

Module DC05: What is Spirituality?

The word 'spirituality' has in recent years enjoyed an extraordinarily wide use. It means different things to different people. Christian spirituality has been described as 'lived theology' which is a rather good way of approaching it; the reason being that Christian spirituality is based on teaching; it is based on a revelation, and revelation by definition has to do with making something known about which we would know nothing if we had not been told. Thus, we are given the gospel, the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Down the centuries, the people of God, together with theologians, saints and mystics, have reflected on the good news of the Gospel, and sought to give expression to it, thus establishing a living tradition. Spirituality emerges when people endeavour to live out the ramifications of the revealed teaching in their everyday lives.

In considering what spirituality is this module covers five areas.

The first surveys the spiritual landscape today, looking at the context within which we live our lives.

Unit 2 goes on to consider, in a general way, the basic teaching of the Bible as God's passionate care for his people – 'God refuses to be God without us.'

Unit 3 deals with some of the central themes of Christian spirituality – Creation, Incarnation, Trinity, Spirit, Vocation/Call, Body of Christ/Church, Eucharist.

In unit 4, an overview (necessarily brief) of the history of spirituality is offered.

And in the final unit, an attempt is made to describe what Christian spirituality precisely is.