

**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 86 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 English language track while 47 will be part of the Spanish language track. An additional 77 participants have begun the second year and 78 have started the third year of the lay formation program.

The Most Reverend Paul Sanchez, Auxiliary Bishop of Brooklyn spoke to the new participants during the prayer service that opened the first day which was held at the Diocesan Offices located at 310 Prospect Park West. He likened the journey that the participants were beginning to a kind of “spiritual boot camp” where they would be prepared to serve their parishes through exercises that will strengthen their faith and knowledge. Bishop Sanchez drew the participants’ attention to the point that the program did more than provide theological education. He said that the formation that participants will receive will touch their hearts so that they can touch the hearts of others.

Participants will study at several sites in the diocese. Classes are being held in English at Our Lady of the Angelus and Resurrection-Ascension both in Rego Park, and at Regina Pacis, Brooklyn. Classes in Spanish are being held at St. Teresa, Woodside and St. Rita, Brooklyn.

Approximately 750 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.”

For further information about this press release:

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