



How God Guides Us

One Step at a Time

It is important to remember that prayer is essential to receive God's guidance as we begin this second in a series of bulletin inserts on "How God Guides Us." How amazing it is that the God of the Universe desires that we speak with Him and that He will respond to our prayer, providing us with necessary guidance. All we need to do is simply "ask."

Silence is necessary to receive a guiding response from Our Lord. We must quiet down interiorly and be attentive to "hear" this response. Taking time for daily prayer is essential, as our capacity to hear and recognize the Lord's response grows with practice. One of the wonderful benefits of quiet listening prayer is that God brings us to a place of peace, and in that place of peace, we are able to recognize His "voice" more clearly.

The guidance we receive from God is not always what we anticipated, nor will it always come in the way that we expected. One thing we can be sure of is that God always answers every prayer. The answer might be "yes" or "no" or "not yet." Sometimes the answer is "yes" because God knows that what we are praying for is for our good. It might be "no" because sometimes we pray for something that we think will be the best thing for us, while instead, we are wrong. Sometimes the answer to our prayer comes in the form of silence, which is also guidance from the Lord. God's

answer may be "not yet" because He knows there is a "right timing" involved and *that* timing has not yet come. When we don't seem to be receiving an answer, we need to grow in patience, trusting in Jesus as we learn the lesson of "loves delays," allowed for by God's perfect timing and His desire for what is best for us. **We need to hold fast to the truth that God is always good**, even when the circumstances around us are difficult. The "Good News" is that "God is shaping *all* things together for good for those who love Him." (Romans 8:28, emphasis added) Nothing in the world can change that and we want to hold onto this truth for the duration.

There is no right or wrong way to ask for God's guidance in our personal conversation with Him, as our "ways of asking" are as unique as our personalities, situations in life and specific requests. Our part is to PAY ATTENTION and LISTEN to the guidance He will give! Here are some simple guidelines.

Ask the Holy Spirit to:

- Help you to be thankful for the ways that He has guided you in the past, whether or not you recognized it at the time.
- Guide you to relinquish your difficulties, distractions, and desires to Him.
- Give you the grace to quiet down inside.
- Assist you in learning how to recognize His guidance.

We need to ask God for His guidance and then listen and "watch" for His response. An important principle of God's guidance is that He will give us guidance **one step at a time**. Normally speaking, He does not reveal the whole picture as it could easily overwhelm us. The important thing is that we follow the next, one step as we understand it. After that, He will reveal the next step.

A helpful saying to remember is: *we need to step out, in order to find out*. This saying means we need to take the first step, and God will honor our step of faith with further guidance as we move forward under His direction. He will then give us the next step.

When we notice an answer to prayer for guidance, no matter how small or insignificant or incredibly large and important, let us be amazed and thankful that God knows and cares for each one of us personally. Remember, in this whole process, that even more important than coming to understand His guidance, **we want to know and love the Guide!**

If you would like to read two modern-day true stories of God's very real and practical guidance, they can be accessed at diolc.org/catechesis/bulletin-inserts.

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