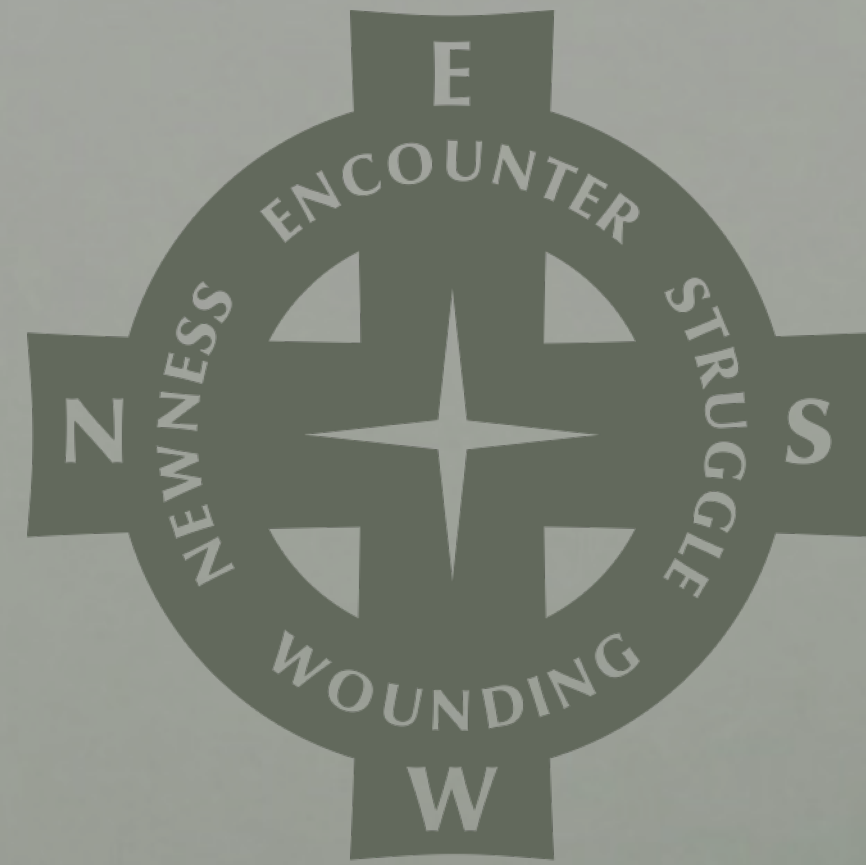




THE
PILGRIMAGE

THE WAY OF THE PILGRIM 2025

DISCERNMENT

Why The Way of the Pilgrim?



Our Mission Statement

For Christians *hearing the call to go deeper* —

The Pilgrimage creates a community and provides tools and experiences through which we:

† learn to hear the call of God

† and respond in faith,

† journeying together with friends

† on the path to a Spirit-led and joyful life.



The Way of the Pilgrim

This whole year-long course has been organized to bring us all to this moment of decision.



The Pilgrimage is our response to a fundamental question . . .

How do those who are hearing the “call to go deeper” in faith, and seeking a “Spirit-led and joyful discipleship” make progress?

The Bible is insistent that *we have to decide*.

Joshua 24:15 — Choose this day whom you will serve

Luke 9:59 — “Follow me” means leaving other things behind

Luke 16:13 — You cannot serve two masters

The need to *choose* has always been a struggle for God's people — are tend to be double-minded.

Exodus Chapter 15

First 19 verses are the songs of praise for God's miraculous salvation from the Egyptian Army and the Red Sea . . .

By verse 24 we are complaining!

The need to *choose* has always been a struggle for God's people — are tend to be double-minded.

Mark 10:23-31

Jesus makes it clear how hard it will be for the rich to enter the Kingdom of God . . .

Peter responds by saying, “Look, we have left everything and followed you.”

Discussion Questions

- 1. Are there particular aspects of the calling to live as a faithful disciple which you find more challenging than others?**
- 2. Do you ever feel the uneasiness of feeling like you have been warned you must choose God - but worrying that you have not been single-minded in your allegiance?**

In your group,
you are invited
to share your
answers to these
questions.

Allow 10
minutes for your
discussion.

The discipline of *discernment* is how we learn to choose well . . .

A partial list of resources:

Hungry Hearts Discernment — Listening with the Ear of Your Heart - Summer 2002. From the Office of Spiritual Formation (PCUSA).

The Center Letter Vol 29, Number 12 Discernment and Discipleship.

A Guide to Doing Prayerful Discernment The Upper Room 1997.

Weavings — Listening Vol. IX, Number 3 1994.

Discernment: Stop Look and Listen By John Ackerman

“Listen carefully, my
child, to the master’s
instructions, and
attend to them with
the ear of your heart.”

opening sentence of the *Rule of Saint Benedict*



“The apostle’s doctrine is not, that the grace of a good will is offered to us if we will accept it, but that *God himself is pleased so to work in us as to guide, turn, and govern our heart by his Spirit, and reign in it as his own possession.*”

my italics — p. 186 *The Institutes*



A Simple Process

- I. Select the matter which you choose to bring to God for discernment.
 - A. Be specific
 - B. Phrase it so that it can be answered clearly.
- II. Proceed to lose your own willfulness — You must be indifferent.
- III. Root your question in Sacred Scripture
 - A. What places in scripture seem to speak to this issue?
What images from scripture offer enlightenment?
- IV. Listen
 - A. What voices do you need to hear?
 - B. What voices have been silenced?
 - C. Sit silently listening for God seeking to know God's will. (as long as you dare)

A Simple Process

V. Explore all the options

VI. Weigh the options

- A. What fruits will each likely bear? Are they the fruits of God's Spirit?
- B. What is the source of this option — test for any selfish or known ulterior motive.
- C. John Cassian's five way test:
 - 1. Is it good for all?
 - 2. Is it heavy with the fear of the Lord?
 - 3. Is it genuine in the feelings underlying it?
 - 4. Has it lost its substance (weight) because of human show or some thrust toward novelty?
 - 5. Has the burden of vainglory lessened its merit or diminished its luster?
- D. Live for a week or more with each option assuming that you took it. Search for Consolation and Desolation relative to each option.

A Simple Process

- VII. Choose and then state the way you discern to be God's will.
- VIII. Rest with/in the discerned way
 - A. What does your heart say to you?
 - B. Consolation? Desolation?
 - C. Give the decision at least a week of prayerful reflection wherein God may move you to consolation or desolation about the matter.
 - D. GOD'S WILL:
 - NOTHING MORE . . .
 - NOTHING LESS . . .
 - NOTHING ELSE . . .



THE
PILGRIMAGE

SOMETHING TO DISCERN BEFORE END OF YEAR

Proposed Disciplines for Pilgrims

† **Companioning - Soul Friendships**

- Participation in gatherings and pilgrimages
- Fidelity to Compass Group

† **Daily worship & / or prayer / spiritual disciplines**

- Daily offices
- Prayer of any form — Christian-prayer toolbox

Proposed Disciplines for Pilgrims

† **Generous Stewardship**

- Sustaining financial contributions to Order
- Gifts of time & talent — sharing in the work of the Order
- Stewardship of our bodies - health and wellness of body & mind.

† **Earth care** — honoring our role as stewards of creation

- Living in awed wonder at a world infused with sacramental meaning. (cf Hopkin's *God's Grandeur*.)
- Doing our part to sustain creation.
- Seeing the justice-connection of living so that the earth will be fruitful for all.

Proposed Disciplines for Pilgrims

- † **Journeying with God and with fellow pilgrims** — *Status Viatoris*
 - Acknowledging and paying attention to the journey of quotidian discipleship.
 - Occasional intentional travel pilgrimages
- † **Solitude, Silence, & Prayer**
 - Making time to be alone with God and with God alone
 - Learning to keep silence
 - Making all of life one's prayer

Proposed Disciplines for Pilgrims

† Obedience - Listening

- As A Tool for Growing in the Discipline of Obedience — “Monks take a vow of obedience. But obedience in the monastic context does not mean just doing what you are told, the sort of obedience a dog learns in obedience school. It means loving listening: listening to the Word of God that comes to us moment by moment, listening to the message of the angel that comes to us hour by hour”. [*The Music of Silence* p. 55-56] But he is not the only one to connect obedience with listening. Indeed, among monastics the art of loving-listening for God in each moment is called discernment and it is considered the “Mother of Virtues,” by John Cassian, Benedict, and Gregory the Great.

The Latin root for our English word “Obedience” is *ob audire* which means “to listen.” There is far too much that I could say here so I won’t at this time. But obedience, understood as loving listening for God and responding faithfully is at the heart of discipleship.