

**PASTORAL INSTITUTE  
DIOCESE OF BROOKLYN**

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**PRESS RELEASE**

**Pastoral Institute Welcomes New Participants**

At two recent full-day orientation sessions, the Pastoral Institute welcomed 80 new participants for the Lay Ministry Program. Coming from parishes across the diocese, they embarked on a three-year course of intellectual, spiritual, human and pastoral formation that will prepare them for service in their parishes. Thirty-nine will follow the Spanish language track while forty-one will be part of the English language track. An additional 88 participants have begun the second year and 57 have started the third year of the lay formation program.

Sister Angela Gannon, C.S.J., the Diocesan Secretary for Catholic Education and Formation, spoke to the new participants during the prayer service that opened the first day held at The Mary Louis Academy in Queens. She reminded them that each person has been given gifts from God that are for use in the wider community for building up the Body of Christ. The vocation of the laity, which is rooted in baptism, comes with the responsibility to continue the mission of Jesus. Sister went on to say that the leadership formation they will receive over the course of the three years is based on Jesus' model of service.

Participants will study at several sites in the diocese. Classes are being held in English and Spanish at St. Thomas the Apostle parish in Woodhaven and the Jesus of Nazareth Diocesan Retreat Center in Brooklyn. Classes in Spanish are also being held at Our Lady of Fatima parish in East Elmhurst and in English at Christ the King parish in Springfield Gardens.

A total of 700 persons have successfully fulfilled the requirements of the program since its inception in 2002. At the completion of their studies, participants serve as coordinators or team members for a variety of parish programs such as Adult Faith Formation, Ministry of Consolation, Pastoral Care of the Sick, Bereavement, Scripture Study Groups, Women and Men's Spirituality, Stewardship, and Liturgical Planning. All serve as volunteers and many participate in more than one ministry.

Gerald Tortorella, Director of the Pastoral Institute, said, "these persons are to be thanked for making a major commitment of time and talent in order to serve more effectively in their parishes and to promote the new evangelization in the Diocese of Brooklyn and Queens."



Photo caption: Participants take part in small group discussions at the Pastoral Institute's second Orientation Day for the Lay Ministry Program held at Holy Name of Jesus parish in Brooklyn.

For further information about this press release:

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