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Summary: Standards for Formation & Certification of Lay Ecclesial Ministers for the Archdiocese of Chicago

I. Introduction

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) Subcommittee on Certification for Ecclesial Ministry and Service has had a long-standing fruitful engagement with the Archdiocese of Chicago and its work to prepare lay women and men as ecclesial ministers. In its Fall 2022 meeting, the Subcommittee approved updated ministry formation and certification standards and competencies for the archdiocese, as administered in collaboration with the Institute for Pastoral Leadership (IPL) at the University of Saint Mary of the Lake in Mundelein, Illinois.

“The Subcommittee’s approval of the Archdiocese’s updated standards highlights the importance of support for lay ecclesial ministers who serve in leadership and coordinator roles,” said Most Reverend Gerald F. Kicanas, Bishop Emeritus of Tucson and Chairman of the Subcommittee. The Subcommittee’s review praised the IPL team for adapting to new needs in the preparation of lay ecclesial ministers for roles such as pastoral associates, directors and coordinators of religious education, and similar positions in adult faith formation and youth ministry. “The Archdiocese’s ongoing efforts, through IPL, to foster lay ministerial leadership is commendable and essential,” Kicanas added, “as are their efforts to address significant shifts in lay minister formation brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts.”

Most Reverend Blase Cupich, Cardinal Archbishop of Chicago, further affirmed the milestone: “I’m delighted that the USCCB Subcommittee on Certification for Ecclesial Ministry and Service has granted its approval for the Institute of Pastoral Life’s updated standards for ministry and certification. I am deeply grateful for the work IPL staff did to renew those standards in light of the realities of the church today, especially the experiences of often-marginalized ethnic and cultural groups. These efforts will help ensure ministers who are trained at IPL are well-prepared to serve the People of God for many years to come.”

II. History of the Archdiocese of Chicago & the Institute for Pastoral Leadership

Established as a diocese in 1843 and promoted to an archdiocese in 1880, the Archdiocese of Chicago serves more than 2.1 million Catholics in Cook and Lake counties in Northeastern Illinois, in the United States, an area of 1,411 square miles (3,650 km²). The archdiocese is divided into six vicariates and 31 deaneries.

The Archdiocese serves approximately 2.2 million Catholics, about 37 percent of the total populations of Cook and Lake counties.

The Most Rev. Blase Joseph Cupich was appointed Archbishop of Chicago in 2014 (and Cardinal in 2016) by Pope Francis. He is assisted by six episcopal vicars, who are each responsible for a vicariate (region). The cathedral parish for the archdiocese, Holy Name Cathedral, is in the near North Side area of the see city for the diocese, Chicago.

The Archdiocese is the metropolitan see of the Province of Chicago. Its suffragan dioceses are the other Catholic dioceses in Illinois: Belleville, Joliet, Peoria, Rockford, and Springfield.

- Archdiocesan Parishes: 247
- Archdiocesan Missions: 18
- Archdiocesan Shrines, Chaplaincies and Oratories: 23
 - *Numbers from 2021 data reports*
- Archdiocesan Elementary Schools: 159
- Non-Archdiocesan Elementary Schools: 8
- Archdiocesan High Schools: 3
- Non-Archdiocesan High Schools: 28
 - *Numbers from 2020 data reports*

Founded in 1921 under the guidance of George Cardinal Mundelein, the University of Saint Mary of the Lake (to be referred to hereafter as USML) prepares adults with the needed academic, human, spiritual and pastoral formation to enter and live out the mission of the Church and share the gospel message. Mundelein Seminary prepares candidates from the Archdiocese of Chicago for diocesan priesthood and seminarians from more than 30 dioceses in and outside the United States. The seminary program succeeds in educating men for parish pastoral ministry as co-workers with their bishops to serve the Catholic Church.

Lay men and women seeking growth in the Catholic faith in pursuit of professional ministerial positions and growing in parish leadership roles, both academically and spiritually, are engaged and educated through the Institute for Pastoral Leadership, Instituto de Liderazgo Pastoral (for Spanish-speaking Catholics) and the Liturgical Institute, which educates and forms clergy and the laity seeking degrees and accreditation in sacred liturgy.

Through its advanced graduate degree programs and formation, the Institute for Pastoral Leadership strives to provide a comprehensive program of theological studies and spiritual, human, and pastoral formation for seminarians and the laity with the goals of:

- Learn, understand, interpret, reflect upon, and proclaim the Catholic faith
- Grow in human and spiritual awareness to develop a life of private and public prayer and healthy psychological and sexual integration in their behavior
- Integrate academic and formational knowledge into the role of a pastoral leader to deepen a relationship with God and continue the Church's mission to evangelize the culture.
- Issue certification for pastoral ministers in coordinator- and director-level in the following ministerial roles:
 - Coordinator of Religious Education, Adult Faith Formation or Youth Ministry
 - Pastoral Associate, Director of Religious Education, Adult Faith Formation or Youth Ministry

Total number of Certified Leaders in the Archdiocese of Chicago through IPL (2022): Director Level: 127; Coordinator Level: 95

III. Summary of the Changes from Previous Approval in 2015

These past seven years have been filled with exciting changes for the Institute for Pastoral Leadership. These changes include:

- The external and internal transformations in parish structures and dynamics brought about by the *Renew My Church* process in the Archdiocese of Chicago.
- The closing of the Office of Lay Ecclesial Ministry and the shifting of all director- and coordinator-level ministry certification responsibilities from the Archdiocesan offices to IP.
- The fluidity involved in the role of a ministry director, so that it no longer is a “controlled” title.
- The effects on parish ministers resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic which spawned changes in the ways that parish ministers fulfill their mission and in how they are academically and spiritually formed. Many of these efforts remain ongoing in their development and implementation to meet the needs of current and future lay ministers.

IV. Certified Roles: Institute for Pastoral Leadership and Current Requirements

Lay Ecclesial Minister:

- Resident of Archdiocese or working (professionally/voluntarily) in ministry in the Archdiocese
- Graduate degree in pastoral studies or equivalent
- Completion of certification application and submission of pastor’s recommendation letter
- Compliant with Protecting God’s Children program
- Completion of formation days specific to Lay Ecclesial Ministers through the Institute

Pastoral Associate:

- Graduate degree in pastoral studies or equivalent
- Completion of certification application and submission of pastor’s recommendation letter
- Compliant with Protecting God’s Children program
- Completion of additional formation days specific to certification through the Institute
- One hundred hours of supervised practical ministry (professional or volunteer)
- Current resume and parish job description

Director of Religious Education:

- Graduate degree in pastoral studies or equivalent
- Collaboration with Universities of Notre Dame and Dayton for specific ministerial role formation online
- Completion of certification application and submission of pastor’s recommendation letter
- Completion of *Protecting God’s Children* program
- Three years’ work experience in role (professional or volunteer)
- One hundred hours of supervised practical ministry (professional or volunteer)
- Current resume and parish job description

Director of Adult Faith Formation:

- Graduate degree in pastoral studies or equivalent
- Collaboration with Universities of Notre Dame and Dayton for specific ministerial role formation online
- Completion of certification application and submission of pastor's recommendation letter
- Completion of *Protecting God's Children* program
- Three years' work experience in role (professional or volunteer)
- One hundred hours of supervised practical ministry (professional or volunteer)
- Current resume and parish job description

Director of Youth Ministry:

- Graduate degree in pastoral studies or equivalent
- Collaboration with Franciscan University for specific ministerial role formation online
- Completion of certification application and submission of pastor's recommendation letter
- Completion of *Protecting God's Children* program
- Three years' work experience in role (professional or volunteer)
- One hundred hours of supervised practical ministry (professional or volunteer)
- Current resume and parish job description

Coordinator of Religious Education:

- Completion of Catechetical Coordinator program through USML or equivalent undergraduate degree in theological courses
- Collaboration with University of Dayton for specific ministerial role formation online
- Completion of certification application
- One hundred hours (professional or volunteer) of supervised ministerial practice

Coordinator of Adult Faith Formation:

- Completion of Catechetical Coordinator program through USML or equivalent undergraduate degree in theological courses
- Collaboration with University of Dayton for specific ministerial role formation online
- Completion of certification application
- One hundred hours (professional or volunteer) of supervised ministerial practice

Coordinator of Youth Ministry:

- Certificate of Studies from Lay Leadership program
- Three years of lay formation
- Pastor recommendation form
- Two years of online workshops from Franciscan University, Steubenville, Ohio
- Completion of 300 hours of supervised ministerial practice (professional work in ministry applies)

V. *Listing of the Academic Courses, Formation and Certification Workshops*

University of Saint Mary of the Lake

DIRECTOR -LEVEL CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

THESE REQUIREMENTS ARE APPLICABLE TO THE PASTORAL ASSOCIATE (PA), DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (DRE), DIRECTOR OF ADULT FAITH FORMATION (DAFF), AND DIRECTOR OF YOUTH MINISTRY (DYM) ROLES.



Academic Courses

Canon Law
Capstone Thesis Project
Catholic Social Teaching
Christian Anthropology
Christology
Church History
Ecclesiology
Field Placement
Foundations of Catholic Doctrine
Lay Leadership of Prayer
Moral Theology
New Testament
Old Testament
Pastoral Care
Sacramental Theology
Spiritual Theology

DIRECTOR-LEVEL CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Formation Program

Year 1

All: Opening Retreat, Year 1
All: 8 Formation Days
All: Day with the Cardinal

Year 2

All: Opening Retreat, Year 2
All: 8 Formation Days
All: Day with the Cardinal

Year 3

All: Opening Retreat, Year 3
All: 4 Formation Days
All: Day with the Cardinal

Pastoral Associate: Ministerial Workshops

PA Workshop 1: Introduction to Annulments
PA Workshop 2: Community Resources/Leading Ministers
PA Workshop 3: Conflict Management
RCIA Intensive I Workshop
RCIA Intensive II Workshop

Director of Religious Education: Ministerial Courses and Workshop

Faith and Human Development (Dayton online course)
The Intercultural Church (Notre Dame online course)
Introduction to Catechesis (Dayton online course)
Catechetical Methodology Workshop (at USML campus)
RE Curriculum and Development/Catechist Formation and Certification Workshop (USML campus)

Director of Adult Faith Formation: Ministerial Courses and Workshops

Foundations and Vision for Adult Learning and Faith Formation (Dayton online course)
Parish as a Learning Community (Dayton online course)
Many Faces of Adult Learners (Dayton online course)
Leadership Roles and Skills for Adult Learning and Faith Formation (Dayton online course)
RCIA Intensive I Workshop
RCIA Intensive II Workshop

Director of Youth Minister: Ministerial Workshops

Year I Workshops (9 online workshops)
Year I Elective Workshops (3 online workshops)
Year II Workshops (10 online workshops)
Year II Elective Workshops (2 online workshops)

COORDINATOR -LEVEL CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

THESE REQUIREMENTS ARE APPLICABLE TO THE COORDINATOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (CRE),
COORDINATOR OF ADULT FAITH FORMATION (CAFF), AND COORDINATOR OF YOUTH MINISTRY (CYM) ROLES.

Academic Courses

Introduction to Divine Revelation
Introduction to Catholic Doctrine
Introduction to Christian Anthropology
Introduction to Church History
Introduction to Sacraments, Liturgy and Worship
Introduction to Morality and Catholic Social Teaching
Christology
Theology of the Holy Spirit
Ecclesiology

COORDINATOR-LEVEL CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Formation Program: Coordinator of Religious Education or Adult Faith Formation

YEAR 1

All: Opening Retreat, Year 1
All: 8 Formation Days
All: Summer Book Discussion/Intro. to Catechetical Coordinator Program

Year 2

All: Opening Retreat, Year 2
All: 8 Formation Days
All: Closing Day of Reflection

Year 3

All: Opening Retreat, Year 3
All: 2 Formation Days

All: Closing Day of Reflection, Year 3

Coordinator for Religious Education or Adult Faith Formation: Ministerial Workshops

(Same online workshops from University of Dayton as the director level.)

Coordinator of Youth Ministry: Ministerial Workshops

(Same online workshops from Franciscan University as the director level.)

VI. Resources & Contact Information

Members of the Institute for Pastoral Leadership Staff:

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Additional information on the Institute is accessible at <https://usml.edu/ipl/ipl/>.

USCCB Subcommittee on Certification for Ecclesial Ministry and Service

The Subcommittee on Certification for Ecclesial Ministry and Service of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has approved the certification competencies and procedures of the **Institute for Pastoral Leadership of the University of Saint Mary of the Lake for the Archdiocese of Chicago** for the roles of **Pastoral Associate, Director of Religious Education, Director of Adult Faith Formation, Director of Youth Ministry, Coordinator of Religious Education, Coordinator of Adult Faith Formation, and Coordinator of Youth Ministry** and approved the process of **calling and commissioning of adults as Lay Ecclesial Ministers** through 2029.



For more information about the subcommittee, visit: usccb.org/certification or contact certification@usccb.org