MEMORANDUM

TO: Theology of Lay Ministry Instructors
FROM: Nelsa I. Elías
SUBJECT: Comments Regarding Course
DATE: Fall Semester

The Pastoral Institute is constantly trying to improve the Lay Ministry Program and therefore changes to the program, course content, and required readings may occur from semester to semester. For this reason, I ask that you read this memorandum and the course outline carefully.

- Instructors will find the course outline and Participants’ reading materials on the Pastoral Institute Online Classroom. Instructors are responsible for distributing any materials not reproducible to the participants on the first day of class. (The PI will provide these copies.)

- The PI Online Classroom web address has changed and the log in process has been simplified. You will receive instructions on how to access the Online Classroom under separate cover. As instructors, you will have access to the instructors’ page and to the Participants’ page.

- Participants will be asked to download articles (when applicable) from the Pastoral Institute Online Classroom. Although the participants know that they are responsible for downloading the articles, we will depend on you to remind the participants to do so when you give the reading assignments. Only copies of articles not available electronically, if applicable, and the textbook will be distributed by the instructor, as noted above.

- It is important that participants in the lay formation program have every opportunity to become acquainted with the course goals and, as well as what they are expected to have learned by the completion of the course. We ask you to please review the course purpose and the objectives of the participants’ education/formation experience at the first session of the course.

- The enclosure lists the required reading (English and Spanish) and the course outline indicates the material that is to be covered. Please feel free to cover the topics and assign the reading from the text and articles in the order in which you are most comfortable, however all topics outlined should be covered.

- **Essays:** Please note that there is no Integration Paper for this course. In its place, the participants will be asked to submit two to two page integration essays. Please see Part I and Part IV of the course outline for details. The Pastoral Institute requires that the instructors only offer the participants a choice of two or three questions/topics from the list at the end of the course outline. This will help us ensure that the theological and intellectual
goals of the Pastoral Institute are met. The integration essay is not meant to be solely a report or reflection paper.

- When grading integration papers, please follow the Pastoral Institute guidelines and grading conventions. (Refer to the most recent Instructor Handbook.)

- The supplemental reading and resource list, if any, will be posted on the PI Online Classroom.

If you do not have a copy of the United States Bishops document on lay ministry entitled *Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord* (Colaboradores en la Viña del Señor) you can download it from the Vatican website (www.vatican.va). Part One, Section B is particularly useful for explaining in terms of *communio* the theology of lay ministry that is contained in the documents of Vatican II and more recent theological reflection. One point that must be emphasized is that the document is focused on *paid* professional lay ecclesial ministers (see description on pages 11-13), the distinction of which must always be made clear to the program’s participants who are being prepared to be *volunteer* lay pastoral leaders.

We are also providing you with a copy of *Forward in Hope-Saying Amen to Lay Ecclesial Ministry* by Bishop Matthew H. Clark. This book gives an overview of the kinds of issues that have come up after *Co-Workers* came out. Participants need to know that the Church and theologians are engaged in an ongoing conversation about lay leaders. They are trying to answer questions like: What should lay ministers be called? Is lay ministry a “vocation” in the sense that the priesthood is a vocation?

Thank you for all of your efforts on behalf of the Pastoral Institute. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Enc.
Pastoral Institute ♦ Diocese of Brooklyn
Lay Ministry Program

Course Title: Theology of Lay Ministry

Course Length:
8 hours

Purpose:

Through this course, those lay persons who are, or will be, serving in volunteer parish leadership positions, will come to understand the development and theological underpinnings of the Church’s teaching on the source and meaning of their call to ministry. Particular emphasis is placed on the impact of the work of Vatican Council II (1962-1965) on the ministry of the laity in the Church and in the world.

Objectives:

1. To present the concept of vocation as rooted in baptism and the baptismal foundation of all ministry as a sharing in the priestly, prophetic and kingly roles of Christ.
2. To highlight the theological development in understanding the universal call to holiness and the role of the laity in the Church as a consequence of the work of Vatican II and beyond.
3. To heighten awareness of the laity’s call to be leaven in the world, especially through their role in the new Evangelization.
4. To introduce the concept of servant leadership in the context of mission and ministry in the Church.

Required Reading:


Jewell, Marti. *Collegeville Lay Ecclesial Ministry Symposium*
Lumen Gentium: Dogmatic Constitution on the Church. (Available in English and Spanish)


**Recommended Reading for participants:**

**English:**


**Spanish:**

Juan Pablo II. Christifideles Laici: Exhortación Apostólica: Los Fieles Laicos)

**Instructor’s Background Reading:**

CARA. Catholic Ministry Formation Enrollments: Statistical Overview 2009-2010 (strongly recommend the section on Lay Ministry)
http://cara.georgetown.edu/Publications/Overview200910.pdf


John Paul II. Christifideles Laici: Apostolic Exhortation on the Laity. (English and Spanish)


Course Outline

Part I: Why Lay Ministry? What is Lay Ministry?

- The aim of this part is to provide the overall context for the work of the course and to highlight the one ministry of Jesus Christ in which all the baptized have a share.
  - Discuss course purpose and objectives
  - The need for and urgency of ministry formation
  - Outcome of the Seventh Synod of Brooklyn (1996-1997) relating to lay ministry formation in this diocese
  - The Gospel call to ministry
  - Servant leadership as the context for ministry
  - Vocation rooted in baptism and the call to ministry to continue the mission of Jesus Christ

- Participant readings
  - Selected Scripture passages
    - The one ministry of Christ; serving as Christ’s hands and feet; sending of the 72 1 Cor 12:12-26, Luke 10: 1-12
    - Jesus’ ministerial actions Mt 15:32-39 (feeding), Mt 8:14-15 (curing), Mt 5 (teaching), John 4 (listening), John 6 (filled hunger and thirst for God), Mt 25:31-46 (needs of our brothers and sisters), Mt 9:8, Luke 5:25-26 (all for the glory of God)
    - Parish Ministry Today: We’re All in it Together (Catholic Update)
    - Ministerio Laico: No sólo para unos pocos elegidos (Catholic Update)
    - Your Ministry is a Vocation

- Writing assignment #1 (English): (Instructors: Please only use these questions.) Participants will be asked to answer one of the following questions:
1. Based on what you have learned so far in the course, has your understanding of vocation and lay ministry been challenged? Does it make a difference if you understand your ministry as an expression of your vocation?

2. Do you and other ministers in your parish intentionally notice and point out gifts as they arise from members of the community? How do you help people to understand their unique gifts as signs of vocation in service to God and the community?

- Tarea- Ensayo #1: (Instructores: Por favor solo use estas preguntas. El participante debe contestar UNA de las siguientes preguntas.

1. Basándose en lo que usted ha aprendido hasta ahora en el curso ¿ha sido retado su comprensión de lo que significa “vocación” y “ministerio laico”? ¿Hay alguna diferencia si se entiende el ministerio como una expresión de su vocación?

2. En su parroquia, ¿los ministros (incluyéndose a usted), se dan cuenta e identifican intencionalmente los dones de los demás miembros de la comunidad? ¿Cómo ayuda usted a las personas a comprender sus dones únicos como signos de la vocación para el servicio a Dios y la comunidad?

Part II: Theology of the Laity Immediately Prior to Vatican Council II

- Providing a context and foundation for understanding the development of the role of the laity at and beyond Vatican Council II
  - The world and the church prior to 1960s
  - The history, meaning and theological implications of “Catholic Action” as the role of the laity

Part III: Theology of the Laity at Vatican Council II

- Introduction of the theological development of the role of the laity as a consequence of the work of Vatican Council II through examination of Lumen Gentium
  - Chapter II: The People of God
    - The Church described as the “new People of God”
    - The focus on “the total community of the Church” before describing the hierarchical structure of the Church
    - The whole people of God, laity and ordained, participate in the one priesthood of Christ
  - Chapter IV: The Laity
    - The laity as sharers in the priestly, prophetic and kingly roles of Christ (#31; descriptions in #34-36)
    - The lay apostolate as participation in the saving mission of the Church (#33)
    - The laity’s role in evangelization (#35)
    - Collaboration between laity and pastors in the Church (#37)
○ Chapter V: The Universal Call to Holiness
  • All the faithful, of “whatever rank and status” are called to holiness (#40 and throughout the chapter)

  • Participant reading: *Lumen Gentium*, especially Chapters II, IV and V

Part IV: Theology of the Laity – Vatican II and Beyond

  • “The call to Christian maturity” (see *Called and Gifted* pages 19-23)
  • Lay ministry in the church and the world (see *Christifideles Laici* #23)
  • Laity’s role in the new evangelization (see *Christifideles Laici* #34)
  • Lay ministry rooted in the theology of communion (see *Co-Workers* pages 17-26)
  • Participant reading: *The New Evangelization in Brooklyn and Queens*

**Writing assignment #2 (English):** The Participants will be asked to answer ONE of the following questions.

In order to facilitate the discussion during the final part of this course, participants will write an integration essay based on the readings for Part V as they relate to one of the areas of discussion and their own particular area of ministry.

1. Explain briefly the meaning of the “new evangelization” as envisioned by Bishop DiMarzio. As a member of the laity and a future lay pastoral leader, what is your role in the new evangelization? What challenges do you think you will face?

2. How does / will the Holy Spirit help you in your vocation as a lay minister? Explain how your ministry will help the needs of the parish and of those in parish leadership.

**Tarea: Ensayo #2- Español**

El participante debe contestar UNA de las siguientes preguntas.

1. Explique brevemente el significado de la “nueva evangelización” usando la visión del Obispo DiMarzio. Como miembro de los laicos y un futuro líder laico pastoral, ¿qué es su papel en la nueva evangelización? ¿Qué retos cree que va a enfrentar?

2. ¿Cómo le ayudará el Espíritu Santo en su vocación de ministro laico? Explique cómo su ministerio ayudará a las necesidades de la parroquia y de aquellos en el liderazgo parroquial.
Part V: Theology of Lay Ministry for the Third Millennium: Reflection and Dialogue

- Highlight the current landscape of lay ministry in the church now and in the future.

- Facilitate reflection and dialogue on the ways in which the readings and work of the course relate to the following needs and concerns. (Refer to *Forward in Hope-Saying Amen to Lay Ecclesial Ministry*.)
  
  - Issues arising after Co-Workers was written, e.g.: What should lay ministers be called? Does recognizing the title “lay ecclesial minister” create a new hierarchy in the Church? From where do they draw their authority? What is their relationship to the priest? What is the difference between professional lay ministers and volunteer lay ministers?
  - The challenges and needs of the Church in the 3rd millennium
  - The challenges and needs of lay ministry in the 3rd millennium
  - The new lay leaders themselves and how they are meeting the challenges and fulfilling the needs of the Church
  - Ministry in and for a culturally diverse Church

- Participant reading
  
  - *The Holy Spirit’s Call: The Vocation to Lay Ecclesial Ministry*
  - *Collegeville Lay Ecclesial Ministry Symposium*
  - *Multicultural Ministry in Parishes Today and Important Themes for its Future*, especially pages 5-8
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Supplementary Reading and Resources

Dues, Greg and Walkley, Barbara. *Called to Parish Ministry: Identity Challenges and Spirituality of Lay Ministers*.


