NATIONAL CERTIFICATION STANDARDS FOR LAY **ECCLESIAL MINISTERS**

These standards were developed by the NALM, NCCL, and NFCYM and approved by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Commission on Certification and Accreditation in November 2011. These standards are articulated in the USCCB document, Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord.

Standard One: Human

Lay ecclesial ministers demonstrate the gualities of human maturity needed for fruitful ministry with the people of God.

VISION STATEMENT: Lay ecclesial ministers, as all ecclesial ministers, develop their human character and relational abilities so that they can be "a bridge and not an obstacle" for people in their encounter with Jesus Christ. This development entails the twofold dynamic of strengthening positive traits that foster ministerial effectiveness and lessening negative traits that hinder it. Accordingly, lay ecclesial ministers strive to deepen their knowledge of self and others, grow from experiences of suffering and challenge, maintain a balanced lifestyle and positive relationships, appreciate and value diversity, and demonstrate basic human virtues. Cultivating such traits and skills within a Christ-centered community contributes to the development of "a healthy and well-balanced personality, for the sake of both personal growth and ministerial service" (Co-Workers in the Vineyard, p. 36).

Standard Two: Spiritual

Sharing in the common priesthood of all the baptized, a lay ecclesial minister demonstrates Christian spirituality as foundational to ministry, integrated in service with the people of God, and possessing a sacramental view of the world that recognizes the world can be a vessel of God's presence and God's transforming grace.

Vision Statement: Having encountered the person and message of Jesus Christ, the hunger of the lay ecclesial minister for union with the Triune God is constant. The result of this hunger is the call to holiness, built on the Word of God, experienced in the liturgy and sacraments, formed through suffering, nurtured in joy, and sustained in community with all the baptized and through the Church as Mystical Body. The minister gives witness to a well-formed spirituality through a rich and diversified prayer life, theological reflection, and action rooted in Catholic social teaching. Spiritual formation is grounded in the understanding that "if ministry does not flow from a personal encounter and ongoing relationship with the Lord, then no matter how 'accomplished' it may be in its

methods and activities, that ministry will lack the "Pastoral formation cultivates the knowledge, vital soul and source needed to bear lasting fruit" attitudes, and skills that directly pertain to (Co-Workers, p. 38). Therefore, open to the mystery effective functioning in the ministry setting and of God's love and in touch with the world's realities, that also pertain to pastoral administration that all actions of the lay ecclesial minister flow from "that supports direct ministry" (*Co-Workers*, page 47). fundamental conversion that places God, and not oneself, at the center of one's life" (Co-Workers, p. 38).

Standard Three: Intellectual

A lay ecclesial minister demonstrates understanding of the breadth of Catholic theological and pastoral studies as well as the intellectual skill to use that knowledge in ministry with God's people from diverse populations and cultures.

VISION STATEMENT: "Formation for lay ecclesial ministry is a journey beyond catechesis into theological study" (Co-Workers, p. 43). A lay ecclesial minister's faith and ministry is formed by the study of the Catholic theological tradition focusing on the following core elements: Scripture and its interpretation, dogmatic theology, Church history, liturgical and sacramental theology, moral theology and Catholic social teaching, pastoral theology, spirituality, canon law, ecumenism and interreligious dialogue, the social sciences, humanities, and culture and language studies Based upon this study, a theologically competent minister can articulate and interpret this Catholic theological tradition with disciples from diverse communities. A key dynamic of effective lay ecclesial ministry is the integration into ministry practices of the key documents and principal theories of pastoral ministry.

Standard Four: Pastoral

A lav ecclesial minister demonstrates a range of leadership and pastoral skills needed for functioning effectively in ministry.

As a response to their baptismal call, lay ecclesial ministers accept the grace of leadership and manifest a range of skills and pastoral gifts which allow them to function effectively in ministry. In their role as evangelizers, they operate in a parochial setting which has various dimensions—faith formation, worship, cultural diversity, community life, social justice, and apostolic service. They are effective listeners who foster respect and offer compassionate care within varied family, community, and cultural settings. In the spirit of the Gospel, they serve others as companions on the journey of faith. These ministers demonstrate good stewardship, work collaboratively with other lay and ordained ministers, and exhibit human resource and management skills. They have an ability to discern and nurture the gifts of all the baptized in order to build the Kingdom of God. Lastly, these ministers embrace a professional code of ethics worthy of Catholic ministry and abide by civil and Church law.

CRITERIA/PROCEDURE FOR ADMISSION TO THE MINISTRY FORMATION PROGRAM

SELECTION PROCESS

Admissions

The Ministry Formation Program (MFP) complies with the Diocese of Saint Augustine's equal opportunity/non-discrimination policy. The program recruits, promotes, and retains participants based on ability and valid qualifications, without regard to race, color, sex, age, national origin, or disability. Further, we are in full accord with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1991. All class locations (Marywood Retreat Center and the Catholic Center) are accessible to persons with disabilities.

Admission Criteria

- A fully initiated Catholic who is in full communion with the Roman Catholic Church.
- Integrated Christian faith he or she sees ministry as a way to live out the Christian faith in service to others.
- Personal integrity he or she is known as someone who possesses and models Christian values.
- Demonstrated ability to be service minded to others – he or she has been involved in service to others in a leadership role and shows promise of leading others in ministry within the ecclesial community.
- Recognized leader within the diocese, on a parish level and/or within our Catholic Schools - who seek leadership skills for ministry along with personal faith development and enrichment within the Church.
- Collaborative can work well with others and shows promise that they can minister cooperatively.
- Has an understanding and appreciation of the role of the baptized as outlined in Lumen Gentium and Gaudium et Spes.
- Commitment to the three-year program in light of his or her life realities (family situations, employment, and requirements of any existing ministry or other demands) can commit to a three-year formation program.

"We need well-formed lay people, animated by a sincere and clear faith, whose life has been touched by the personal and merciful love of Christ Jesus...We need lay people who take risks, who get their hands dirty, who are not afraid of making mistakes, who go forward. We need lay people

with a vision of the future, not confined



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to the little things of life."

Pope Francis Address to the Pontifical Council for the Laity June 17, 2016

MINISTRY FORMATION PROGRAM

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MINISTRY FORMATION PROGRAM - INFORMATION PACKET -

TOWARD AN UNDERSTANDING OF LEADERSHIP

The following initial understanding of leadership provides the basis for designing and structuring programs and for the selection of candidates:

LEADERSHIP is a PROCESS that involves assisting an individual or group in shaping a VISION or GOAL and MOTIVATING PEOPLE to working toward the vision or goal. Leadership includes being able to motivate DIFFERENT KINDS OF PEOPLE in a VARIETY OF SITUATIONS.

LEADERSHIP can be SHARED or ROTATED in a group and does not necessarily reside on or in one person or two persons. Different persons with different gifts, knowledge, and abilities can exercise leadership in different areas or on different topics.

DESIRED QUALITIES OF ECCLESIAL LEADERS Co-Workers in the Vineyard

SUCCESSFUL AND EFFECTIVE ECCLESIAL LEADERS STRIVE TO DEVELOP SOME ESSENTIAL QUALITIES:

- * Ecclesial leaders are PRAYERFUL and build their leadership on a personal relationship with Jesus, continual openness to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, a strong COMMITMENT to the Church, and a lifestyle consistent with the SCRIPTURES and TRADITION of the Church.
- # Ecclesial leaders are PREPARED. They have sufficient education and background to provide knowledge and skill for the effort to be undertaken and they seek ongoing formation and training.
- * Ecclesial leaders are ENERGETIC. They have the needed vitality to energize other people and groups.
- # Ecclesial leaders understand the LARGER PICTURE. They see how their project fits into the larger structure, and they understand the diocesan/universal aspects of the Church.
- ✤ Ecclesial leaders ENABLE and EMPOWER others. Leaders help people to discern and develop their talents and skills and authorize them to utilize these talents and skills as well.
- ✤ Ecclesial leaders have a sense of SELF-AWARENESS. They realize their strengths and limitations and recognize how others generally perceive them.

- ✤ Ecclesial leaders create an OPEN and TRUSTING ENVIRONMENT in which others can see the vision, feel free to share their talents and skills, and work with others to achieve goals.
- * Ecclesial leaders are RELATIONAL. They understand and generally get along with people and assist others in building healthy and effective relationships.
- * Ecclesial leaders are ACCOUNTABLE. They realize the parameters within which the group will work and know to whom they are accountable: their authority to one another and to those who are being served. They are willing to accept feedback and receive critiques of their efforts.
- Ecclesial leaders TAKE RISKS and deal with AMBIGUITY in order to help people move from the present situation that is known and comfortable toward the desired goal or vision which may not be clearly seen or understood.
- Ecclesial leaders MANAGE CHANGE effectively in order to move to a new situation or outcome.
- * Ecclesial leaders are COLLABORATIVE. They realize that the Spirit of God resides in all members of the community in differing ways and that all persons are called and gifted to advance the mission of the Church.

Admission Procedure

A potential candidate needs to attend an information night and begin to discern the program, Part of this discernment is a conversation with their pastor on their potential for success within the program. The potential candidate needs their pastor to endorse them for the program. This endorsement along with 3 references who can speak to the applicant's ministerial capabilities are part of the overall application. The application form includes a request to write an essay on "How do I see myself ministering as a leader in the Church?" The application process takes 6 -8 weeks to complete.

Admission to the program includes completion of the application packet and a personal interview with an appointee of the MFP. The interviewer writes an assessment of the interview. This confidential information is returned to the Program Director who meets with the Admissions Committee to review these confidential materials.

Before a candidate is accepted into the program, the admissions committee reviews and evaluates the application, initial paperwork, and the interviewer's report. A letter of acceptance or non-acceptance is mailed to the applicant and sponsoring parish or diocesan agency. Admission and participant file materials are confidential. These materials may be accessed directly by MFP staff or by request of the Director. Diocesan Office of Christian Formation.

Deadline for application is May 15.

DIOCESE OF ST. AUGUSTINE **PROCEDURES FOR** PARTICIPANTS IN THE MINISTRY FORMATION Program

GENERAL PROCEDURES: YEARS I, II, & III

Attendance:

It is presumed that, by enrolling in the Ministry Formation Program, participants will be present for all class sessions, annual retreats, and skills workshops The interaction with peers and faculty, the course materials, and the formational opportunities are difficult to make up. Exceptions, though rare, will be addressed on an individual basis. Exceptions will be made by the Program Director.

Financial Policy:

The cost for the program includes tuition and the annual retreat (except overnight rooms). Depending on arrangements between participants and pastors, school principals, or supervisors of a diocesan ministry, this cost or part of it may be borne by the parish, school, or diocesan ministry. All tuition and book fees are the responsibility of the participant regardless of sponsorship by parish or diocesan ministry.

Retreat/Formation:

Each year, the Ministry Formation Program provides a retreat during the season of Lent The retreat brings together participants from all three years, as well as graduates of the program, to provide a sense of community and the sharing of experience and knowledge In keeping with a family focus, spouses are welcome to the retreat. The annual retreat is a requirement of the program. Marywood Retreat Center is our ideal location for the annual retreat.

Annual Discernment:

Participants meet yearly with their sponsoring Pastor or Diocesan Director to review their ongoing experience within ministry and as a participant of the Ministry Formation Program The participant handbook, papers, and grade sheets are part of this conversation. The completed document is due on June 1st.

Course Evaluation:

Participants complete a course evaluation at the end of each course (see Handbook Appendix). This input is used to continually improve course structure and delivery. Course evaluations completed by the participants are confidential and become the property of the Ministry Formation Program. These can be submitted confidentially.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

YEARS I AND II. ACADEMIC FORMATION

During Years I and II, there are five meeting dates each semester, which include academic sessions, skills workshops, and seminars. Each academic course is twenty-five (25) hours. Skills workshops/seminars are five (5) hours each semester. There are three (3) semesters per academic year.

Each course instructor will determine the level of course completion by the participant, based on established criteria on the Verification of Course Completion.

Verification of Course Completion:

The instructor will complete a form at the close of each course indicating:

____ High Pass ____ Pass ____ Low Pass ____ Incomplete ____ Fail

In Year III, the verification is given at the closing session, prior to graduation. The Verification of Course Completion form is confidential. The Iform and information contained therein belongs to and is the property of the Ministry Formation Program. Participants will be notified of their completion status.

Year III. Pastoral Formation

Theological Reflection: The Theological Reflection sessions held throughout Year III introduce the essential principles and practice of pastoral theological reflection through an interactive process of description, analysis, and interpretation of ministerial experiences. It provides an opportunity for conscious reflection on experiences in dialogue with experience, tradition, and cultural perspectives to formulate appropriate insights and adequate pastoral responses. Class gatherings are approximately once per month.

Ministry Professionals: Participants are introduced to the wider mission of the Church through presentations by and dialogue with diocesan ministry professionals. These gatherings take place each month during a class session.

Skills for Ministry: a variety of skills workshops are held during Year III that provide an opportunity for growth. These include workshops on Human Development, Ecumenism, current Papal documents, Ecclesiology as well as practical protocols for work within a parish or school setting.

Supervised Practicum: The Supervised Practicum is a learning experience component of the Ministry Formation Program. The Practicum takes place in a parish or diocesan setting and is approved by the participant's pastor. Participants choose a ministry focus which will enable them to acquire and refine skills in a practical setting with the guidance of an appointed supervisor. The practicum assists the participant in his or her continued integration of theoretical and practical knowledge. The various aspects of surfacing needs, designing a project to address some of these needs, and evaluating the implementation enables the various knowledge and skills to be demonstrated.

DIOCESE OF ST. AUGUSTINE MINISTRY FORMATION PROGRAM

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

INTRODUCTION: Ministry Formation participants eniov opportunities for theological and spiritual development and relate their own gifts to the needs of their parishes/diocesan agency while acquiring specialized ministry skills. Certification is bestowed upon satisfactory completion of the three-year program.

The various documents of Vatican II, several post-conciliar documents and documents of the USCCB are integrated throughout the three years of the program. A particular emphasis is given to the standards set by the U.S. Bishops in the document Co-Workers in the Vinevard of the Lord December 2005

Old Testament

This course explores the Old Testament as the written foundation of the Judeo-Christian faith experience. It analyzes the Old Testament as a literary expression of faith and history. The Bible is essential to the life of the Church. The scriptures, together with sacred tradition, are "the supreme rule of faith." The course reveals the rich background of the old covenant, which in fact prepared the way for Jesus Christ.

The main focus is on key concepts of the Old Testament utilizing the scriptures themselves and the Church's statements on scripture. Particular emphasis will be placed on a study of the Dei Verbum and portions of the Nostra Aetate, document of Vatican Council II. (See Handbook Appendix)

New Testament

This course explores the person of Jesus within the context of a Judeo-Christian background. It offers sound information, as clearly and directly as possible, on the factors which help to shape the books of the New Testament. It hopes to bring a better understanding between historical events and their religious interpretation and the development of religious and ethical beliefs.

This course explores the political and religious world of Jesus (the daily life of His people; His birth and early life; His preaching, His messages: His death and resurrection) and its central significance for the Church's understanding of Jesus through history. It includes an extensive discussion on the activities and writings of Paul, as well as portraits of Christ presented in each one of the Gospels.

In addition to the required text, the participant will examine the Vatican II Document. Dei Verbum. (See Handbook Appendix)

Catholic Traditions

This course introduces or expands the of their religious roots. This increased and to help shape the future.

The course covers the period from the (See Handbook Appendix)

Catholic Beliefs

This course offers a comprehensive overview of the basic beliefs of the Catholic Church. It draws its emphasis chiefly, but not solely, from the Catechism of the Catholic Church, which presents the essential teachings of the Catholic faith in an authoritative, systematic, and comprehensive manner. The course will review the major content of the first part of the Catechism of the Catholic Church. "The Profession of Faith."

The course also serves as a foundation for other courses in the Ministry Formation Program. It provides a common vocabulary for articulating the essentials of Catholic teachings. With pastoral sensitivity it attempts to provide a framework from which students may reflect on their own faith experiences and articulate their beliefs with others.

In addition to the required text, the participant will examine portions of the documents of Vatican II: Lumen Gentium, Gravissimum Educationis, and Unitatis Redintegratio. (See Handbook Appendix)

Catholic Moral Theology

The Catholic Moral Theology Course provides a fundamental overview of the basic principles of moral theology. Concepts of law, justice, sin and forgiveness, and conscience are studied with a view to understanding the Church's teachings within the field of morality and their practical and pastoral implications.

participant's knowledge of the rich religious history and traditions of the Catholic Church. It gives the participant a better understanding knowledge and experience sharing should foster in each participant a deeper appreciation of his/her role in the Church. This in turn will prepare the participant to deal with the present

beginnings, through the early Church, through the Renaissance and Reformation, to the post-Vatican II era of the Church. In addition, participants will examine portions of the following Documents of Vatican II: Gaudium et Spes, Lumen Gentium, Nostra Aetate, Orientalium Ecclesiarum, Unitatis Redintegratio, Ad Gentes Divinitus and Dignitatis Humanae.

The course will discuss the relationships of faith to Catholic morality and of religious convictions to moral thinking. It will include a perspective on how Catholics integrate "into a perspective informed by faith the aspects of rational morality, such as natural law, positive law, moral action, moral norms, and methods of making a decision." In addition to the text (The Essential Moral Handbook, Kevin J. O'Neil, C.SS.R. & Peter Black, C.SS.R., Ligouri Publications © 2003), the Catechism of the Catholic Church and Vatican Council II documents: Gaudium et Spes and Dianitatis *Humanae*. (See Handbook Appendix)

Sacrament/Liturgy

This course focuses on the Catholic belief that God's presence comes to His people through visible realities, especially through the liturgy and the sacraments. The real and visible sign of God's love for the world is the prime sacrament, Jesus Christ, consecrated in the Liturgy of the Eucharist. In turn, the Church is Christ's sacrament, a "visible, Christ-willed sign that mediates grace through the seven ritual sacraments." The course presents Christian worship and sanctification in terms of the development and meaning of both the liturgy the sacraments.

The course will discuss several definitions of the term sacrament and summary statements of what the Church teaches about sacraments and liturgy in general. It will explore the Church's documents that deal with and touch on these topics, such as the *Sacrosanctum* Concilium (See Handbook Appendix).

Theological Reflection

This course introduces the essential principles and practice of pastoral theological reflection through an interactive process of description, analysis, and interpretation of ministerial experiences. It will provide an opportunity for conscious reflection on experiences in dialogue with personal, ecclesial, and ministerial perspectives to formulate appropriate insights and adequate pastoral responses.

The Ministry Formation Program believes that the elements of experience and the Christian tradition must be brought together in earnest, dynamic dialogue with all available resources. Faith development occurs in the dynamics of a vital and stimulating environment in which the participant is encouraged to offer his/her own experiences in conversation with others on that same journey.

A three-hour workshop serves as an introduction to the practice of theological reflection. An overview of the steps that are utilized in the

process is presented. Through a ministry experience presentation in group process, the participant will gain a familiarity with the scope of theological reflection as it relates to a person's experience and its application in ministry.

In addition to the required materials, the participant will examine portions of documents of Vatican II: the Lumen Gentium, Apostolicam Actuositatem, and Gaudium et Spes. (See Handbook Appendix)

Supervised Practicum

The Practicum is the learning experience component of the Ministry Formation Program of the Diocese of Saint Augustine. It takes place in a parish or diocesan setting. Participants choose a ministry focus, which will enable them to acquire and refine skills in a practical setting with the guidance of a trained supervisor. The Practicum integrates the participant's knowledge and skills with actual ministerial situations.

In addition to the required materials, the participant will examine the document of Vatican Council II: Apostolicam Actuositatem, Vatican Council II. (See Handbook Appendix)

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

INTRODUCTION: Ministry Formation participants enjoy opportunities for theological and spiritual development and relate their own gifts to the needs of their parishes/ diocesan agency while acquiring specialized ministry skills.

Certification is bestowed upon satisfactory completion of the three-year program.

The various documents of Vatican II, several post-conciliar documents and documents of the USCCB are integrated throughout the three years of the program. A particular emphasis is given to the standards set by the U.S. Bishops in the document Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord, December 2005

Academic Skills for Studying Scripture

The Academic Skills for Studying Scripture Workshop is designed for those beginning the Ministry Formation Program. It assumes that no previous academic study has occurred. The workshop will focus on the background of Scripture, interpretation tools that exist, Church documents in regard to Scripture, and tools for the study of Scripture including footnotes, commentaries, concordances, and cross references.

Canon Law

The Canon Law and Legal Issues Workshop presents an overview of the purpose, function, and history of Canon Law, as well as the main points of the Cod of Canon Law (1983). Special emphasis is given to the applications of both canon and civil laws to workers in the Diocese of St. Augustine. Discussion will include the content of the diocesan Policy and Procedural Guidelines for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults as well as the brochure, Sexual Misconduct: Preventing Responding, Reporting, produced by the Diocese of St. Augustine.

Communication Skills for Ministry

The Communication Workshop will introduce participants to the concepts and skills needed for one-on-one communication, public speaking, and conflict resolution in ministerial settings. The participants are provided with the opportunity to demonstrate those skills with peers and receive feedback.

Ecclesiology

Ecclesiology is the theological study of the Catholic Church – it's nature, organization, and role in the salvation of all through Jesus Christ This workshop will explore these elements to give participants a better understanding of the universality of the Church.

Evangelization and Catechesis

The Directory for Catechesis (2020) places the area of catechesis clearly in the realm of evangelization. There is an inseparable connection between the two as stated in Pope St. John Paul II's apostolic exhortation, On Catechesis in Our Time. The directory offers guidelines to assist those who teach in the name of the Church to have a clearer understanding of the learner as one being awakened to the faith through the proclamation of the Gospel.

Human Development

The Human Development Workshop enables the participant to gain an understanding of the dynamics of spiritual, moral, and human growth in one's family and in one's own life, as well as in the lives and family circumstances of those being ministered to in the parish or school setting.

Intercultural Competence

The Multicultural Workshop will engage the participants in an appreciation of their own culture as a basis for understanding other cultures. A sensitivity and openness to those

of all cultures and circumstances is a major goal of this workshop. Several learning approaches will offer reasons for celebrating and promoting our Catholic faith

Liturgical Skills

The Liturgical Skills Workshop gives the participants an opportunity to learn the rudimentary principles of liturgical preparation. A variety of the Church's documents will be used to provide participants with a basic foundation of these principles. Participants will then demonstrate what they have learned by preparing a liturgy. The participants will also be asked to evaluate their liturgical plan using tolls and suggestions provided.

Practical Skills for Parish Ministry

The Practical Skills for Parish Ministry Workshop includes a series of one-hour lectures covering practical topics related to working in a parish. Topics may vary depending on input from pastors and participants. Topics may include parish communication, insurance and risk management, decorum, legal issues in catechesis, parish record keeping, and maintaining a work/life balance. Resources will include appropriate diocesan policy statements.

Prayer and Spirituality

The Prayer and Spirituality Workshop presents a foundational vision of the essential truths, dynamics, and patterns of the spiritual life, personal prayer, and prayer leadership within the context of Scripture and Tradition. It describes the basic principles of Christian spiritual formation, the fundamental gualities of authentic personal prayer, and the guiding values for preparing and leading communal prayer.

Recent Church Documents by Pope Francis

The Current Church Documents Workshop allows participants the opportunity to explore key concepts of Pope Francis' pontificate. Specifically, this workshop introduces key thoughts found in *Jov of the Gospel, Jov of* Love, and Christ is Alive, providing practical application for parish ministry.

Servant Leadership

The Servant Leadership Workshop gives participants an opportunity to understand the meaning of collaborative leadership and to discover their own leadership styles as a way of developing the ability to work with a variety of other ministers effectively, as well as to manage situations involving conflict. Participants will utilize the Myers-Briggs personality inventory and relate its findings to their ministry with others.