

NOTES FROM THE LITURGIST...

Confession... Counseling... and Spiritual Direction...

Confession, Counseling and Spiritual Direction (SD) are the main keys and great tools for ourselves especially in the aspect of human maturity and personal healing. We can say that they are similar, yet distinct, different, yet overlapping.

These are essential to our lives because they make us healthier and mature body, mind, and soul.

The **Sacrament of Reconciliation** (also known as Confession). This sacrament is a celebration of Christ's forgiving love by two sinners (the priest and the penitent) AND reconciliation of the penitent to God and to the community. I consider that the confession room is a hospital of mercy. Many times, when I go to the confession room to get Fr. Edwin to prepare for mass, I jokingly tell him, "Doc, no more patients in line." Yes, it is true because we human beings are emotionally and spiritually sick when we have sinned. That is why we go to the hospital of mercy to be cured and when we come out we are pure and spiritually healed because of the power of the sacrament. Many people asked for confession especially when they are experiencing or facing painful and shameful problems in their lives because of the blessing that the sacrament may offer and the confidentiality it can provide. To have a very meaningful and effective confession we must prepare ourselves and be ready to desire to change our lives. Only an ordained bishop or priest can minister this sacrament.

Counseling, this session is very important when a person is troubled by emotional or relational issues and wants to find ways to overcome this issue. It is a series of meetings and activities that can help the client to be more effective in the daily life of a normal person. A counselor, a lay person or a priest can administer this session.

Spiritual Direction, we go to a spiritual director when we are looking for a deeper relationship with God or to clarify our religious experiences or to what God wants from us. A spiritual director can be a spiritual lay person and of course a priest or a bishop.

There is a commonality to counseling and spiritual direction but a different form.

In regards to these processes in our human growth, sometimes we forget the distinction of each.

When we avail of these human processes – pray about it... discern well so that whoever will administer to us will help us more to become a better person.

Whatever process we need, may we take our journey seriously. We are growing – not only growing older but also growing up emotionally, physically and of course growing up closer to God. For this growth – The Church needs to provide all these three types of help. The priests are here to help you, just let them know what process is the best to help you in your longings--- either **Confession, Counseling or a Spiritual Direction**.

- Ace Tupasi