What do I talk with my spiritual director about?

In addition to attending the daily talks and spending time in quiet reflections and prayer, each of you will have an opportunity to meet with a spiritual director for about a half an hour each day.

What exactly is spiritual direction?

**Spiritual Guidance/Direction** - People are often helped to integrate their faith and their life by talking on a regular basis (e.g. monthly) with someone they can trust. This person acts as a guide (sometimes also called a spiritual friend, companion, or director) for the journey, helping them to find the presence and call of God in the people and circumstances of their everyday lives.

The assumption is that God is already present there, and that another person, a guide, can help them to notice God’s presence and also to find words for talking about that presence, because they are not used to doing so. The guide is often a specially trained listener skilled in discernment* and therefore able to help them sort out the various voices within and around them. While he/she may suggest various kinds of spiritual exercises*/ways of praying, the focus is much broader than that; it is upon the whole of a person’s life experience as the place to meet God. (*Do You Speak Ignation?, George Traub, SJ, 2002*)

So with your director you attend to what you have experienced of God’s inner working in you and how you experience God’s absence from you. It is more helpful, therefore for you to share your desires, zeal or discouragement, peace or anxiety, joy or sorrow rather than ideas and reflections you have had.
Your director might ask you some of these questions:

- What did I experience during prayer?

- What occurred in my relationship with God during prayer?

- Was anything particularly attractive or repulsive in my prayer?
  - Anything that causes deep peace or consolation?
  - Anything that caused anxiety or uneasiness?
  - Anything God seemed to be asking of me-directly or indirectly?
  - Any insight that touched me?
  - Any particular distraction that kept recurring or bugging me?

- How did prayer go?
  - Was it pleasant? Difficult? So-so?
  - Was my prayer intimate and personal?
  - Was I engaged with my whole self or only my head?
  - Did I savor God’s presence or some truth about myself, the people I know, or God?

- How many periods of formal prayer did I have today?
  - Was that a fit for me?
  - Was it fruitful?
  - Did I spend my time clock-watching? Eager to be done or at peace...

- Things related to prayer:
  - How did I spend the time not taken up with formal prayer?
  - Do I feel physically healthy and rested?
  - After prayer, do I reflect on the experience of prayer?
  - Am I having trouble with silence?

- Does journaling help?
  - What was the general mood of the day? Peaceful or troubling? Awesome or anxious?
  - Did I feel encouraged or sad? Rested or restless? Any sense of direction that occurs out of this?