

Ignatian Communal Discernment

CLA Cohort – Spring 2014 – Marilyn Nash

You are what your deep driving desire is...

As your desire is, so is your will

As your will is, so is your deed

As your deed is, so is your destiny.

- Ancient saying – Upanishads



Presuppositions to Communal Discernment:

Groups and individual decision makers need to be...

1. Ready to move in any direction God wants – Radical freedom
2. Open to sharing all that God has given me – Radical generosity
3. Willing to suffer if God's will requires it – Radical patience/ availability
4. Questing for union with God in prayer Radical spirituality I

General Overview of Communal Discernment Process:

1. Relevant facts and data laid out & shared – “as if placed on the table”
2. Options are explored and named: Each option a plausible choice representing a relative good.
3. Honest conversation – members name feelings, felt responses and reflect on the origins of those responses
4. Confirmation of decision – Clarity is the ultimate outcome. Peace, shifts in perspective & alignment with mission are all confirming elements

Questions for participants in #3 above – Honest Conversation

How do I feel regarding this option?

What is the origin of my response?

Is my response from God ?

Or "not from God" – i.e. ignorance, fear, obstinacy, ego, about a person not the option.

Communal discernment requires...

Real and prayerful communication – n.B. willingness to communicate AND skills to do this effectively /healthily

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After that – it's not about debate – it is dialogue

Separate out the "pro" time / "con" time – separate

ALL decision makers speak and participate– even if only to confirm assent

Facilitator – reads the group/intuit