

SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE

Introduction: Awakening Spiritual Intelligence for a Transformed Life

In a world marked by rapid change, complex challenges, and a profound search for meaning, missionaries are called to respond not only with intellectual competence or emotional maturity but also with deep spiritual wisdom. Spiritual Intelligence (SQ) is the capacity to perceive reality through the light of God's presence, discern His will amid life's complexities, and respond with wisdom, compassion, and integrity. It enables missionary disciples to integrate faith, reason, emotions, and action into a unified way of living and serving.

Far more than religious knowledge or devotional practice, spiritual intelligence is the ability to see life from God's perspective and to allow the Holy Spirit to guide one's thoughts, decisions, relationships, and mission. It helps formandi discover deeper meaning in everyday experiences, discern God's action in changing circumstances, and remain rooted in hope even amid uncertainty. As such, spiritual intelligence becomes an indispensable capacity for missionary formation, enabling missionaries to accompany others with wisdom, make sound decisions, and remain faithful to their vocation in an increasingly complex world.

This module provides practical exercises, reflective tools, and real-life applications designed to deepen self-awareness, strengthen spiritual discernment, foster emotional maturity, and integrate faith into everyday life. This journey of personal growth disposes the missionary formandus to face life's uncertainties with hope, cultivate resilience amid trials, and contribute meaningfully to community life and apostolic mission.

Growing in spiritual intelligence gradually enables formandi to think with the mind of Christ, love with His heart, and act according to His Spirit. It fosters a balanced integration of intellectual, emotional, and spiritual capacities, leading to greater interior freedom, authentic relationships, prudent leadership, and joyful missionary service.

Formation Itinerary

This module is designed as a **six-month formation journey**. The learning process is progressive: it begins by laying the foundations of spiritual intelligence, moves to practical application through prayer and discernment, and culminates in integrating these capacities into missionary life, leadership, and apostolic service.

Phase I (Months 1–2): Foundations

Understanding and Renewing the Mind

- **Module 1:** Thinking Tri-Dimensionally
- **Module 2:** Renewing the Mind

Phase II (Months 3–4): Practice

Developing Spiritual Intelligence in Daily Life

- **Module 3:** Discovering and Developing Spiritual Gifts
- **Module 4:** Living from Heaven toward Earth

Phase III (Months 5–6): Integration

Applying Spiritual Intelligence in Mission

- **Module 5:** Discernment in Action
- **Module 6:** Spiritual Intelligence for Sustainable Mission

Each phase builds upon the previous one, helping formandi move from understanding spiritual intelligence intellectually, to practising it intentionally, and finally to integrating it into every aspect of their vocation and missionary ministry. The ultimate goal is to form discerning missionaries who, guided by the Holy Spirit, are capable of reading the signs of the times, responding creatively to pastoral challenges, and witnessing to the Gospel with wisdom, compassion, and evangelical courage.

PHASE 1 (Month 1–2): FOUNDATIONS

Theme: *Understanding and Renewing the Mind for SQ*

Module 1: Thinking Tri-Dimensionally

Theme: *Engaging IQ, EQ, and SQ in Harmony*

1. Formation Goal

To help formandi understand the three dimensions of intelligence—Intellectual (IQ), Emotional (EQ), and Spiritual (SQ)—and learn to engage all three under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, with SQ as the integrating and guiding force.

2. Key Concept

From Kris Vallotton’s perspective:

- **IQ** – The cognitive capacity to analyse, recall, and reason. Finite in scope.
- **EQ** – The emotional capacity to manage feelings, empathize, and connect relationally. Also, finite.
- **SQ** – The divine capacity to access the mind of Christ, receive revelation from the Holy Spirit, and apply God’s wisdom to real-life situations. Infinite in scope because it taps into God’s unlimited knowledge.

Core Insight: IQ and EQ operate like a smartphone’s internal memory, useful but limited. SQ is like connecting to the internet: it taps into God’s limitless wisdom and perspective.

3. Biblical Foundation

- **1 Corinthians 2:16** – “We have the mind of Christ.”
- **Ephesians 4:23** – “Be renewed in the spirit of your mind.”
- **Proverbs 25:2** – “It is the glory of God to conceal a matter; to search out a matter is the glory of kings.”
- **John 16:13** – “The Spirit of truth... will guide you into all the truth.”

4. Learning Outcomes

By the end of this module, formandi should be able to:

1. Explain the difference between IQ, EQ, and SQ.
2. Recognize personal default tendencies in problem-solving (head, heart, or spirit).
3. Intentionally invite SQ to lead IQ and EQ in real-life situations.
4. Apply SQ to interpret everyday challenges from a heavenly perspective.

5. Core Content Points

A. Understanding the Three Dimensions

1. **IQ (Intellectual Intelligence)** – The capacity for logic, reasoning, and factual knowledge. Important but insufficient for spiritual discernment.
2. **EQ (Emotional Intelligence)** – The capacity to understand and regulate emotions, build empathy, and maintain relational health. Necessary for ministry but limited in knowing God’s will.
3. **SQ (Spiritual Intelligence)** – The capacity to align with God’s thoughts and purposes, hear His voice, and respond according to His wisdom.

B. Why SQ Must Lead

- IQ without SQ risks arrogance and self-reliance.
- EQ without SQ risks sentimentality and fear of truth.
- SQ integrates the other two, grounding intellect and emotion in God’s truth and love.

C. Example from the Book: The “Broken Truck”

Kris Vallotton’s experience with the “Beast” (the Chevy truck that wouldn’t start) illustrates SQ in action:

- **Natural IQ:** Using manuals, wiring diagrams, and mechanical expertise—no solution found.
- **EQ:** Patience, perseverance, avoiding frustration.
- **SQ:** Asking God directly, receiving a vision of the exact fault, and solving the problem in minutes.

6. Formation Exercises

Exercise 1 – Personal Intelligence Mapping

- **Step 1:** Distribute a chart with three columns labelled IQ, EQ, and SQ.
- **Step 2:** Ask for mandi to list personal strengths, weaknesses, and examples of past successes in each area.
- **Step 3:** Discuss in small groups how each type of intelligence has helped or hindered them in ministry.

Exercise 2 – Three-Dimension Problem Solving

- **Scenario:** Present a real or fictional ministry challenge (e.g., conflict in a mission community, a budget shortfall, a pastoral crisis).
- **Step 1:** In groups, solve it using *only* IQ (facts, logic).
- **Step 2:** Solve it using *only* EQ (empathy, feelings).
- **Step 3:** Pray together for the Holy Spirit’s perspective and solve it again using SQ.
- **Debrief:** Compare the differences in approach and results.

Exercise 3 – Practising Spiritual Discernment

- Choose a small, personal decision each day (e.g., scheduling, outreach planning).
- Before deciding, pause and ask:
 - *Holy Spirit, what do You see here?*
 - *What do You want me to notice?*
- Write the response in a journal, act on it, and record the outcome.

7. Case Study for Reflection

Google Headquarters Talk (2018) – Vallotton presented the concept of SQ to some of the brightest minds in the tech industry. They understood IQ, EQ, and AI, but had never considered SQ. This opened a door for Kingdom wisdom to enter the conversation on innovation.

Reflection Question: If you had 10 minutes to explain SQ to a secular leader, how would you do it?

8. Accompaniment Guidelines for Formators

- **Model openness:** Share personal stories of listening to God in practical situations.
- **Guide discernment:** Help formandi distinguish between God's voice, their own thoughts, and emotional impulses.
- **Affirm growth:** Celebrate even small moments when a participant acts on SQ insight.
- **Challenge integration:** Ask follow-up questions like, "How did SQ shape your response?"

9. Assessment Tools

A. Self-Rating (1–5)

- I often pause to seek God's perspective before acting.
- I can explain the difference between IQ, EQ, and SQ.
- I can recall at least one recent example where SQ changed my approach.

B. Peer Feedback

- In group discussions, peers note when a participant brings a Spirit-led insight that changes the group's direction.

10. Discernment Markers of Growth

A participant is developing in this module when:

1. They naturally invite the Holy Spirit's guidance in both small and large matters.
2. They recognize when they are relying solely on intellect or emotion.
3. They can articulate the value of SQ to others.
4. Their problem-solving is increasingly creative, hopeful, and peace-filled.

Claretian Insight: St. Anthony Mary Claret sought to integrate every dimension of his life—prayer, study, pastoral ministry, and community life—under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. His example reminds us that authentic wisdom is not merely intellectual or emotional but deeply spiritual, enabling missionaries to think, discern, and act according to the mind of Christ. "The Spirit of the Lord has sent me to proclaim the Good News." (*Aut.*, 687; cf. Lk 4:18)

Missionary Integration: Missionary life constantly requires the integration of intellectual competence, emotional maturity, and spiritual discernment. Formandi are encouraged to reflect on how Spiritual Intelligence enables them to accompany people with compassion, make balanced decisions in community life, respond wisely to intercultural situations, and discern God's will amid the complex realities of missionary ministry. Allowing SQ to guide both IQ and EQ helps missionaries become credible witnesses of the Gospel in every circumstance.

Module 2: Renewing the Mind

Theme: *From Information to Transformation*

1. Formation Goal

To help formandi move beyond behaviour modification toward genuine transformation by renewing the mind according to God's truth, replacing false core beliefs with the reality of His Word, and learning to consistently interpret life through the "mind of Christ."

2. Key Concept

From *Spiritual Intelligence – The Art of Thinking Like God*:

- The renewed mind is more than thinking positively—it's adopting God's perspective.
- Transformation happens when God's truth rewires our "neural pathways."
- Core beliefs (what we really believe deep down) must align with our stated high values (what we say we believe).
- The "first mention" principle means that the first information we receive about something often becomes our interpretive lens—whether true or false.
- Biblical meditation (Hebrew *hagah* – "to growl, to declare") is a key tool in reprogramming thought patterns.

3. Biblical Foundation

- **Romans 12:2** – "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind..."
- **Joshua 1:8** – "Meditate on it day and night... for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success."
- **Luke 8:18** – "So take care how you listen..."
- **John 8:31–32** – "...you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."
- **Philippians 4:8** – "...whatever is true... think about these things."

4. Learning Outcomes

By the end of this module, formandi should be able to:

1. Distinguish between **high values** (stated beliefs) and **core values** (actual beliefs).
2. Recognize the influence of the "first mention" principle on their thinking.
3. Use biblical meditation to intentionally form new mental pathways.
4. Apply God's Word to reframe negative or fear-based thoughts.

5. Core Content Points

A. High Values vs. Core Values

- *High Values*: What we say we believe (e.g., "God will provide for me").
- *Core Values*: What our reactions reveal we actually believe (e.g., panic when finances are low).
- Discrepancy between the two signals an area in need of mind renewal.

B. The "First Mention" Principle

- First exposure to a concept creates a default lens for future interpretation.
- If that first impression is false (e.g., unhealthy view of sexuality, distorted idea of God), it becomes a "filter" for processing later truth—unless intentionally replaced.

C. Meditation as “Neural Pathway Bulldozing”

- Biblical meditation (*hagah*) is not emptying the mind but declaring God’s Word aloud, chewing on it, and letting it reshape thinking.
- Repeated declarations create “new highways” for thought, while old destructive pathways fade through disuse.

6. Formation Exercises

Exercise 1 – Core vs. High Values Audit

- **Step 1:** Write down 3 statements you say you believe about God’s character.
- **Step 2:** Recall a recent situation that tested each statement.
- **Step 3:** Ask: *Did my reaction confirm or contradict this belief?*
- **Step 4:** Identify any areas where your core values need to match your high values.

Exercise 2 – First Mention Reflection

- **Step 1:** Identify one area (e.g., money, authority, forgiveness) where you suspect your lens might be distorted.
- **Step 2:** Recall your earliest exposure to this topic—what was communicated or modeled?
- **Step 3:** Compare it with Scripture’s truth.
- **Step 4:** Write a “truth declaration” to replace the falsehood.

Exercise 3 – Joshua Meditation Drill

- Choose a Scripture related to a current struggle.
- Declare it aloud daily for 14 days, inserting your name where possible.
- Journal any emotional or behavioural changes you notice.

Example: “Because *[Name]* dwells in the shelter of the Most High, *[Name]* rests in the shadow of the Almighty...” (Psalm 91:1)

Exercise 4 – Reframing Thought Patterns

- Present a fear-based or negative thought (e.g., “This is impossible”).
- In pairs, replace it with a truth-based statement (e.g., “With God all things are possible” – Matthew 19:26).
- Discuss how reframing affects emotional response.

7. Case Study from the Book

Situation: Kris Vallotton describes a parent teaching a child about healthy sexuality *after* the child has already been exposed to pornography by a friend.

Lesson: The child’s “first mention” lens was formed by the wrong source, so renewing the mind will require intentional rejection of falsehood and active replacement with truth.

Reflection Question: Where has a false “first mention” shaped my current beliefs, and what steps can I take to replace it?

8. Accompaniment Guidelines for Formators

- **Model honesty:** Share your own areas where mind renewal was needed.
- **Reinforce truth daily:** Give formandi short Scriptures to meditate on between meetings.
- **Gently challenge:** When someone reacts fearfully or negatively, ask, “What truth of God could replace that thought?”
- **Encourage persistence:** Mind renewal is a process—affirm progress, however small.

9. Assessment Tools

A. Self-Check (Weekly)

- Did I meditate on Scripture at least 5 times this week?
- Did I identify and replace any false beliefs?
- Did I notice more peace and hope in my responses?

B. Peer Feedback

- In small groups, formandi share one “old thought” they’ve replaced and receive encouragement.

C. Progress Journal

- Keep a log of truth declarations and answered prayers that confirm God’s Word in action.

10. Discernment Markers of Growth

A participant is progressing in renewing the mind when:

1. They notice negative thoughts more quickly and replace them with truth.
2. Their emotional reactions align more with Scripture than with fear or past experience.
3. They habitually declare God’s Word over their life.
4. They show increased peace, hope, and gratitude.

Claretian Insight: St. Anthony Mary Claret continually sought to renew his mind according to God’s will. Rather than relying solely on his own ideas or preferences, he cultivated a heart that was attentive to God’s guidance through prayer, Scripture, and discernment. Reflecting on his vocation, he recognized that God gradually revealed His plan and faithfully led him step by step (*Aut.*, 64). His example reminds formandi that renewing the mind is an ongoing process of allowing God’s truth to reshape one’s thoughts, decisions, and missionary outlook.

Reflection: How is God inviting me to renew my way of thinking so that I may better discern and embrace His call today?

Missionary Integration: Missionaries frequently encounter situations that challenge their assumptions, beliefs, and ways of thinking. A renewed mind enables formandi to interpret people, cultures, and pastoral realities through the eyes of Christ rather than through prejudice, fear, or personal preference. By continually renewing their minds through Scripture, prayer, and reflection, missionaries become more open to God’s surprising ways of working and more capable of fostering reconciliation, hope, and communion wherever they serve.

PHASE 2 (Month 3–4): PRACTICE

Theme: Activating Spiritual Gifts and Applying SQ

Module 3: Discovering Your Discovering and Developing Spiritual Gifts

Theme: *Identifying, Cultivating, and Applying Your God-given Gifts through Spiritual Intelligence (SQ)*

1. Formation Goal

To help formandi recognize, activate, and mature the spiritual gifts God has entrusted to them, and to learn how to apply these gifts in practical, mission-oriented situations with wisdom, love, and cultural sensitivity.

2. Key Concept

From *Spiritual Intelligence – The Art of Thinking Like God*:

- Spiritual gifts are *superpowers*—divine abilities given by the Holy Spirit for building up the Body of Christ and influencing the world with God’s wisdom.
- SQ enables believers to use these gifts effectively, discerning the right time, place, and manner to release them.
- Operating in gifts without SQ can lead to immaturity, misuse, or even harm.

3. Biblical Foundation

- **1 Corinthians 12:4–7** – “There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit...”
- **Daniel 2:27–28** – God reveals mysteries to His people.
- **Romans 12:6–8** – “We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us...”
- **1 Peter 4:10–11** – “Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others...”
- **Acts 6:8–10** – Stephen, “full of grace and power,” spoke with divine wisdom no one could refute.

4. Learning Outcomes

By the end of this module, formandi will be able to:

1. Identify their primary spiritual gifts and potential areas for growth.
2. Understand how SQ directs the use of gifts for maximum Kingdom impact.
3. Apply spiritual gifts in practical situations within ministry and daily life.
4. Discern the difference between natural talents, learned skills, and supernatural gifts.

5. Core Content Points

A. The Three Levels of Capacity

1. **Natural Talents** – Abilities given by birth (e.g., musicality, craftsmanship).
2. **Learned Skills** – Abilities developed through training and practice.
3. **Spiritual Gifts** – God-given, Holy Spirit-empowered capacities for supernatural effectiveness.

B. The Role of SQ in Gift Activation

- SQ keeps gifts anchored in God’s heart and mission.
- SQ ensures gifts are exercised with discernment, avoiding showmanship or manipulation.
- SQ prompts believers to see beyond immediate needs into God’s broader plan.

C. Common Misuses of Gifts (Without SQ)

- **Prophetic Gift:** Used to impress rather than to edify.
- **Teaching Gift:** Used to win arguments instead of discipling.
- **Healing Gift:** Used to gain attention instead of glorifying God.

6. Formation Exercises

Exercise 1 – Spiritual Gifts Inventory

- Complete a gifts assessment questionnaire (covering gifts listed in 1 Corinthians 12, Romans 12, and Ephesians 4).
- Discuss results with a mentor to confirm and refine understanding.

Exercise 2 – “When Heaven Breaks In” Journal

- Write about a time when you sensed the Holy Spirit guiding you to use a gift—what happened, how you felt, and the outcome.
- Reflect on whether SQ was present in your discernment process.

Exercise 3 – Prophetic Problem-Solving

- Present a practical challenge (e.g., community conflict, financial shortfall, ministry opportunity).
- Step 1: Pray for words of knowledge, visions, or insights.
- Step 2: Share what you sense God is revealing.
- Step 3: Discuss together how to apply these insights with wisdom and love.

Exercise 4 – “Gift-in-Action” Role-Play

- Assign each participant a hypothetical ministry scenario.
- Ask them to demonstrate how they would apply one of their gifts in that context, considering timing, tone, and cultural sensitivity.

7. Case Study from the Book

Daniel before King Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 2)

- Daniel’s gift of dream interpretation was paired with SQ:
 - He sought God before responding.
 - He honoured the king’s authority.
 - He gave glory to God, not himself.
- *Lesson:* Gifts used with SQ open doors to influence even in hostile environments.

Reflection Question: How might my gift create influence if used with humility, wisdom, and God’s timing?

8. Accompaniment Guidelines for Formators

- **Help in identification:** Affirm observed gifts in formandi.
- **Provide safe spaces:** Allow them to practice gifts in low-risk settings before public ministry.
- **Correct in love:** Gently address misuses, explaining why timing or tone matters.
- **Encourage journaling:** Tracking God’s guidance builds sensitivity to SQ.

9. Assessment Tools

A. Self-Reflection Checklist

- Do I know my primary spiritual gifts?
- Do I seek the Holy Spirit’s direction before using them?
- Have I seen positive fruit in others’ lives from using my gifts?

B. Peer & Mentor Feedback

- Peers note moments when a gift was used effectively and with love.

C. Growth Plan

- Set one measurable step to grow in each identified gift (e.g., read a book, practice weekly, seek feedback).

10. Discernment Markers of Growth

A participant is maturing in this module when:

1. They can clearly identify their spiritual gifts and how to use them.

2. They demonstrate humility and dependency on God when exercising gifts.
3. Their use of gifts consistently builds up others and honours Christ.
4. They apply their gifts in varied contexts, adapting to cultural sensitivity.

Missionary Integration: The gifts of the Holy Spirit are entrusted not for personal fulfilment but for the service of the Church and the mission. Formandi are invited to discern how their God-given gifts can strengthen community life, enrich pastoral ministry, and respond to the needs of the people they serve. Spiritual Intelligence ensures that these gifts are exercised with humility, prudence, and love, always seeking the common good and the building up of God’s Kingdom.

Module 4: Living from Heaven Toward Earth

Theme: *Shifting Perspective to God’s Reality First*

1. Formation Goal

To help formandi consistently see, think, and act from God’s perspective—operating from heavenly reality toward earthly situations—rather than letting earthly circumstances dictate their mindset and responses.

2. Key Concept

From *Spiritual Intelligence – The Art of Thinking Like God*:

- The renewed mind sees reality as God sees it, not as the world reports it.
- Living “from heaven toward earth” means making decisions as if God’s promises and eternal truth are the most real things in the room.
- It’s about *responding from identity and inheritance* rather than reacting from lack or fear.

Kris Vallotton emphasizes that SQ thrives when we stop “begging God from earth” and instead partner with Him as citizens of heaven carrying Kingdom solutions.

3. Biblical Foundation

- **Colossians 3:1–2** – “Set your hearts on things above... set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.”
- **Ephesians 2:6** – “God... seated us with Him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus.”
- **Matthew 6:10** – “Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”
- **John 5:19–20** – Jesus only did what He saw the Father doing.
- **2 Kings 6:15–17** – Elisha prayed for his servant’s eyes to be opened to see the heavenly army.

4. Learning Outcomes

By the end of this module, formandi will be able to:

1. Explain what it means to live from heaven toward earth.
2. Identify when they are operating from a purely earthly perspective.
3. Apply SQ to align decisions with heavenly priorities.
4. Use prayer and Scripture to reframe problems from a Kingdom point of view.

5. Core Content Points

A. The Two Perspectives

- **Earth-to-Heaven:** Starting with limitations, fear, and lack; hoping God intervenes.

- **Heaven-to-Earth:** Starting with abundance, identity, and God’s promises; releasing them into the situation.

B. Identity Shapes Perspective

- If I believe I am a *beggar*, I’ll approach life from scarcity.
- If I believe I am a *beloved child and co-heir*, I’ll expect God’s resources to be available for His purposes.

C. Seeing Beyond the Seen

- SQ helps us perceive spiritual realities hidden from the natural eye.
- God’s plans are not bound by human timelines, resources, or probabilities.

D. The SQ Decision Filter

Before deciding, ask:

1. *What does heaven say about this?* (God’s Word, prophetic sense, inner peace)
2. *How does my identity in Christ affect my approach?*
3. *What outcome reflects God’s nature most clearly here?*

6. Formation Exercises

Exercise 1 – Seeing Reality through the Eyes of Faith

- Choose a personal or community challenge.
- Write two descriptions:
 1. From an earthly perspective (focus on obstacles, risks).
 2. From a heavenly perspective (focus on promises, resources, and God’s plan).
- Compare and note the shift in emotional tone and hope level.

Exercise 2 – Scripture Reframing Drill

- In small groups, present scenarios (e.g., ministry budget cut, illness in a member’s family).
- Step 1: Discuss the default human response.
- Step 2: Read a relevant Scripture.
- Step 3: Redefine the situation based on that verse.

Exercise 3 – “What the Father is Doing” Practice

- Spend 10 minutes in silence, asking: *Father, what are You doing in this situation?*
- Write down impressions, pictures, or verses.
- Share in pairs, focusing on encouragement and discernment.

Exercise 4 – Vision Mapping

- Create a visual or written map of a current ministry project from a heaven-first perspective.
- Include: God’s promises, desired Kingdom impact, and possible Spirit-led strategies.

7. Case Study from the Bible

Elisha and the Aramean Army (2 Kings 6)

- Earthly reality: The city was surrounded—doom seemed certain.
- Heavenly reality: God’s army of fiery chariots was already in place.
- Lesson: SQ helps open our spiritual eyes so that faith overrides fear, leading to bold, Spirit-led action.

Reflection Question: Where do I need God to “open my eyes” to see the heavenly resources around me?

8. Accompaniment Guidelines for Formators

- **Model the mindset:** Share how you've applied heaven-first thinking in real decisions.
- **Challenge defaults:** Gently ask, "What does heaven say?" when formandi react fearfully.
- **Encourage prophetic listening:** Build time into formation meetings for asking God's perspective.
- **Affirm shifts:** Recognize when formandi choose hope and faith over fear.

9. Assessment Tools

A. Self-Reflection Checklist

- I intentionally seek God's perspective before responding.
- I can articulate how my identity in Christ shapes my decisions.
- My language reflects faith and hope more than fear or doubt.

B. Peer Observation

- Group members note moments when someone brings a heaven-first insight.

C. Progress Journal

- Record "before and after" perspectives for situations over the month.

10. Discernment Markers of Growth

A participant is maturing in this module when:

1. They habitually pause to ask for God's perspective.
2. They make decisions rooted in identity and Kingdom values.
3. Their speech and actions carry hope, peace, and authority.
4. They see problems as opportunities for God's glory to be revealed.

Missionary Integration: Missionary disciples are called to interpret reality through the light of faith rather than through fear or discouragement. Living from God's perspective enables formandi to remain hopeful amid uncertainty, to discern new missionary opportunities in difficult situations, and to inspire others with confidence in God's presence. This heavenly perspective nurtures resilience, creativity, and missionary courage in the face of changing pastoral realities.

PHASE 3 (Month 5–6): INTEGRATION

Theme: *SQ in Mission, Leadership, and Cultural Transformation*

Module 5: Discernment in Action

Theme: *Applying SQ to Hear, Test, and Respond to God's Voice in Real-Life Situations*

1. Formation Goal

To equip formandi to accurately discern God's guidance in the midst of competing voices—internal thoughts, external influences, and spiritual impressions—and to respond with wisdom, love, and integrity in leadership, relationships, and mission contexts.

2. Key Concept

From *Spiritual Intelligence – The Art of Thinking Like God*:

- Discernment is the ability to see beneath the surface of situations, separating truth from error, good from evil, God's voice from other voices.

- SQ sharpens discernment so that it's not just about avoiding wrong but about finding and releasing God's redemptive solution.
- Mature discernment is proactive, not just reactive—it anticipates God's movements and positions us accordingly.

3. Biblical Foundation

- **Hebrews 5:14** – "...the mature... have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil."
- **Philippians 1:9–10** – "...that you may be able to discern what is best..."
- **1 Kings 3:9** – Solomon asks for a discerning heart to govern God's people.
- **John 10:27** – "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me."
- **Acts 16:6–10** – Paul discerns the Spirit's redirection to Macedonia.

4. Learning Outcomes

By the end of this module, formandi will be able to:

1. Define spiritual discernment and explain how it differs from suspicion or personal preference.
2. Identify the three main sources of "voices" in decision-making (God, self, enemy).
3. Apply biblical tests for discerning God's voice.
4. Use discernment to guide action steps in leadership and mission.

5. Core Content Points

A. Three Sources of Input

1. **God's Voice** – Aligns with Scripture, produces peace and life, often challenges us toward growth.
2. **Our Own Voice** – Shaped by personal desires, fears, and past experiences.
3. **Enemy's Voice** – Condemns, confuses, or tempts; distorts God's character.

B. Biblical Tests for Discernment

1. **Scripture Test** – Does it align with God's revealed Word? (Isaiah 8:20)
2. **Fruit Test** – Will it produce good fruit consistent with the Spirit's character? (Matthew 7:16–18; Galatians 5:22–23)
3. **Peace Test** – Does it bring inner confirmation and rest? (Colossians 3:15)
4. **Community Test** – Does godly counsel affirm it? (Proverbs 15:22)

C. Discernment Pitfalls

- Confusing fear or comfort-seeking with the Spirit's leading.
- Over-relying on personal logic without SQ.
- Ignoring the timing of God, even when the direction is correct.

D. SQ and Redemptive Discernment

- Mature SQ moves beyond identifying what's wrong to asking: *What is God's redemptive plan here?*
- Example: Instead of merely spotting division in a team, SQ seeks the Spirit's strategy for restoring unity.

6. Formation Exercises

Exercise 1 – Voice Identification Drill

- Present a scenario (e.g., invitation to a new ministry opportunity).

- Read three different “inner impressions” formandi might have.
- In groups, decide which is most likely God’s voice, which is self, which might be enemy influence—and explain why.

Exercise 2 – Case Study: Paul’s Redirection (Acts 16)

- Read the passage.
- Identify how Paul and his team discerned the Spirit’s “no” to Asia and “yes” to Macedonia.
- Discuss how they remained flexible and responsive.

Exercise 3 – Discernment Map

- For a current decision, create three columns: God’s voice indicators, self-indicators, enemy indicators.
- Pray and fill in observations under each.
- End with a group prayer for clarity and alignment.

Exercise 4 – Conflict Resolution Role-Play

- Simulate a leadership conflict.
- Step 1: Identify the surface issue.
- Step 2: Ask God for insight into root causes.
- Step 3: Propose a redemptive, Spirit-led resolution.

7. Case Study from the Book

Kris Vallotton shares experiences where “prophetic discernment” revealed hidden root issues—such as recognizing that a person’s opposition in leadership wasn’t rebellion but fear due to past wounds.

Lesson: Discernment without love can wound; discernment with SQ restores.

Reflection Question: When I discern a problem, do I stop at diagnosis, or do I seek God’s strategy for healing and restoration?

8. Accompaniment Guidelines for Formators

- **Normalize discernment:** Encourage daily practice in small matters before major decisions.
- **Coach in testing impressions:** Walk through Scripture and fruit tests with formandi.
- **Debrief real cases:** After ministry situations, discuss what voices were present and how they were navigated.
- **Encourage humility:** Remind formandi that discernment can be sharpened over time and in community.

9. Assessment Tools

A. Self-Evaluation

- I pause to seek God’s perspective before acting.
- I know how to test an impression biblically.
- I can identify when my own emotions may be influencing my perception.

B. Peer Feedback

- In group work, others observe whether my discernment inputs lead to peace and clarity.

C. Mentor Check-In

- Share one real-life discernment decision each month with a mentor for feedback.

10. Discernment Markers of Growth

A participant is maturing in this module when:

1. They consistently test impressions against Scripture and godly counsel.
2. Their discernment produces peace, clarity, and constructive solutions.
3. They use discernment to build up, not tear down.
4. They are willing to wait for God's timing instead of forcing action.

Claretian Insight: Throughout his missionary life, St. Anthony Mary Claret never undertook important apostolic initiatives without first seeking God's will through prayer and discernment. His decisions were guided not by personal ambition but by a sincere desire to accomplish what would most promote God's glory and the salvation of souls. This attitude enabled him to respond courageously to new missionary challenges with freedom and confidence. "I always sought only the greater glory of God and the good of souls." (*Aut.*, cf. 494)

Reflection: Before making important decisions, do I sincerely seek God's will through prayer, discernment, and consultation, or do I rely mainly on my own preferences?

Missionary Integration: Every missionary is called to discern God's voice within the concrete circumstances of daily life and apostolic ministry. Spiritual Intelligence helps formandi listen attentively to the Holy Spirit, seek the wisdom of the community, and make decisions that promote communion, justice, and the mission of the Church. Genuine discernment enables missionaries to respond creatively to new challenges while remaining faithful to the Gospel and the Claretian charism.

Module 6: SQ and Mission Sustainability

Theme: *Applying Spiritual Intelligence to Build Enduring Mission Impact*

1. Formation Goal

To help formandi integrate Spiritual Intelligence into long-term mission planning, decision-making, and resource stewardship—ensuring that Kingdom initiatives are spiritually grounded, resilient, and adaptable to changing realities without losing their core vision.

2. Key Concept

From *Spiritual Intelligence – The Art of Thinking Like God*:

- SQ is not only for moment-by-moment guidance; it is essential for shaping strategies that last.
- Mission sustainability depends on both **hearing God** for vision and **walking with Him** in daily operational decisions.
- SQ safeguards missions from burnout, drift, and dependency by keeping them aligned with God's purposes rather than mere survival.

3. Biblical Foundation

- **Habakkuk 2:2–3** – "Write the vision; make it plain... though it linger, wait for it; it will certainly come."
- **Luke 14:28–30** – The wise builder counts the cost before starting.
- **John 15:4–5** – "Abide in me... apart from me you can do nothing."
- **Genesis 41:33–36** – Joseph's Spirit-led planning sustains Egypt (and the world) during famine.
- **Acts 13:2–3** – The Antioch church receives Spirit direction for mission expansion.

4. Learning Outcomes

By the end of this module, formandi will be able to:

1. Explain the role of SQ in creating sustainable mission strategies.
2. Identify spiritual and practical threats to mission longevity.
3. Apply SQ to resource allocation, team development, and community engagement.
4. Develop a basic sustainability plan that balances faith, wisdom, and adaptability.

5. Core Content Points

A. The Three Pillars of Sustainable Mission

1. **Spiritual Alignment** – Vision rooted in God’s call, regularly renewed in prayer and Scripture.
2. **Relational Integrity** – Healthy, Spirit-led team culture; conflict resolution; shared ownership.
3. **Operational Stewardship** – Wise use of finances, time, and human resources; adaptability to external changes.

B. SQ as the Integrator

- SQ discerns **when to persevere** and **when to pivot** without compromising core calling.
- SQ helps distinguish between God-given opportunities and distractions.
- SQ ensures resource decisions align with Kingdom values, not just financial feasibility.

C. Threats to Sustainability

- **Vision Drift** – Losing focus under pressure or due to funding shifts.
- **Burnout** – Ignoring Sabbath and relational health.
- **Dependency** – Building without empowering local leadership.
- **Overreaction to Crisis** – Making fear-driven changes without discerning God’s timing.

6. Formation Exercises

Exercise 1 – Sustainability Audit

- In groups, assess a current or hypothetical mission project.
- Identify strengths and vulnerabilities in the three pillars (spiritual alignment, relational integrity, operational stewardship).

Exercise 2 – Joseph Planning Simulation

- Present a “7 years of plenty / 7 years of famine” scenario.
- Formandi use SQ to design a storage and distribution plan that serves both current and future needs, balancing generosity with preparedness.

Exercise 3 – Mission Pivot Drill

- Provide a case where external circumstances (e.g., political change, funding cut, natural disaster) force rethinking the mission.
- Groups discern:
 1. What stays fixed?
 2. What can be adapted?
 3. How does SQ guide this?

Exercise 4 – Abiding Strategy

- Spend 15 minutes in silent prayer asking: *Lord, what do You see as the long-term fruit You want from this mission?*
- Journal impressions and share in small groups.

7. Case Study from the Bible

Joseph in Egypt (Genesis 41)

- SQ revealed the meaning of Pharaoh's dream and the strategy for national survival.
- Planning was not merely human foresight—it was prophetic insight with practical execution.
- Lesson: Sustainable mission combines revelation with disciplined management.

Reflection Question: What has God revealed about the future of my mission, and how am I preparing now?

8. Accompaniment Guidelines for Formators

- **Help leaders connect vision to daily practice:** Regularly revisit the mission's "why" in prayer.
- **Train in adaptive thinking:** Practice scenarios that stretch flexibility while holding to core vision.
- **Encourage resilience habits:** Sabbath rest, healthy boundaries, and delegation.
- **Celebrate long-term wins:** Not just immediate results, but enduring fruit.

9. Assessment Tools

A. Self-Reflection Checklist

- I regularly seek God's perspective on mission direction.
- I can identify both immediate and long-term needs of the mission.
- I adapt without compromising core vision.

B. Team Feedback

- Peers assess whether my decisions balance faith and wisdom.

C. Sustainability Plan Review

- Present a basic sustainability plan to mentor or peer group for feedback.

10. Discernment Markers of Growth

A participant is maturing in this module when:

1. They consistently anchor mission planning in prayer and Scripture.
2. They make decisions that consider long-term impact, not just short-term gain.
3. They show adaptability in crisis while staying true to vision.
4. They empower others to carry the mission forward.

Claretian Insight: St. Anthony Mary Claret demonstrated remarkable adaptability throughout his missionary life. Whether preaching popular missions, serving as Archbishop of Santiago de Cuba, accompanying Queen Isabella II, or enduring exile, he continually adapted to changing circumstances without losing sight of his missionary vocation. His unwavering confidence in Divine Providence enabled him to remain faithful even when plans changed unexpectedly. "I am like a saw in the carpenter's hands" (*Aut.*, 348). His complete availability to God allowed him to respond creatively to new needs while remaining firmly rooted in the Gospel.

Reflection: Am I willing to adapt my plans and methods while remaining faithful to God's call and the mission entrusted to me?

Missionary Integration: Missionary effectiveness depends not only on enthusiasm but also on the ability to sustain vision, relationships, and apostolic commitment over time. Spiritual Intelligence enables formandi to balance prayer with planning, faith with responsible stewardship, and

adaptability with fidelity to their missionary vocation. By integrating these capacities, they become leaders who build resilient communities, empower others for mission, and ensure that today's apostolic efforts continue to bear fruit for future generations.

Assessment Tools for Spiritual Intelligence Formation Program

1. Self-Assessment Tools

These allow formandi to reflect honestly on their progress after each module.

A. Self-Reflection Questionnaire (General – all modules)

Rate each statement from **1 (rarely true)** to **5 (consistently true)**:

1. I intentionally seek God's perspective before acting.
2. My reactions align more with faith than fear.
3. I apply Scripture to interpret situations.
4. I can identify when my thinking is shaped by past wounds.
5. I use my spiritual gifts to build others up, not for self-promotion.
6. I can distinguish between my voice, God's voice, and the enemy's voice.
7. I balance immediate ministry needs with long-term sustainability.
8. I seek counsel and test impressions in community.
9. I take time for prayerful listening before making key decisions.
10. I adapt to change without losing sight of God's vision.

B. Module-Specific Quick Checks

Module	Self-Check Questions
1 – Thinking Tri-Dimensionally	Do I consider spiritual, emotional, and practical aspects before deciding? Can I hold multiple perspectives without confusion?
2 – Renewing the Mind	Am I replacing false beliefs with biblical truth? Have I noticed changes in my emotional reactions?
3 – Discovering Your Discovering and Developing Spiritual Gifts	Do I know my top 2–3 spiritual gifts? Am I using them with humility and in God's timing?
4 – Living from Heaven Toward Earth	Do I interpret challenges from God's reality rather than earthly limitation?
5 – Discernment in Action	Do I use biblical tests for impressions? Am I able to identify the redemptive purpose in situations?
6 – SQ and Mission Sustainability	Do I make mission decisions with both short- and long-term effects in mind?

2. Peer & Group Assessment Tools

A. Observation Feedback Form

Peers observe during group exercises and record:

- **What was demonstrated well** (e.g., faith perspective, clarity, humility).
- **What could be improved** (e.g., timing, communication, Scripture grounding).
- **Example moment** showing SQ in action.

B. Peer Encouragement Rounds

At the end of each module, peers affirm one area of observed growth and one suggestion for deeper practice.

3. Mentor / Formator Assessment Tools

A. Monthly One-on-One Review

Mentor asks:

1. *Describe a recent situation where you applied SQ. What was the outcome?*
2. *Where did you feel confident in discernment? Where did you struggle?*
3. *What is one concrete step you will take before our next session?*

B. Growth Rubric (0–3 scale)

Area	0 – Not evident	1 – Emerging	2 – Growing	3 – Consistently demonstrated
Biblical Grounding	Rarely applies Scripture	Sometimes applies	Regularly applies	Integrates naturally in decisions
Perspective Shift	Stuck in earthly view	Begins shifting	Often applies heaven-first	Consistently sees from God's perspective
Gifts Use	Unclear gifts or misused	Identifying gifts	Using gifts with guidance	Using gifts wisely and independently
Discernment	Confused voices	Attempts testing	Tests with help	Accurately tests and acts
Sustainability Thinking	Short-term focus	Aware of long-term needs	Balances both	Strategically plans for long-term mission health

4. Practical Ministry Assessment

Evaluating SQ application in real-world mission or community service.

A. Field Observation Checklist

Formator observes participant during actual ministry:

- Was there evidence of prayerful preparation?
- Did they adapt to unexpected changes with calm and faith?
- Were their words and actions constructive and edifying?
- Did they collaborate and seek input when appropriate?
- Was there a visible impact on others (peace, clarity, encouragement)?

B. Post-Action Debrief

After ministry activity:

1. What happened that required discernment?
2. How did you seek God's guidance?
3. How did SQ affect your response?
4. What would you do differently next time?

5. Tracking Growth Over Time

- **SQ Journal:** Weekly record of challenges, impressions, Scriptures applied, and observed results.
- **Quarterly Review:** Compare self-ratings and mentor ratings over the months to identify growth areas.
- **Celebration Milestones:** At 3-month intervals, acknowledge progress publicly in the formation group.

Accompaniment Strategies for Formators

1. Foundational Posture for Accompaniment

- **Prayerful Presence** – Approach accompaniment with intercession for the participant’s growth, not just evaluation.
- **Safe Space** – Create an environment where formandi can share successes, failures, and doubts without fear of judgment.
- **Gradual Challenge** – Push for growth without overwhelming; stretch faith in progressive steps.
- **Modelling** – Demonstrate SQ in your own life and decisions; let formandi “see it in action.”

2. Module-Specific Accompaniment Strategies

Module	Accompaniment Focus	Practical Strategies
1 – Thinking Tri-Dimensionally	Helping formandi integrate spiritual, emotional, and practical perspectives.	Use real-life cases; pause to ask, <i>What would change if we saw this spiritually? Emotionally? Practically?</i>
2 – Renewing the Mind	Supporting belief transformation.	Identify recurring negative patterns; guide them to Scripture that rewrites those beliefs. Encourage testimonies of renewed thinking.
3 – Discovering Your Discovering and Developing Spiritual Gifts	Guiding safe and wise gift activation.	Provide “practice spaces” in small groups; debrief after gift use; affirm strengths; correct in love when misuse occurs.
4 – Living from Heaven Toward Earth	Building heaven-first reflexes.	Frequently ask, <i>What does heaven say about this?</i> ; share biblical examples; celebrate when faith overrides fear.
5 – Discernment in Action	Training in testing impressions.	Walk through the Scripture/fruit/peace/community tests; role-play voice identification; help formandi slow down decision-making to listen better.
6 – SQ and Mission Sustainability	Shaping long-term Kingdom thinking.	Mentor in balancing short-term wins with long-term fruit; use scenario planning; revisit vision regularly in prayer.

3. General Accompaniment Practices

1. **Regular One-on-One Meetings** – Monthly reviews to track personal and spiritual growth.
2. **Case Study Debriefs** – After ministry experiences, process what happened and how SQ was or wasn’t applied.

3. **Group Reflection Circles** – Encourage shared learning through testimonies of SQ in action.
4. **Scripture Anchoring** – Always tie discernment back to God’s Word to avoid subjectivity.
5. **Progress Journaling** – Require weekly entries on SQ application moments, reviewed periodically.

Discernment Criteria for SQ Maturity

These criteria help formators assess when a participant is moving toward maturity in Spiritual Intelligence. They can be used as **end-of-module checkpoints** and **graduation benchmarks**.

1. Core Indicators of SQ Maturity

A mature participant will consistently:

1. **See from God’s Perspective** – Regularly reframe situations from a heaven-first lens before acting.
2. **Apply Biblical Wisdom Naturally** – Scripture flows into their decisions without forced effort.
3. **Use Gifts with Humility** – Spiritual gifts serve others and honour God, not self-promotion.
4. **Discern Accurately** – Can distinguish between God’s voice, self, and enemy with tested reliability.
5. **Act Redemptively** – Respond to problems with solutions that align with God’s heart.
6. **Plan Sustainably** – Make choices that preserve mission vision and impact over time.

2. Module-by-Module Discernment Criteria

Module	Maturity Markers
1 – Thinking Tri-Dimensionally	Balances spiritual, emotional, and practical views without neglecting any; avoids impulsive, one-dimensional responses.
2 – Renewing the Mind	Identifies lies or limiting beliefs quickly and replaces them with Scripture truth; observable shift in language and confidence.
3 – Discovering Your Discovering and Developing Spiritual Gifts	Can name and operate in gifts with discernment; uses them to build others up in love; open to correction.
4 – Living from Heaven Toward Earth	Approaches challenges with expectation of God’s intervention; maintains hope and peace under pressure.
5 – Discernment in Action	Applies multiple biblical tests to impressions; chooses Spirit-led timing; seeks confirmation in community.
6 – SQ and Mission Sustainability	Makes decisions with both immediate needs and long-term vision in mind; empowers others for continuity.

3. Levels of SQ Maturity

- **Emerging** – Demonstrates occasional SQ insights but still defaults to natural reasoning under stress.
- **Developing** – SQ is used regularly, though sometimes inconsistently; seeks guidance for harder cases.
- **Mature** – SQ is a natural part of daily life; models it for others; produces lasting fruit in ministry.

4. Red Flags Indicating Immaturity

- Frequently acts on untested impressions.
- Uses gifts for self-importance or to dominate.
- Avoids feedback or resists correction.
- Makes fear-driven or comfort-driven decisions without seeking God's perspective.
- Ignores long-term implications of choices.

Conclusion: Embracing and Living Spiritual Intelligence

Spiritual Intelligence is not simply another human capacity to be acquired. It is a way of living that allows the Holy Spirit to illuminate the mind, shape the heart, and guide every decision. It enables missionary disciples to perceive reality through the eyes of faith, discern God's presence in the ordinary events of life, and respond with wisdom, compassion, and integrity. As formandi grow in Spiritual Intelligence, they become more attentive to God's voice, more discerning in their judgments, more compassionate in their relationships, and more available for the mission entrusted to them.

The journey proposed in this module—from understanding the foundations of Spiritual Intelligence, to practising spiritual discernment, and finally integrating it into leadership and missionary service—is intended to foster the harmonious development of the whole person. By integrating intellectual, emotional, and spiritual capacities, formandi learn to think with the mind of Christ, love with His heart, and act under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. This integration strengthens not only personal holiness but also community life, apostolic effectiveness, and missionary resilience.

Like St. Anthony Mary Claret, who continually sought God's will before every apostolic undertaking and entrusted himself completely to Divine Providence, missionaries are invited to unite prayer, discernment, and action in every aspect of their vocation. His life demonstrates that authentic missionary fruitfulness is born not merely of talent or effort, but of a heart continually listening to the Holy Spirit and responding generously to God's call.

The cultivation of Spiritual Intelligence is, therefore, a lifelong journey. It requires perseverance in prayer, openness to continual conversion, humble accompaniment, and a willingness to learn from every experience. Through regular reflection, discernment, and faithful practice, formandi gradually develop the interior freedom and spiritual wisdom needed to navigate the complexities of missionary life with serenity and hope.

Ultimately, Spiritual Intelligence becomes not merely a personal quality but a missionary way of life. It forms missionaries who are capable of reading the signs of the times, discerning God's action in changing circumstances, accompanying individuals and communities with compassion, and proclaiming the Gospel with wisdom, humility, and evangelical courage. In this way, they become credible witnesses of Christ, bringing the light of the Holy Spirit into every community, culture, and mission to which they are sent.