

### Reflective Dialogue

#### *Characteristics of reflective dialogue*

Participants come

- aware of any personal agenda and ready to put that aside;
- in faith, open to the Holy Spirit;
- seeking the truth as can best be known at this point through the collective wisdom;
- searching for the mind and heart of God;
- to listen deeply, not just to words, but to feelings, both in self and others;
- open to engage with the perspective of others;
- willing to share their experience, wisdom and questions briefly so the main point can be heard clearly and concisely;
- ready to be moved and to change: to refine, reconsider and develop personal opinions and understandings;
- seeking to bring out the strength of the other;
- ready to find a new unity with others through discovering shared meaning.

Therefore, in a Reflective Dialogue:

- The focus is on listening, NOT responding to what we hear.
- There is no back and forth discussion.
- Participants are attentive to feelings, their own and those of others.
- Points are made concisely so the essential information can be heard clearly.
- Participants are treated respectfully.
- In making a point no names or other identifying markers are used.
- There is silence after anyone speaks.
- Priority is given to those who have not yet spoken.
- The focus of the conversation is respected and irrelevant material is not raised.
- Confidentiality is respected.

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