and in our coming and our going  
may we experience  
the freedom of the Spirit,  
day by day,  
calling us  
to new life  
together  
in Christ**

**In the Name of the Father  
and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit**

**Amen**