

Invitation School of Contemplative Listening

Application Forms

Below are the outcomes of the School of Prayer, and what we hope an applicant is familiar with if they have completed a year of discernment with the SOP or a similar formal year-long formation experience. Use this page in discerning how to apply. We hope the SOCL can be instrumental in the formation of anyone desiring to follow Jesus more intentionally. We especially want to support pastors and social activists.

Who should apply to the SOCL?

DISCERNMENT: Anyone who has discerned a desire 'to create time & space for God' for others - who desires to continue intentional journey of discernment to be more open to self, others, and God - who has begun a movement into the second half of life (individuation) - who has begun a working understanding of self/charism/vocation.

DISCIPLINES: Anyone who has written and is practicing a rule of life - meets with a spiritual director - has a healthy and accountable relationship with a spiritual community - has participated in 2-3 retreats - has a working understanding and practice of solitude and silence - has working understanding of communal discipline (able to learn from and love Judas).

BOOKS: Anyone who is familiar with these books from the School of Prayer or similar books: Jesuit Guide to (Almost) Everything, Into the Silent Land, Jesus and the Disinherited, The Cross and the Lynching Tree, Desert Fathers & Mothers: Early Christian Wisdom Sayings.

KNOWLEDGE BASE: Anyone who has a working understanding of these kinds of terms.... spiritual formation, contemplative spirituality, social-justice, ecumenicism, ecclesiology, liturgy, theology, spiritual discipline, bible study, lectio divina, familiar with a variety of spiritual traditions old and new (Ignatian, Desert Wisdom, Eastern, Carmelite, Benedictine, Celtic, Anglo-Catholic, Protestant, Merton, Nouwen, Peterson, Willard, Foster, Rhor, Keating).

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Please submit this completed form and your short essay questions (below) in the form of a pdf document to SOCL@theinvitationcenter.org by May 28 to qualify for early bird tuition rate.

Application for: online practice _____ in-person practice _____

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____
City, State Zip

Phones: _____
Home Cell Work

Email: _____

Religious affiliation (if applicable): _____
(Denomination & Community/Organization)

Current occupation: _____

Please describe any health issues that may hinder your ability to participate in this practicum:

Briefly describe your educational background:

Briefly describe your vocational history:

Are you pursuing formal certification or are you still in discernment? If yes, do you understand the three components required for completion? Do you have further questions about the SOCL practicum?

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Please answer these questions with careful, prayerful written responses in a 3-4 page single spaced document. Our purpose in soliciting this depth of thoughtful reflection is not so much to decide if you are qualified to ever practice spiritual direction, but to join with you to discern if this is a good time to pursue this level of study and practice. These written reflections will help your own discernment to begin well, and they will help your instructors serve you better.

1. Describe the discernment process that has led you to the SOCL. What are you seeking in this experience? (2-3 paragraphs)
2. Briefly describe your spiritual autobiography. (3-4 paragraphs)
3. Define your vision for ministry. (1-2 paragraphs)
4. Describe your understanding and involvement in justice. (1-2 paragraphs)
5. Briefly describe your current practice of prayer and spiritual discipline. (1-2 paragraphs)
6. If you could mature in one area of your life, what would that be and why? (1 paragraphs)
7. What books or people alive or dead influence you most today and why? (1-2 paragraphs)
8. How busy do you live your life? What are the advantages and disadvantages of your life's pace? (1-2 paragraphs)

Application Process:

1. Submit your application and two references, one from some form of pastor or spiritual leader and one from someone other than a family member who can speak to your character.
2. Pay \$25 non-refundable application fee here: <https://theinvitationcenter.org/donations>
3. Complete an interview with Josh and Cami.
4. Once accepted, you will secure your place in the SOCL by submitting a \$400 non-refundable deposit. Payment of the full tuition can be submitted in one lump sum or by setting up a monthly schedule on the donation page: <https://theinvitationcenter.org/donations>

*Those who need financial help can apply for up to \$400 in tuition assistance by completing the form below.

**If you have interest and means to not only pay your own tuition in full but would like to make financial assistance available for other applicants, please make a note of the purpose of your over and above payment when you submit your funds here: <https://theinvitationcenter.org/donations>

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Pastoral Reference Pastor/Spiritual Director/Spiritual Leader

(Not a family member)

DEAR _____,

As part of my application for the Invitation School of Contemplative Listening practicum in spiritual direction, I am asking you to write a letter of recommendation for me. Please address the questions listed below and provide any additional information that might help the SOCL facilitators evaluate my application.

Please email your recommendation to socl@theinvitationcenter.org by

_____.
(insert registration deadline.)

Thank you,

(Signature of Applicant)

- How do you know this person?
- Why would you recommend this individual for this program?
- What is your sense of how this program is a good match for this person?
- Will you have any ongoing interaction with this person during his/her participation in the SOCL that will allow you to support and encourage this person during his/her journey?

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Character Reference

This reference should not be written by a family member.

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SOCL Tuition Assistance Application

The Invitation's business plan functions largely as a service-for-fee nonprofit. Less than 10% of our operating budget comes from donations. We are a new, fledgling organization. However, we want to make the SOCL available especially to those who sense a definite calling to the practice of spiritual direction and/or to facilitate spiritual direction in the setting of justice work. Please consider carefully with prayer your expenses and income as you apply for assistance.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____
City, State Zip

Phones: _____
Home Cell Work

Email: _____

How much funding would you like to request? (no more than \$500):

What is your estimated family income for the duration of this year of the SOCL:

Are you planning to attend either of the SOCL retreats? What are your estimated expenses to participate?

Do you already have a definite sense that God is calling you to practice spiritual direction either formally or in the context of social justice work?

What else do we need to know in order to discern with you the amount of assistance we can provide?