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Patient and persistent in prayer

by Joyce Rupp

Make me to know your ways, O Lord; teach me your paths.

--Psalm 25:4

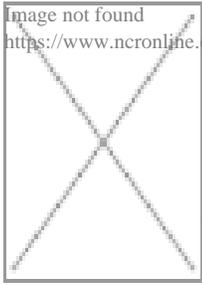
Recently I asked a large gathering of retreatants to write down some of their questions regarding prayer. Quite a few wanted to know how they could tell if they were doing God's will. Others wanted to know if they were on the right path.

Psalm 25 suggests that we need to ask God for guidance if we are going to be living the ways of the Holy One. God can and will direct our paths if we are open, attentive and listening. For our part, we need to be patient, consistent in praying daily, willing to consult wise persons, and we need to regularly check our motivation -- "Why am I doing what I do?"

St. Ignatius insists that a key way to know if we are doing God's will is to check on our peacefulness. We may not have many positive feelings about a decision or a direction, but if we have peace, we can be assured that we are probably in tune with God. We need to trust our truest self. No one else can tell us if we are on the path with God. Only our true self, that part of us that is in close union with God at the core of our being, knows this. Let us keep going there and trusting the Peace that resides deep within us.

*I turn to you for light and guidance,
Source of Truth and Peace.
Teach me your will and make me known to me
how best to live with peace in my heart.*

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