

Living in Truth series.

Discernment by Fr Glen Sudano CFR

Decisions. Much of life is about making decisions; literally, every inch of the way. When we wake up in the morning, we have to decide when to get up, what to wear, and where to go. Now many decisions, like what to have for breakfast, can hardly be described as major or earth shattering. Yet, some decisions are indeed very big and what we choose will have a big impact, good or bad, on our life. For example, choosing the right school, job, or spouse aren't light decisions to make "on the run". Big decisions like these require some time and effort. The process of applying time and effort in big decisions is called *discernment*. Now here are some important steps you can take which will help you in your discernment.

- **Write out all your options including positive and negative aspects.** It's very important to step back and look at your situation with both honesty and objectivity. Since every choice has a price and a consequence, don't be afraid to lay-out all the facts, especially those you may not want to admit! We are often reluctant to think about the more difficult or less desirable choices, which are sometimes the best in the long run.
- **Review your list with those "in the know".** Many times very good people make very bad decisions simply because they don't have the humility or courage to ask the honest opinions of others. Also, when seeking advice, speak to those who are more mature; important decisions demand the input of those who have more knowledge, experience, and wisdom than ourselves or our peers. So, everyday decisions? Ask an amateur. But, discerning something important? Ask an expert!
- **Discernment requires both time and patience.** In this age of computer technology, speed and convenience is the name of the game. But outside of "cyberspace", many things in life take time; problems aren't solved at the click of a mouse. It is important that you give some time to your discernment and not make rash decisions. Our imagination can be helpful if we "wear" one option for a day or two, then try on another for a few days. A sense of inner peace, and at times joy, often accompanies the best decision. Remember that flowers don't pop out of the ground - they slowly grow!
- **Don't neglect to pray and ask for God's guidance.** It shouldn't surprise us that many people who do not pray for Divine inspiration and direction often end up in a sad situation. If you feel you're "in the dark", well, ask for light. You don't have to be a monk to pray; indeed, history attests that some of the greatest accomplishments and achievements known to man were accompanied by faith in God and prayer for His assistance. "Crash and burn" is the best description of those who travel through life without any light to guide the way.

Discernment may take time and effort, but it is surely worth the wait. In short, the ingredients needed for good discernment are honesty, humility, patience, and prayer. May God bless you "every inch of the way"!

Prayer

Heavenly Father, Your call reaches out to every person. You call every person to be holy because You are holy. Help me to hear Your call and to answer it in my life so that I may be holy. In the midst of so many distractions and attractions, may the force of Your voice be the never-failing source to lead me along the path You have marked out for me. May the force of Your voice be the never-failing power strengthening my weakness and weakening the strength of all that is contrary to Your call in my life - all the prominent and dominant cultural trends that compete for my attention to lessen and lower the high standard of holiness, the perfection of love. Keep me faithful to Your call, following wherever You would lead me, to do whatever You would have me do. Perfect love in my life and help me to be holy. Amen ...

U got 2 pray by Fr Stan Fortuna
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