



Lay Ministry Program Process for Selecting Candidates

It is recommended that the pastor/administrator together with the parish team/staff make the decision regarding selection of candidates.

Step 1: Read and Discuss:

- *Brochure for Lay Ministry Program (LMP)*
- *Criteria for Selection of Candidates*
- *“Frequently Asked Questions...”*
- *Program Overview*
- *Ideas for Promoting the LMP in Parishes*

Step 2: Study and Dialogue:

- Is lay leadership formation one of the parish’s Pastoral Plan’s goals and/or objectives?
- Does the parish have sufficient staff at the present time to coordinate the various programs and services that are offered or are one or two persons doing all the work?
- In what ways have lay persons been invited into leadership roles?
- Looking toward the next three to five years, what leadership or coordinating needs are anticipated?
- What ministries are not in place and should be considered in light of lay leadership and ministerial responsibility?
- How would the parish benefit from the presence of lay pastoral leaders?
- Are the pastor/administrator and the team/staff willing to take on the responsibilities connected with sponsorship of candidates, namely, serve as mentors throughout the education/formation process and contribute toward the financial cost?

Step 3: Reflect and Consider:

- Are there persons who are now active in parish ministry and leadership who have never received adequate formal theological/spiritual formation? Have any persons come forward requesting to take part on lay ministry formation?
- Are there persons who have the desire and the potential to be more fully involved in the life of the parish?

- Do these persons have the human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral capacity to develop into leaders for parish programs?
- Is there agreement among the staff regarding the persons who should be approached about participation in the program?
- Which staff member should begin to dialogue with these potential candidates and share with them the information about the program?

Step 4: Meet with Potential Candidate(s):

- Candidate’s certificates of baptism, confirmation, and marriage, where applicable, are reviewed by a member of parish staff.
- A parish staff member meets with the candidate and makes an initial determination as to the suitability for nomination. At this meeting, the importance of the laity in the life of the parish, the call of lay women and men to leadership in ministry and the diocesan formation program are discussed.
- Information Sessions in English and Spanish for interested candidates are normally held in March at which time detailed information is discussed and distributed concerning the program. It is strongly recommended that all interested candidate(s) be offered the opportunity to attend the Information Session in March or view the online version. Prior registration on a form provided by the Pastoral Institute is required.
- The parish staff person also presents the requirement of passing a background check prior to acceptance into the program.
- Candidates are given materials related to the program: brochure, curriculum overview, schedule and location of the classes, and a copy of the “Frequently Asked Questions.”
- After the candidate has had sufficient time to review the program materials and to consider his/her participation in it, a mutual decision is made concerning his/her enrollment.

If at the conclusion of the process the pastor/administrator decides to nominate candidates for participation in the *Lay Ministry Program*, complete a Nomination/Sponsorship Form and return it to the Pastoral Institute as soon as possible. Candidates must file their application, including two recommendation letters, prior to a pre-acceptance interview with the Pastoral Institute in July or August.