



Year of Renewal Tuesday Evening Gathering Participant Insights to Share with the SJF Community

The second Year of Renewal Tuesday Evening Gathering took place on October 27 with many faith family members in attendance. Connie Schoen, OP presented “Awakening to the Journey,” an excellent overview of the discernment process and how to use it in our lives. After the presentation, Gathering participants were asked to submit any new insights they gained from the presentation and how the presentation may help in discerning God’s movement in their lives and in the St. John Fisher community. A summary of the responses follows. Thanks to all who participated!

- A better understanding of discernment was gained by many. The “LISTEN” method was found to be a very helpful part of the process. *
- It is very important to stay in the present, not dwell on the past or worry about the future. God is in the present. *
- We need to wait and listen; as individuals, quiet time is needed to be ready for God’s call and insight. Contemplation is an important part of discernment. *
- All of us need to be more aware of God working in our lives. We must be open to God’s voice. God speaks to us and is calling us in many different ways: In the quiet moments and through others.
- God is with us always, including during the discernment required to make life decisions. Because of this, we all have what we need to make decisions and to move forward.
- Each and every one of us has different life experiences and as a result, has different perceptions of the world. We “filter” much of what we see and experience based on these perceptions. We must be aware of these and how they may be hindering our growth and how we view and judge others. *
- Based on our knowledge that we all have a different view of the world, we must learn to interact with others in a non-threatening way to better understand their beliefs and to reach common ground. There is much to learn from others if we are open to them.
- Because of common formation of thought for many of us, we have the basis for decisions and next steps. We should pray for “collective discernment” – taking into account the background and experiences of all.
- Once discernment is complete and a decision has been made, there is a need to act and not procrastinate. Part of this process is to be willing to accept the answer that comes from discernment.
- There is a deeper purpose to life that goes beyond self. We need to affirm the gifts in others and believe in what can be. With God’s help, anything is possible.
- After the Year of Renewal is complete, we need to discern the next steps for the St. John Fisher community.

* Represents the most frequently mentioned insights.