**Discernment Deep Dives**

**January 25, 2023**

**DISCERNMENT OF SPIRITS, PART I:**

 **“Spiritual Homework”**

***Be Generous in Receiving Spiritual Consolation***

**Prayer exercise** (Taken from “God’s Voice Within” by Fr. Mark Thibodeaux, SJ, pg. 57)

1. Begin your prayer time by placing yourself in an alert but comfortable position. Spend a good while quieting yourself and asking the Spirit of God to be present to you and to fill you with life. Soak in the Spirit as you would soak in a warm bath.
2. If you feel called to do so, begin to reflect on a time when you were clearly in a period of consolation - that is, a time of deep, inner peace, during which you experienced great desires of faith, hope and love. It might be a time of exterior sadness or tragedy but of interior peace and joy. Ask God to reveal this time to you so that you can learn from it. God back to that place of deep inner peace.
3. Here are a few ways you might reflect on moments of consolation.
* Read and ponder the words of Jesus in John 14:27. What is the peace of Christ like? How do you experience it? How is it not the peace that the world gives? Note how this peace does not imply that all interior and exterior problems in your life are solved and resolved but that you have a new and different relationship with those problems.
* Looking back on that period of consolation, ponder how close you felt to God then and how natural it seemed to move toward greater faith, greater hope, and greater love.
* Looking back on that period of consolation, remember how easy it was to recognize “God laboring to love you through all created things and events”. See how clear it was for you to see God’s hand in every aspect of life, even the difficult ones.

*If it is helpful, you may want to journal or take a few notes regarding what you noticed from this experience of prayer*