

## **Conversion in the Ordinary: How God Speaks to Us in Our Everyday Lives**

**Retreat Director: David B. Perrin**

### **Some practical advice how to do a retreat at home:**

So how do you go about being on retreat in your own home? Below are some suggestions to help frame your retreat. Modify these as needed to meet your personal needs or preferences.

#### **1. Choose a space to listen to the conferences**

- Find a location that is quiet and away from potential distractions (a room with a door you can close, if possible). If other people are around, let them know you will not be available for the next thirty minutes or so; longer if you plan on taking time immediately after each conference for personal reflection. Ask them to respect this time as sacred (which it is) and let them know you will attend to any pressing matters after you are finished.
- Sit in a comfortable chair.
- Have a pen and paper or a notebook handy in case you would like to write down your thoughts or feelings during each conference.
- Leave your cellphone in another room. Silence other phones or devices and turn off the TV or radio.

#### **2. Put yourself into the right frame of mind**

- Pay attention to your mood from the beginning. Check in with yourself: How are you feeling in this moment? What you are thinking about? Are you having any physical

discomfort? Acknowledge these and try to put them aside temporarily to focus on the conference. Also set aside any major events from the day – stressful encounters, pressing problems, unresolved challenges. These are important and, in due time, they will come into your meditation time as appropriate; for now focus on the conference and your own personal space (physical and mental).

- Prior to each conference prepare with a brief prayer. You could use words like these: “Loving God, I come before you in these moments of silence and listening to open my heart to you. Bless this time of retreat with the presence of your Holy Spirit. May I be open to listening to you and following you ever more deeply in my life in all ways. Thank you for this time together. Amen.”
- Listen attentively to each conference.
- If possible, immediately following each conference work your way through the reflection questions. Take your time. Jot down some thoughts or feelings as you reflect. If possible take about 30 minutes for the reflection questions.
- End your personal reflection time with a brief prayer of thanksgiving, such as “Gracious God, I am grateful for this time together. Thank you for your presence in my life. Be with me in a special way during this weekend retreat. Amen.”

### **3. Keep a Journal**

- Consider keeping a journal (notebook or a few blank loose pages) in which you can jot down thoughts or feelings or brief summaries of events from your life that seemed meaningful during the conference or as you reflect on the questions for prayerful reflection at the end of each conference.

- Keep this journal in a private and safe place for your personal use. You can destroy it after the retreat if you feel it contains too much personal information, and you don't want others to read it. You can use this journal as reflection starters with the retreat director if you choose to schedule a one-on-one conversation with him.
- Remember: You are in communion with all men and women who seek a deeper and more meaningful relationship with God, *the desire* for our lives. Pray for them while you do your reflections; knowing that they are praying for you will help you feel supported.

**May God bless you as you move into your sacred journey of retreat.**