



2023 - 2025

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION FORMATION PROGRAM

IN THE CHARISM OF MERCY



A contemplative process toward the art and practice of spiritual direction with a particular focus on accompanying persons who are poor and marginalized.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Drawing from the rich wellspring of the contemplative tradition and the charism of mercy, this two-year certificate program nurtures and supports those who wish to deepen their own spirituality and discern spiritual companionship with others. The curriculum includes a particular (but not exclusive) focus on the art of spiritual accompaniment with those on the margins of society.

While many program graduates go on to serve as spiritual directors, others apply the skills they acquire in the fields of church ministry, education, healthcare, social work and more.

“There are three things the poor prize more highly than gold, tho’ they cost the donor nothing; among these are the kind word, the gentle, compassionate look and the patient hearing of their sorrows.”

Catherine McAuley,
Founder of the Sisters of Mercy

“*Social justice and proximity to the poor and marginalized is key to being in proximity with God, and all of my experiences with Cranaleith embody these truths. Put more simply, I find myself wanting to be in study and communion with those who love the art of listening...to self, to others, and to God, not only for personal fulfillment, but for the transformative work of reconciliation, anti-racism and deep mercy.*”

Sara, program participant



PROGRAM CURRICULUM INCLUDES

- History of and various approaches to spiritual direction
- Human growth and spiritual development
- The spirituality of mercy as inspired by Jesus and Catherine McAuley, founder of the Sisters of Mercy
- Traditions of prayer
- Discernment
- Scripture in spiritual direction
- Operative theological assumptions
- God's identification with the marginalized
- The distinctions between spiritual direction & pastoral counseling
- Social justice and the critical concerns of the Sisters of Mercy
- Contemplative action
- The ongoing spiritual growth of the spiritual director



ESSENTIAL PROGRAM VALUES

- SPIRITUALITY OF MERCY
- COMMUNITY
- WHOLISTIC PRAYER
- CONTEMPLATIVE ENVIRONMENT
- INTEGRATION OF THOSE ON THE MARGINS

REQUIREMENTS OF PARTICIPANTS

- Applicants must have been in some form of spiritual accompaniment for one year prior to program start
- Continued commitment to personal spiritual direction
- Continued participation in a faith community
- Required reading
- Written reflections on readings monthly and yearly integration papers
- Meetings (virtually or in person) with a designated group of peers
- Continued involvement with those on the margins
- Practicum: During second year, participants become actively involved in the ministry of spiritual direction and receive formal monthly supervision

PROGRAM TIMEFRAME AND STRUCTURE

Please note: The Spiritual Direction Formation Program will be in compliance with all CDC COVID-19 guidelines. Onsite program components may be migrated to a virtual platform, if necessary.

First Year (2023-2024)

- September retreat weekend at Cranaleith (Friday and Saturday)
- Monthly virtual sessions: Saturdays, October - June
- June retreat weekend at Cranaleith (Friday and Saturday)

Second Year (2024-2025)

- September retreat weekend at Cranaleith (Friday and Saturday)
- Monthly virtual sessions: Saturdays, October - June
- June retreat weekend at Cranaleith (Friday and Saturday)
- September Commissioning at Cranaleith (Saturday)

"Our small group of learners has received an amazing amount of guidance and mentorship from the team. The readings we have been given and the topics of our monthly meetings never fail to expose us to new ways of thinking and being. And the one-on-one supervision of our individual meetings with directees not only prepared me for my future ministry, but has led to abundant growth in my own relationship with God."

Joanne, program participant



PROGRAM TUITION

Cost of two-year certificate program:
\$5,000

Cost includes:

- Onsite retreat days
- Tuition for monthly virtual sessions
- Ten individual supervision sessions during the second year practicum

*There is limited scholarship assistance available for this program. Please write to info@cranaleith.org to apply for scholarship funding.

OPTIONAL LODGING

Limited overnight lodging is available onsite at Cranaleith. A separate lodging rate is payable to Cranaleith Spiritual Center.

COORDINATING TEAM

MARIA DIBELLO, RSM

has experience in adult faith formation, spiritual direction, and retreat ministry. For many years, Maria provided pastoral leadership in a culturally diverse rural community. She holds a master's degree in theology from Villanova University and a certificate from the Vincentian Center for Spirit at Work.

BETH FLANNERY, RSM

is a spiritual director and supervisor of spiritual directors. She has extensive experience in campus ministry (university and secondary). Beth holds a master's degree in pastoral counseling and a certificate in spiritual direction from Neumann University in Aston, Pa.

KATHLEEN MCALPIN, RSM

has served globally as teacher, spiritual director, and retreat director. She holds a doctor of ministry from the Toronto School of Theology and a master's degree from the Center for Religious Development in Cambridge. Kathleen has formed spiritual directors and supervisors at universities in Canada and throughout the U.S. She is an adjunct faculty member at Creighton University.

HONORA NICHOLSON, RSM

Sr. Honora Nicholson, RSM, is an educator who has also served in parish ministry, Community leadership and has extensive experience in leading retreats and small faith sharing groups. She is a trained spiritual director and supervisor of spiritual directors. She holds an MA in Theological Studies from the University of Dayton, a Certificate in Spiritual Direction from the Center for Spirituality and Justice (New York) and a Certificate in Directed Retreats from Our Lady of Peace Spiritual Center (Narragansett, RI).

CONTACT US!

To apply to the Spiritual Direction Formation Program, please visit cranaleith.org.

If you have questions about the program, please write to us at info@cranaleith.org.



Cranaleith Spiritual Center
13475 Proctor Road
Philadelphia, PA 19116
215-934-6206
cranaleith.org

ABOUT CRANALEITH

Sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy, Cranaleith offers a contemplative space for all those seeking wholeness and transformation for themselves and society. We are committed to making Cranaleith accessible to all, especially to persons who are poor and those who work in solidarity with them. We seek to invite those at the center of need and those at the center of influence to reflection, reverent dialogue and meaningful partnerships.

Cranaleith's vision is a world made whole by mutually transforming relationships, where each one's truth, gift and brokenness is embraced, and each belongs.

