



Discern

Facilitator Guide

Part 1—Why Use Discernment in Your CWOC

Purpose: Discernment can lead to a spirit-led, vibrant and dynamic CWOC! MCCW promotes the use of discernment—a prayerful, Holy Spirit led process—for selecting CWOC leadership. Inspired by St. Ignatius’ ten principles for discernment, the CWOC discernment process helps potential leaders to evaluate their lives through the eyes of our Lord and define their ability to be a vibrant servant leader in the positions available. Come learn more about this beautiful process and about the resources MCCW had to help you bring discernment to your chapel.

Together, ask for the intercession of Our Lady of Good Counsel, patroness of MCCW.

Let us pray. Lord of heavenly wisdom, Who has given us your own Mother Mary to be our guide and Counselor in this our lives, Grant that in all things we may have the grace to seek maternal instruction and to profit by it in humility and love. O Mother of Good Counsel, Patroness of the Military Council of Catholic Women, help us to understand and fulfill the mind and will of your Divine Son, Jesus Christ.

Under the blessing of the Father, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, may we be responsible and intelligent daughters of the Church. May we labor in the spirit of renewal to realize more perfectly the Kingdom of God here below, as the only true preparation for our share in the Kingdom of Heaven.

1. Icebreaker: Prayerful Puzzles
 - a. Ask the group: What is discernment?
 - b. Guide the answers to the concept that discernment is about decision making
 - c. Hand out one puzzle to each group being careful to put them CCC or scripture side up. Ask the groups to put the puzzles together and have groups read their puzzle aloud to the group.



- d. When you have heard all five CCC excerpts or scripture passages, ask the groups to turn their puzzles over and make the backside of the puzzle.
 - e. Ask someone to read the word formed on the back of the puzzle (PRAYERFUL!)
 - f. Begin discussion by sharing that discernment is different from just “making a decision” because it is prayerful -- rooted in making the decision with God’s guidance.
2. How can we discern?
 - a. Ask the group for examples of when they can discern.
 - b. Share a personal experience with discernment.
3. Models of discernment
 - a. Daily examen
 - i. Prayerful reflection on the events of the day
 - ii. Try to see God’s presence and discern His direction for us
 - b. Spiritual direction
 - i. Helps you recognize how the Holy Spirit is working in your life
 - ii. Not necessarily to give advice but to guide you through prayerful decision-making
 - c. St. Ignatius’ Rule of Discernment
 - i. Consolations - that which brings joy and brings you closer to God
 - ii. Desolations - move you further from God, brings disquiet
 - d. Father Mike Schmitz’s “Four Helpful Rules for Discernment”
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ne8n-1ATd1s>)
 - i. Is this a good door?
 - ii. Is this an open door?
 - iii. Is this a wise door?
 - iv. Is this a door I want?
4. What does this have to do with my chapel?
 - a. Discernment can be used for personal decisions but also group decisions
 - b. Can be a more prayerful way to select new leaders for your ministry (how this differs from elections)



- c. Share personal story of leadership discernment
- 5. Discernment in Your Chapel - a Timeline
 - a. 1-2 mos out - Assessing your spiritual gifts
 - b. 1 mos out - Discernment Meeting/Preparing for Personal Discernment
 - i. Answering questions
 - 1. What roles are available?
 - 2. What does each role do?
 - 3. What else will be asked of me?
 - ii. Asking questions
 - 1. Do you meet the requirements to serve? (Servant Leader Info Form)
 - iii. Encouraging prayer
 - 1. Pray together
 - 2. Pray in groups throughout personal discernment
 - iv. Empowering prayer
 - 1. [St. Ignatius' Ten Guiding Principles](#)
 - 2. Sharing Your Gifts
 - 3. Adoration
 - c. Discernment Day
 - i. Invitation to come to see discernment in action
- 6. Discovering Your Spiritual Gifts

*Facilitators note--MCCW has a dedicated module for discerning your spiritual gifts (“Gifted”) which pairs well with the “Discern” module.

- a. CCC801 It is in this sense that discernment of charisms is always necessary. No charism is exempt from being referred and submitted to the Church’s shepherds...so that all diverse and complementary charisms work together “for the common good.”
- b. 1 Corinthians 12:4-5 - There are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same Spirit, there are different forms of service but the same Lord;
- c. Interactive Spiritual Gifts Assessment:
 - i. Share the List of Spiritual Gifts



Administration: the Gift that enables a believer to formulate, direct, and carry out plans necessary to fulfill a purpose. Biblical References: I Corinthians 12:28, Acts 14:23.

Artistry: the Gift that gives the believer the skill of creating artistic expressions that produce a spiritual response of strength and inspiration. Biblical References: Ex 31:1-11, Ps 149:3a.

Discernment: the Gift that motivates a believer to seek God's will and purpose and apply that understanding to individual and congregational situations. Biblical References: John 16:6-15, Romans 9:1, I Corinthians 2:9-16.

Evangelism: the Gift that moves believers to reach nonbelievers in such a way that they are baptized and become active members of the Christian community. Biblical References: Matthew 28:16-20, Ephesians 4:11-16, Acts 2:36-40.

Exhortation: the Gift that moves the believer to reach out with Christian love and presence to people in personal conflict facing a spiritual void. Biblical References: Jn 14:1, II Tim 1:16-18, III Jn 5-8.

Faith: the Gift that gives a believer the eyes to see the Spirit at work and the ability to trust the Spirit's leading without indication of where it all might lead. Biblical References: Genesis 12:1-4a, Mark 5:25-34, I Thessalonians 1:8-10.

Giving: the Gift that enables a believer to recognize God's blessings and to respond to those blessings by generously and sacrificially giving of one's resources (time, talent, and treasure). Biblical References: II Corinthians 9:6-15, Luke 21:1-4.

Hospitality: the Gift that causes a believer to joyfully welcome and receive guests and those in need of food and lodging. Biblical References: Romans 12:13, Romans 16:23a, Luke 10:38.

Intercession: the Gift that enables a believer to pray with the certainty that prayer is heard and when requests are made, answers will come. Biblical References: Matthew 6:6-15, Luke 11:1-10, Ephesians 6:18.

Knowledge: the Gift that drives a person to learn, analyze and uncover new insights with regard to the



Bible and faith. Biblical References: I Corinthians 12:8; I Corinthians 14:6, Romans 12:2.

Leadership: the Gift that gives a believer the confidence to step forward, give direction and provide motivation to fulfill a dream or complete a task. Biblical References: Romans 12:8, John 21:15-17, II Timothy 4:1-5.

Mercy: the Gift that motivates a believer to feel deeply for those in physical, spiritual, or emotional need and then act to meet that need. Biblical References: Luke 7:12-15, Luke 10:30-37, Matthew 25:34-36.

Music--Vocal: the Gift that gives a believer the capability and opportunity to present personal witness and inspiration to others through singing. Biblical References: Psalm 96:1-9, Psalm 100:1-2, Psalm 149:1-2.

Music--Instrumental: the Gift that inspires a believer to express personal faith and provide inspiration and comfort through the playing of a musical instrument. Biblical References: Psalm 33:1-5, Psalm 150, I Samuel 16:14-23.

Pastoring (Shepherding): the Gift that gives a believer the confidence, capability and compassion to provide spiritual leadership and direction for individuals or groups of believers. Biblical References: I Timothy 4:12-16, I Timothy 3:1-13, II Timothy 4:1-2.

Service (Helps): the Gift that enables a believer to work gladly behind the scenes in order that God's work is fulfilled. Biblical References: Luke 23:50-54, Romans 16:1-16, Philippians 2:19-23.

Skilled Craft: the Gift that enables a believer to create, build, maintain or repair items used within the church. Biblical References: Exodus 30:1-6, Exodus 31:3-5, Ezekiel 27:4-11.

Teaching: the Gift that enables a believer to communicate a personal understanding of the Bible and faith in such a way that it becomes clear and understood by others. Biblical References: I Corinthians 12:28, Matthew 5:1-12, Acts 18:24-48.

Wisdom: the Gift that allows the believer to sort through opinions, facts and thoughts in order to determine what solution would be best for the individual believer or the community of believers.



Biblical References: I Corinthians 2:6-13, James 3:13-18, II Chronicles 1:7-11.

Writing: the Gift that gives a believer the ability to express truth in a written form; a form that can edify, instruct and strengthen the community of believers. Biblical References: I John 2:1-6, 12-14, I Timothy 3:14-15, Jude 3.

- ii. Ask each woman to self-identify one or two gifts they see in themselves
- iii. Ask each woman to turn to someone else and identify a gift they see in them
- d. Living Stones activity
 - Give each women a small stone and pass around paint pens
 - i. Ask the women to choose one of their gifts and write it on the rock
 - ii. Once they have done this, invite a chapel president to come forward and hold a basket
 - iii. Then invite the women all to come forward and place their rocks in the basket
 - iv. Read to the group 1 Peter 2:4-5: “Come to him, a living stone, rejected by human beings but chosen and precious in the sight of God, and like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”
 - v. Tell the group: Each of you is one of those living stones!
 - vi. Tell the chapel president: These are the living stones with which you can build a strong, vibrant women’s ministry in your chapel.
 - vii. Tell everyone: Each of you brings gifts that can be used, like living stones, to build God’s kingdom. How will you discern to use those gifts?