Spiritual Direction Training Program

INSTRUCTIONS FOR LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

Thank you for your willingness to write this letter on behalf of one of our program applicants! Your honesty and openness are essential for us to be able to select qualified candidates. This training program is co-sponsored by the Our Lady of Guadalupe Mercy Center and the Jesuit Community of Belize.

We wanted to give you some background on our program, so that you might understand what we are looking for in a candidate. For more information, please visit our program webpage:

*www.BelizeJesuits.org/SpiritualDirection2022*

Spiritual Direction is an age-old Christian ministry that has taken many different forms over the centuries. People come to spiritual direction, when they want to deepen their relationship with God and gain a clearer understanding of how God is present and active in their lives.

The Spiritual Director’s role is to meet such “seekers” with warmth, a listening ear, and a discerning heart. The Spiritual Director is not a therapist or counsellor, not an advice-giver or a spiritual guru. Spiritual Directors are *fellow seekers,* on the same journey to God as everyone else, with the one difference that they have been trained to recognize the movements of the Holy Spirit.

They must be spiritually mature men and women with empathetic hearts. They should be good listeners, who are slow to give advice and quick to give encouragement. They should be trustworthy and able to maintain strict confidentiality.

We encourage you to reflect on the following questions as you prepare your letter of recommendation. You need not answer all these questions in your letter, only the ones you are able to. Try to think of concrete examples of each of the following:

1. How long have you known the applicant and in what capacity?
2. Does the applicant have a vibrant and mature spiritual life?
3. Is the applicant a good listener, or does he/ she have a tendency to give unsolicited advice or turn the conversation to him-/ herself?
4. Have you found the applicant trustworthy?
5. Have you found the applicant to be able to keep confidences or does he/ she give in to gossip?
6. Do you find it easy to talk with this person on a deep level? Do you think other people find it easy to approach the applicant and share on a deep level?
7. Is the applicant warm and understanding, when it comes to hearing another person’s struggles and fears?

*AT NO POINT WILL THE CONTENTS OF YOUR LETTER BE SHARED WITH THE APPLICANT!!*

When you have written your letter, please email it to:

**MercyCenterBelize@outlook.com**

Please write the subject line of the email as: [Applicant’s Name] Recommendation

Recommendation letters should be signed and sent to us either in Word (.doc) or .PDF format. Do not copy the applicant on your email!

**Letters of recommendation should be received**

**no later than September 5th, 2022.**

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If you have any questions about this process, please do not hesitate to contact the Our Lady of Guadalupe Mercy Center at **223-2275.**

Once again, thank you so much for your candor and honesty!!