

# LAY ECCLESIAL MINISTRY FORMATION PROGRAM

## INSTITUTE FOR LAY ECCLESIAL MINISTRY AND SERVICE

*For Lay Ministers in the Archdiocese of San Antonio who serve as Catechetical Leaders (Director/Coordinator in Religious Education/Catechesis), Youth Minister (Director/Coordinator Youth, Young Adult, or Campus Ministry), Liturgical Minister (Director/Coordinator of Worship, Liturgy), Marriage and Family Life Minister (Director/Coordinator of Marriage/ Family Life), Pastoral Ministry (Director/Coordinator of Multiple Ministries)*

### THE CALL TO MINISTRY: FORMATION IN CONTEXT

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All the baptized, in their particular contexts, are called to holiness to transform the world by witnessing the Lord they have encountered.<sup>1</sup> Many, moved by the Spirit, discern to respond to this call to ministry (*servitium*) in their local parishes as Lay Ecclesial Ministers.<sup>2</sup> The Church has used the term Lay Ecclesial Ministry because it reflects key elements of the specific lay vocation.<sup>3</sup> The ministry is Lay for it is rooted in our baptismal call, we respond as lay women and men. The ministry is Ecclesial for it is discerned and appointed by the local shepherd, the Archbishop, to serve in close collaboration with the pastor and parish leadership to serve in communion for mission. It is ministry for it expresses the continuous mission of Christ through the Church.<sup>4</sup>

Those called to serve as Lay Ecclesial Ministers need a comprehensive formation with personal and communal accompaniment. This healthy pedagogy of formation fosters the development of a mature sense of our personal vocation.<sup>5</sup> In the same way, the Code of Canon Law states that lay persons, in fact, have a right to acquire knowledge of Christian doctrine appropriate to the capacity and condition of each in order for them to be able to live according to this doctrine.<sup>6</sup> The Archdiocesan Lay Ecclesial Ministry Formation Program seeks to ensure that candidates have a solid foundational and ongoing knowledge and understanding of the teachings of the Catholic Church, an understanding of the Archdiocesan Pastoral Vision, a high degree of collaboration (*pastoral de conjunto*), and that they model the Culture of Encuentro. This comprehensive formation intends to deepen God's call which they have discerned and develops the relational and professional skills needed for ecclesial ministry in the Archdiocese of San Antonio. After successful completion of all requirements, His Excellency, Archbishop Gustavo García-Siller, MSPS calls forth and commissions them as Lay Ecclesial Ministers.

### FORMATION PROGRAM AT GLANCE

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In providing a consistent development process, the Archdiocesan Lay Ecclesial Ministry Formation Program uses the four standards for Lay Ecclesial Ministry: human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral. These were defined by the National Certification Standards for Lay Ecclesial Ministers established by the Alliance for the Certification of Lay Ecclesial Ministers rooted in the USCCB Co-workers in the Vineyard of the Lord.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Evangelii Gaudium*, 11.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Ecclesiae de Mysterio: Practical Provisions*, articles 1,2.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Christifideles Laici*, 23.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *Coworkers in the Vineyard*, p11.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *Ratio Fundamentalibus Institutionis Sacerdotalis*, n50.

<sup>6</sup> *Codex Iuris Canonici*, 229.



ARCHDIOCESE  
OF SAN ANTONIO

INSTITUTE FOR LAY ECCLESIAL MINISTRY AND SERVICE  
MEXICAN AMERICAN CATHOLIC COLLEGE  
*The Art of Forming Those Called to Ministry*

*Human formation* aims to develop the lay ecclesial minister's human qualities and character, fostering a healthy and well-balanced personality, for the sake of both personal growth and ministerial service.

*Spiritual formation* aims to arouse and animate true hunger for holiness, desire for union with the Father through Christ in the Spirit, daily growing in love of God and neighbor in life and ministry, and the practices of prayer and spirituality that foster these attitudes and dispositions.

*Intellectual formation* seeks to develop the lay ecclesial minister's understanding and appreciation of the Catholic faith, which is rooted in God's revelation and embodied in the living tradition of the Church. While the sacred sciences are the main focus here, we recognize the value of these other disciplines and encourage their study and use whenever relevant for effective ministry.<sup>7</sup>

*Pastoral formation* cultivates the knowledge, attitudes, and skills that directly pertain to effective functioning in the ministry setting and that also pertain to pastoral administration that supports direct ministry.

Upon completion of the formation process, final determination of suitability is made as to the candidate's competencies for service in the Ecclesial Ministry of the Church. Archbishop Gustavo commissions them to minister in the Archdiocese of San Antonio.

#### COMPONENTS OF THE LAY ECCLESIAL MINISTRY PROGRAM

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In order to offer high standards, effective methods, and comprehensive goals, the Archdiocesan Lay Ecclesial Ministry Formation has the following components of formation.

**Formation Advisor.** Formation advisors are seasoned leaders entrusted with the task to accompany participants in the formation process.

**Theological Formation.** Theological formation goes hand in hand with spiritual and pastoral praxis. All participants must meet the coursework required for the ministry in the Archdiocese of San Antonio. Undergraduate-level coursework is required for the core curriculum.

**Cohorts.** Participants will be in cohorts to be formed as a group. It is our hope that the formation program lay the foundations for a more collaborative ministry between parishes.

**Yearly Retreat.** An essential component in participants' ongoing formation are the yearly retreats.<sup>8</sup>

**Theological Reflection.** Participants will develop the ability to practice theological reflection as an essential element of effective ministry.

**Spiritual Direction.** All participants are expected to seek spiritual direction with a qualified Director on an ongoing basis. It is recommended that visits are every six weeks.

**Annual Evaluation.** Each year, the Director will meet with the participant's formation advisor and pastor to assess the suitability of the participant and continuation in the formation program.

**Pastor Accompaniment.** It is uniquely the role of the pastor to select those who will serve on his pastoral team.

**Unity of Formation.**<sup>9</sup> All participants are expected to engage in an ongoing formation that continues after being commissioned.

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<sup>7</sup> Cf. *Ibid*, pp42-43.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. *Ibid*, p42.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis*, n53.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS<sup>10</sup>

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Intellectual formation is foundational for ministry and it is intrinsically related to spiritual formation. Lay Ecclesial Ministers, in the Archdiocese of San Antonio, are expected to minister alongside priests and deacons. Therefore, their intellectual formation must be aligned with the Archdiocesan Pastoral Vision for an effective pastoral service in the Church.

The Archdiocesan Lay Ecclesial Ministry Formation Program remains consistent with the *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis*, U.S. Bishops guidelines stated in *Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord: A Resource for Guiding the Development of Lay Ecclesial Ministry*, *Our Hearts Were Burning Within Us: A Pastoral Plan for Adult Faith Formation in the United States*, the National Certification Standards for Lay Ecclesial Ministers, Standards for Catholic Campus Ministry Professionals, the Handbook of Pastoral US Institutes (FIP), and new national trends.

Philosophy Course is pre-required for Theological Coursework.

PHIL1310            Philosophy in the Catholic Tradition

### *Theological Courses*

*Taken together with candidates for the Diaconate program*

THEO2320            Catholic Biblical Interpretation: Old Testament  
THEO2332            Catholic Biblical Interpretation: New Testament  
THEO3381            Jesus Christ: God and Man (Christology)  
THEO4387            Ecclesiology  
THEO2382            Sacramental Theology: The Faith Celebrated  
THEO3385            Moral Theology: The Faith Lived  
PSTR2351            History of the Catholic Church

### *Ministry Practicum Courses*

PSTR1372            Intercultural Competencies for Pastoral Ministry  
Elective (Ministry-specific)  
Elective (Ministry-specific)

## COST OF THE LAY ECCLESIAL MINISTRY PROGRAM

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Thanks to the vision of his Excellency, Archbishop Gustavo and the generous contribution of many women and men through the Archbishop's Appeal, the cost for the Lay Ecclesial Ministry three-year program is **\$2,100** to be shared between the parish and the participant. This comprises the total cost of courses, seminars and retreats. This fee is paid in three annual installments of \$700 per year.

Please, note that candidates are responsible for books or other non-tuition required materials needed for the program.

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<sup>10</sup> Courses with identifying codes are currently being offered at MACC; codes subject to change.

## MINISTERIAL COURSES (MINISTRY-SPECIFIC ELECTIVES)

Below is the list of courses for the Ministerial Specialization. These are ministry-specific courses.

### Catechesis and Evangelization

PSTR 1350	Foundation of Evangelization and Catechesis*
PSTR 2352	Catechetical Content, Methods, and Curriculum*
PSTR 2354	Baptismal Catechumenate (RCIA) and Catholic Formation

### Youth Ministry

NEW	Foundations of Youth Ministry (Currently covered under Principles of Youth Ministry, Practices of Youth Ministry, and Foundations of Ministry Leadership)
PSTR 1350	Foundation of Evangelization and Catechesis*
NEW	History of Campus Ministry and Current Trends
NEW	Ecumenical/Interfaith Dialogue
NEW	Catholic Social Teaching

### Marriage and Family Ministry

(PSTR 3360S)	Marriage and Family in Catholic Tradition
(PSTR 3356S)	Family, Culture and Catechesis

### Leadership

PSTR 3374	Stewardship and Financial Management
PSTR 4378	Ethics and Accountability for Catholic Leaders

### Liturgical Ministry

PSTR 2325	Liturgical and Sacred Music
THEO 2382	Sacramental Theology*

*\*These courses will be taken with the Diaconate Program candidates.*

For more information visit us at: [www.archsa.org/lay-ecclesial-ministry](http://www.archsa.org/lay-ecclesial-ministry)  
<https://maccsa.org/institute>

