

## A PRAYER TO START A DECISION-MAKING MEETING



*Good and loving God, our source of love and light,  
Thank you for bringing us together today  
in a spirit of generosity.*

*May we honor one another  
by keeping an open mind.*

*May we voice our truth  
and listen with an open heart.*

*May we discern your will  
to unite in fruitful outcome.*

*We ask for your wisdom and grace,  
to use our talents for the betterment of others.*

*With gratitude, we offer this prayer for your inspirational guidance.*

*Amen*



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## IGNATIAN COMMUNAL DISCERNMENT

A spiritual mission-centric approach to group decision-making

*A Desktop Primer*

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## IGNATIAN COMMUNAL DISCERNMENT

### 1. BEGIN THE PROCESS IN A STATE OF IGNATIAN INDIFFERENCE

Approach the deliberation with an impartial mindset.

### 2. OUTLINE THE PRO'S AND CON'S OF THE DECISION

Weigh the issues, concerns, and values in light of the mission and vision.

### 3. BE A CONTRIBUTOR AND AN ACTIVE LISTENER IN BRAINSTORMING A SOLUTION

Share opinions and encourage the contributions of others.

### 4. PRESUME GOOD INTENTIONS ON THE PART OF OTHERS

Pay close attention to people with viewpoints that differ from your own by 'seeing through their eyes.'

### 5. NOTICE GOD'S PRESENCE AND WILL

Be mindful of Ignatian desolation, feelings of agitation or a disharmony of thoughts and feelings, and Ignatian consolation, feelings of peace and satisfaction. Recognize that moments of inspiration and gratitude are encounters with the Divine.

### 6. DELIBERATE UNTIL THERE IS A SHARED CONTENTMENT WITH A DECISION

When decision-makers have united around an outcome, communicate the decision to those that are impacted and help to bring the resolution to fruition.

## TIPS ON LEADING AN IGNATIAN COMMUNAL DISCERNMENT

- Engage in the process when a true decision is to be made, that is, when a specific outcome is not predetermined or desired.
- State, up-front, that an Ignatian communal discernment process is being used to make the decision, review the steps.
- Use an unhurried attentive approach by determining the style and format of the discussion in advance of the gathering.
- Introduce and frame the options in a neutral manner.
- Solicit opinions from all members of the group; share your opinion after others.
- Attend to dissenting opinions to avoid group-think (i.e., the pressure to conform to group consensus).
- Ensure that no one person dominates the process.
- Foster an atmosphere which recognizes connectedness with transcendence beyond oneself (e.g., begin with a prayer, "give the decision up to God," use silent reflection).
- If debate heats-up, call for a moment of silence; invite decision-makers to focus on their spirit of openness and freedom [to God's presence and will].
- Remember that Ignatian Communal Discernment is a perspective not a set of rigid instructions; adaptation is to be expected based on situational circumstances.