**SIX TRUTHS ABOUT DISCERNMENT.** (thanks to Kris Miller for this material)

1. **The nature of what we know determines how we know it.**

The way I come to know a rock differs from the way I come to know my pet dog. The way I come to know a human being is certainly different than the way I come to know my pet dog. The way I come to know my spouse is certainly different than process I would use to know a rock or my pet dog. Get it? So, the way I come to know God will differ based on those things I think I already know. In other words.. what we discern (what we know or think we know) affects our actual knowing. And, the process or the way we know will change, depending on who or what we are trying to know.

1. **God is hidden and mysterious**.

This is both good news and bad news. This truth now brings to the surface issues of illusiveness, difficulties, questions, unknowns, etc. into play. Thus all theology becomes a discernment process.

1. **God is purposely revealing of Himself.**

In the Trinity, God is self-revealing, pro-active, Father, Son, Holy Spirit. A purposeful God will reveal Himself in purposeful ways. We, many times, will insist on how God must reveal Himself (because we know), thus trying to remove the hiddenness & mystery of God. Yet, in His perfect will, He reveals. He hides. He reveals. He hides. All done purposely to reveal Himself to us.

1. **God uses all of our faculties in discernment.**

Circumstances, dreams, reasoning, imagination, intuition, outside voices, etc. Many we are aware of. Many we are unaware of. Awareness, then, becomes a key factor in good discernment. Paying attention is vital. Having eyes to see, ears to hear, etc.

1. **Discernment is both a gift of the Spirit and a skill to be developed.**

An example: it’s absurd for a blind man to explain what an elephant is by touching only the elephant’s trunk. In truth, only God sees the whole elephant. So, we must start any discernment process in humility. We only see in part or through a glass dimly. Spiritual direction is a work of discernment and co-discernment. Both a gift to be received and a skill to be developed. You and I can learn the fine art of discernment, but we also still need to ask for the gift of discernment as well.

1. **God forms us through discernment.**

Self-awareness and God-awareness are both forms of discernment. As we grow in both, we mature in Christ. There is always a process of growth and formation underneath the discernment process. A good question to ask: “How am I being formed in this discernment process?” Wisdom is the fruit from a life of discernment. Wisdom: learning the ways of God, the ways of the world, the ways of self.