

**PASTORAL INSTITUTE  
DIOCESE OF BROOKLYN**

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**PRESS RELEASE**

**September 16, 2009**

**Masters Scholars Honored**

At a recent reception, the Office of Faith Formation and the Pastoral Institute honored five persons who completed their M.A. Degree in Theology from St. John's University. Those honored were: Maura Chisam, Julia Fernandez, Andrea Florendo, Susan Karcher and James Lonergan.

The M.A. Scholarship Program was inaugurated in 2003 to prepare individuals for parish staff positions as Director of Religious Education, Pastoral Associate or Youth Minister as well as in other leadership roles in the parish or diocese. Each person receives a tuition grant from the Alive in Hope Foundation toward their graduate studies in theology. Because they are sponsored by the Diocese of Brooklyn, the students also receive a tuition discount from the universities. Recipients have a choice of studying at the Seminary of the Immaculate Conception, St. John's University or Fordham University.

Besides their engagements in parish ministry, many of the graduates serve on their Parish Pastoral Council, the Diocesan Pastoral Council and as Instructors and Retreat Directors in the Pastoral Institute's lay formation programs.

The financial assistance of the Alive in Hope Foundation has provided immeasurable opportunities for the individuals in the M.A. Scholarship Program in Theology. The diocese is experiencing the fruit of that endeavor in the lives and ministries of its graduates.

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