

**Discernment Exercise based on Fr. Michael Scanlon's book:
*What Does God Want? A Practical Guide to Making Decisions***

*The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity,
faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. -Galatians 5:22-23*

Question 1 : Does it conform to God's will?

Question 2: Does it encourage conversion?

Question 3: Is it consistent?

Question 4: What confirms it?

Question 5: Does the heart say "Yes?"

Question 1 : Does it conform to God's will?

- Relevant commandments of God
- Relevant teachings of the Church
- Existing commitments that bear on the decision (work, family, etc.)
- Existing "calls" from God that might contradict the current proposal
- Might the current proposal hinder a spirit of submission and obedience to God and His Church?

Reflection on your conclusions about Conformity:

Question 2: Does it encourage conversion?

- Will the proposal lead to a closer union with God?
- Will the proposed direction lead to a more faithful discharge of my primary responsibilities?
- Does the proposal involve an unnecessary occasion for sin?
- Does the proposal foster a spirit that says, "Go for holiness?"

Reflection on your conclusions about Conversion:

Question 3: Is it consistent?

By Simone M. Rizkallah

- **WHAT?** Is it consistent with God’s earlier calls in my life?
- **HOW?** Is it consistent with how God has dealt with me in the past?
- **WHO?** Is it consistent with whom God has used in the past to lead me to His will?
- **WHEN?** Have I heard His call at the same time (or in the same way) that I have heard Him in the past? (Daily prayer time, after communion, on annual retreat, etc.)
- **WHERE?** Have I heard his call in the same place or under the same circumstances that I have heard him in the past? (In church, during a walk in the woods, in a special place of prayer, etc.)
- **HOW MUCH?** Is the cost, including possible negative effects, consistent with my established priority of values?

Reflection on your conclusions about Consistency:

Question 4: What confirms it?

- Is it confirmed by those who are involved in the proposal?
- Is it confirmed by apparent miraculous or spiritual signs?
- Is it confirmed by people who know me and are in a position to give godly direction to me?
- Is it confirmed by circumstances--either extraordinary or which make the direction possible?
- Are there other signs that seem to confirm or deny the validity of the proposition as from God?

Reflection on your conclusions about Confirmation:

Question 5: Does the heart say “Yes?”

- Do I have moral certainty about the proposal?
- Can I say that I believe in my heart that this is the right thing to do?
- Of my alternatives, of which I must choose one, is this the one I believe is right?
- Am I convinced that this is simply a good thing to do without any appreciable negative consequences following?
- Am I paralyzed with difficulties or uncertainties and therefore have to appeal to other principles or to guidance from others?

Reflection on your conclusions about Conviction and Actions to be taken:

By Simone M. Rizkallah

Suggested daily prayers:

The Daily Offering to the Immaculate Heart of Mary

*O Jesus, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary,
I offer you my prayers, works, joys, and suffering of this day in union with the Holy Sacrifice
of the Mass throughout the world.
I offer them for all the intentions of Your Sacred Heart: the salvation of souls, reparation for
sins, the reunion of all Christians;
I offer them for the intentions of our Bishops and of all Apostles of Prayer and in particular for
those recommended by our Holy Father this month.*

Prayer Before A Crucifix:

*Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, While before Thy face I humbly kneel And with
burning soul, pray and beseech Thee, To fix deep in my heart, Lively sentiments of faith, hope
and charity, True contrition for my sins And a firm purpose of ammendment. While I
contemplate with great love and tender pity, Thy five most precious wounds, Pondering over
them within me, And calling to mind the words that David, Thy prophet, said of Thee , my
Jesus, "They have pierced My hands and feet, They have numbered all my bones."*

A Solemn Act of Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary

*Most Holy Virgin Mary, tender Mother of men, to fulfill the desires of the Sacred Heart of
Jesus and the request of the Vicar of Your Son on earth, we consecrate ourselves and our
families to your Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart, O Queen of the Most Holy Rosary, and we
recommend to You, all the people of our country and all the world.
Please accept our consecration, dearest Mother, and use us as You wish to accomplish Your
designs in the world.
O Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Mary, Queen of the Most Holy Rosary, and Queen of the
World, rule over us, together with the Sacred Heart of Jesus Christ, Our King. Save us from the
spreading flood of modern paganism; kindle in our hearts and homes the love of purity, the
practice of a virtuous life, an ardent zeal for souls, and a desire to pray the Rosary more
faithfully.
We come with confidence to You, O Throne of Grace and Mother of Fair Love. In flame us with
the same Divine Fire which has inflamed Your own Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart. Make*

By Simone M. Rizkallah

*our hearts and homes Your shrine, and through us, make the Heart of Jesus, together with
your rule, triumph in every heart and home.
Amen.*

By Simone M. Rizkallah