

“My sheep hear my voice” John 10:27

Ten Ways we learn to listen to the voice of the Lord?

1. We begin by a faithful habit of daily prayer and having our minds formed by reading the Bible.
2. As we read the Bible, we will experience special attention being drawn to a specific phrase or idea. The Holy Spirit will give insight about where or how this applies to us. We will receive encouragement, hope, and strength.
3. We learn to be quiet in the presence of the Lord.
4. God usually starts speaking to us by saying simple things like ‘I love you’ or ‘trust me.’ Our natural response will be that this is simply our own thoughts, but we can learn to notice that it is not the same thing. God will rarely speak urgently about specific actions: do this, go there, say that.
5. God will never contradict the Bible or the authoritative teachings of the Church.
6. Sharing with others is a protection. A feeling that others will not understand, that this must be kept secret, or that this is an exception just for you is very dangerous and a clear sign that this is not from God. You can always speak confidentially to a priest you trust. Regular small group personal sharing can teach us what others are learning.
7. Write things down. You will see confirmation over time. You will see patterns emerge.
8. How things hit us emotionally can be instructive. Peace is good. Agitation is not good. God will always: encourage you, strengthen you, give you peace, clarity, focus. God will never: condemn, discourage, isolate, or confuse.
9. Experience teaches. We do something and it works. We tell someone that we were praying for them because God put them on our heart and then you discover why. You resist or doubted something and you learn later why God was saying that.
10. *“You will know by the fruit.”* (Matt 7:16) You will learn to see yourself as someone loved intimately and forgiven deeply. You will experience faith for today and hope for tomorrow. You will see meaning and purpose in the circumstances of your life. You will learn to see others as God sees them with mercy, patience, and generosity.