

Journeying with Others [J1] *Guardians of the Community*

For an elaboration,
see <https://www.a-z.ctn.sg/post/journeying-j1>

Opening Prayer

Father God, today more than ever we need men and women who, on the basis of their experience of accompanying others, are familiar with processes which call for prudence, understanding, patience and docility to the Spirit, so that they can protect the sheep from wolves who would scatter the flock.

O Lord, we humbly pray for such ***guardians of the community*** to hear your call and to rise up – so that they can journey with and protect the sheep from wolves, so as to enable your young and growing disciples to mature and multiply, for the good of Your Holy Church, the evangelisation of the world, and for the greater glory of Your ineffable name.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

St. Paul in **Acts 20:29-30**, addressing the Elders of Ephesus

“I know that after my departure **fierce wolves** will come in among you, not sparing the flock, and from among your own selves will arise men speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them.”

St. Paul in **Acts 20:28** therefore charged the Elders of Ephesus

“Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has **made you guardians**, to feed the Church of the Lord which he obtained with his own blood.”

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“Take heed”

- “Take heed” (RSV 2nd CE)
- “Be on your guard for” (JB)
- “Keep watch over” (NABRE)



apud: phillip medhurst

THE GOOD SHEPHERD. JOHN 10:11-16. JAN LUYKEN

excudit: harry kossuth

The Flock, Fierce Wolves and Guardians

Who / What	Definition	Examples
Flock	Each and every young & growing disciple in the Catholic Church today in Spore.	“Young” in faith; includes adults or elderly who are young in the faith.
Fierce Wolves	<i>Anyone or anything</i> which draws away young and growing disciples away from Christ.	Secularism. Materialism. False teachers. Bad influencers. Atheism. Ignorance. Hedonism. The toxic cultural air.
Guardians	Called to guard and keep watch over the younger disciples.	Clergy. Religious. Every older or mature lay Catholic.



"The Sower"
by James Tissot
(1886-1894)

The Parable of the Sower and the Seeds (Matt 13:1-23)

Type of Seed	Unfavourable Conditions	What if Guardian(s)?
Sown along the path	Evil One comes and snatches away what is sown in his heart	Help them understand word of the kingdom
Sown on rocky ground	Tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately falls away	Explain / model Christian meaning of suffering
Sown among thorns	Cares of the world & delight in riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful	Guide them in detachment, mortification and generous giving

Guardians of the Community

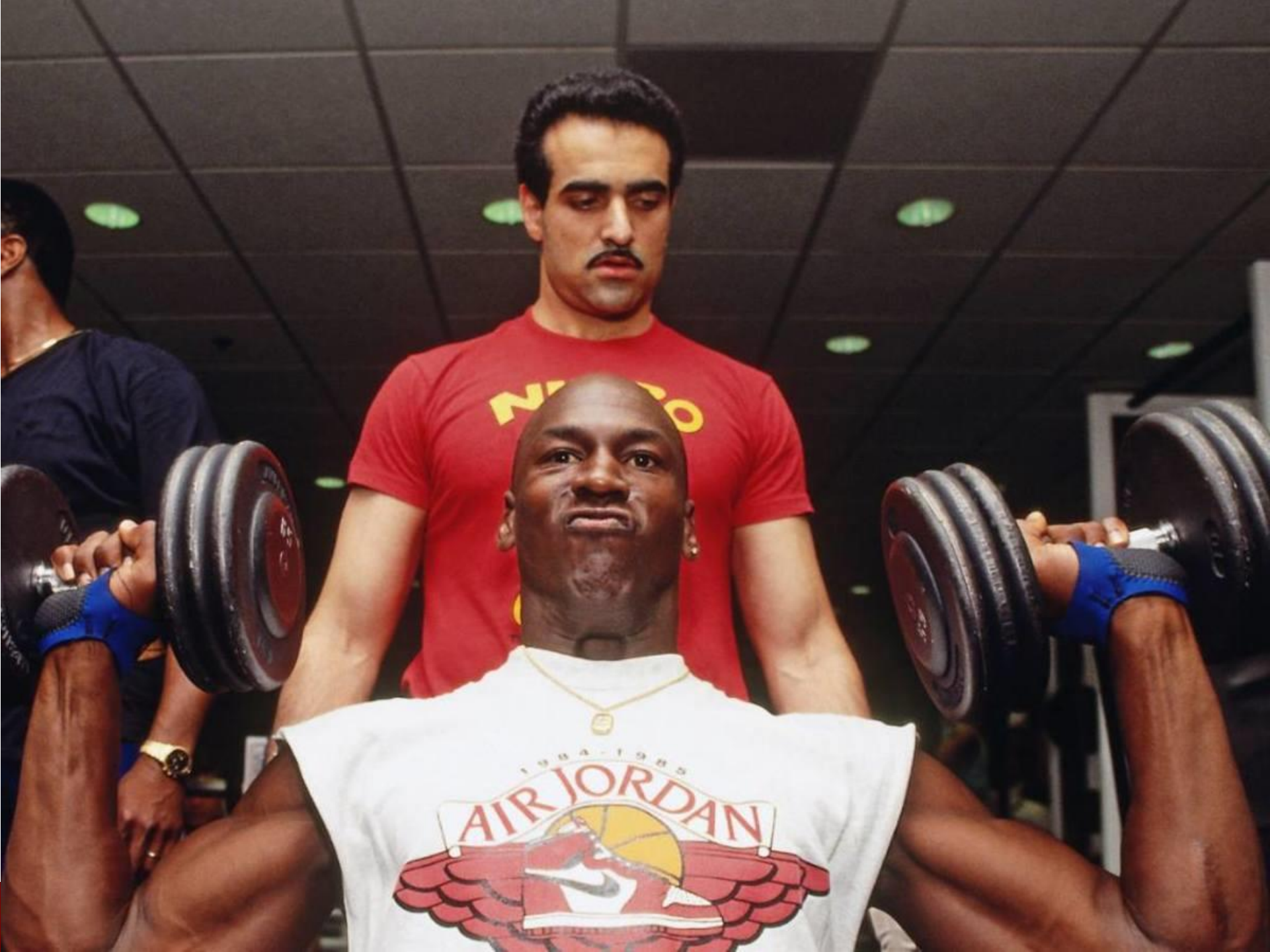
Personal Accompaniment
/
Spiritual Guardianship

3 Permutations of Personal Accompaniment / Spiritual Guardianship

1. Spiritual Direction
2. Spiritual Mentorship
3. Spiritual Buddies

1. Spiritual Direction

Unleashing spiritual greatness





The greats became *great* because they
found *someone* to help them become
greater than who they *used to be*.

“Whoever wants to stand alone without the support of **a master and guide** will be like the tree that stands alone in a field without a proprietor. No matter how much the tree bears, passers-by will pick the fruit before it ripens.”

St. John of the Cross, *Sayings of Light and Love*, 5

“The virtuous soul that is alone and without
a master is like a lone burning coal; it will
grow colder rather than hotter.”

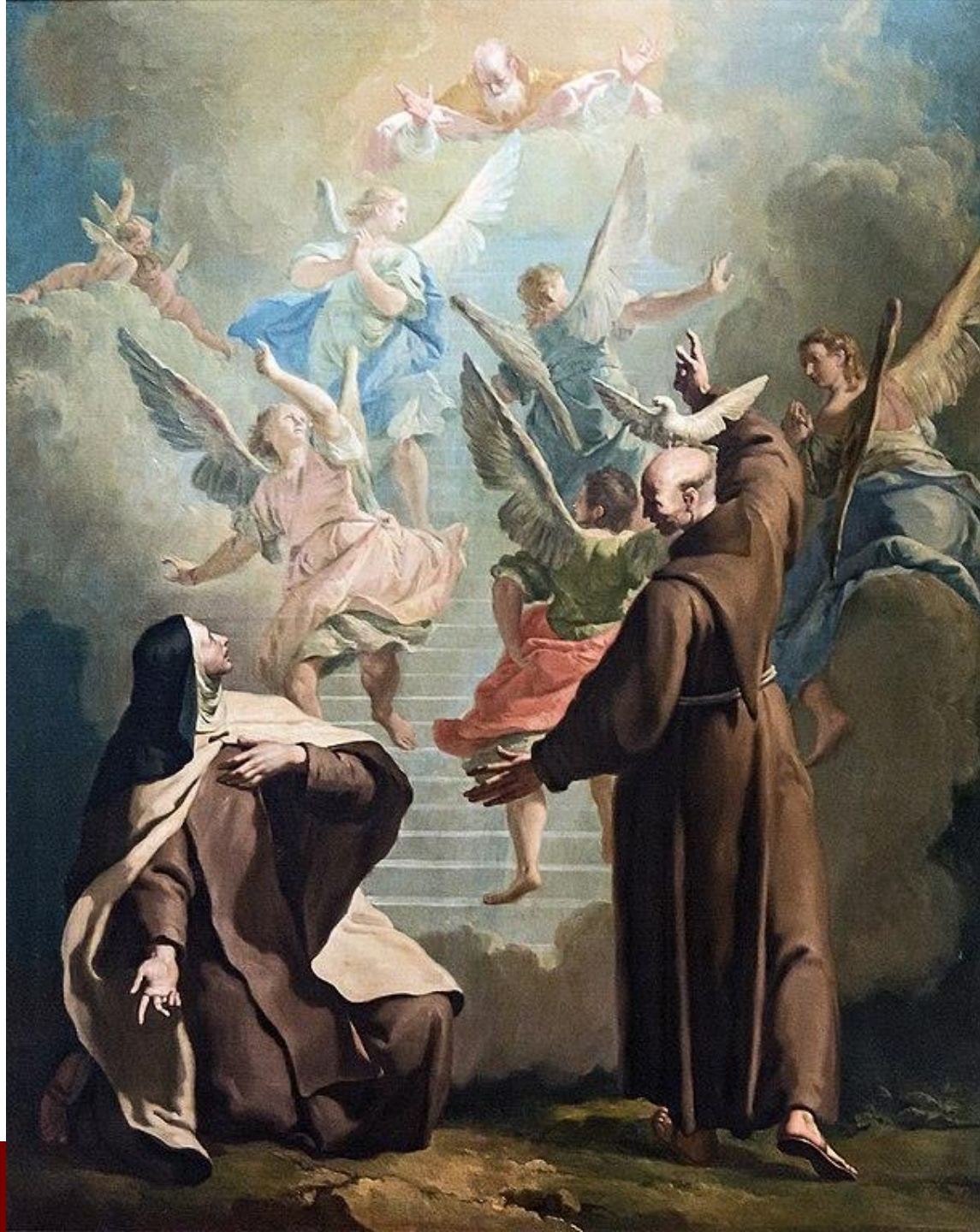
St. John of the Cross, *Sayings of Light and Love*, 7

“As she has always done, today the Church continues to recommend the practice of spiritual direction not only to those who desire to follow the Lord closely but to **every Christian who wishes to live responsibly his or her Baptism, that is, new life in Christ.**”

Pope Benedict XVI, [Address of His Holiness Benedict XVI to the Community of the Pontifical Theological Faculty “Teresianum” of Rome](#) (2011).

Saints Journeying with Saints

Spiritual Directee	Spiritual Director
St. Teresa of Avila	St. John of the Cross; St. Peter of Alcantara
Pope St. John Paul II	Servant of God, Jan Tyranowski (lay person)
Father Gabriele Amorth	St. Padre Pio



"Peter of Alcántara shows Teresa of Avila the way to paradise" by Francesco Fontebasso (1707–1769)

Consider

Do you *have* a spiritual director?

Can you *become* a spiritual director?

2. Spiritual Mentorship

Spiritual Mentor

- Mature or maturing in the faith
- Orthodox in doctrine
- Faithful to Christ and His Church
- Has a shepherd's heart

Notable Examples of Spiritual Mentorship

Spiritual Mentee	Spiritual Mentor
Paul	Barnabas
St. Augustine	St. Ambrose
St. Francis Xavier	St. Ignatius of Loyola

Consider

Do you *have* a spiritual mentor?

Can you *become* a spiritual mentor?

3. Spiritual Buddies





OCS
Buddies:
2LT
Robert
Lim (left)
and 2LT
Chan
Young
Matthew
(right)
during
field
training.

Spiritual Buddies

A small band of like-minded Christians (peers, not superiors) who are determined to pursue Christ together.

“Two are better than one... For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow; but woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up.

Again, if two lie together, they are warm; but how can one be warm alone?

And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him. A threefold cord is not quickly broken.”

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

“Those who fall alone remain alone in their fall, and they value their soul little since they entrust it to themselves alone.

If you do not fear falling alone, do you presume that you will rise up alone? Consider how much more can be accomplished by two together than by one alone.”

St. John of the Cross, *Sayings of Light and Love*, 7-8



The founding members of the Jesuits:

St. Peter Faber, St. Ignatius of Loyola, St. Francis Xavier, met through their studies in Paris, gradually merged their desires to be instruments of God, and became companions, co-founding the Society of Jesus



Picnic of St. Claire
with St. Francis:

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Consider

Do you *have* spiritual buddies?

Can you *become* a spiritual buddy?

Closing Prayer – The Memorare

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thy intercession, was left unaided.

Inspired by this confidence I fly unto thee, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother. To thee do I come, before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful.

O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy hear and answer me.

Amen.