

Co-Workers in the Vineyard

Unit III: Formation and Authorization

Prepared by Susan K. Wood, SCL

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Four Areas of Formation

- *Human* qualities critical to form wholesome relationships and to be apt instruments of God's love and compassion
- *Spiritual* formation developing a practice of prayer that animates ministry
- *Intellectual* formation in theological and pastoral studies
- *Pastoral* formation in pastoral skills

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Goal of Human Formation

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

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Human Formation

- Basic understanding of self and others
- Psychological health
- Mature sexuality
- Physical health
- Knowledge of one's personal gifts and special charisms
- Recognition of the traits and abilities one lacks

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Human Formation, cont.

- Understanding of family systems and dynamics
- Ability to learn from both praise and criticism
- Appreciation and valuing of racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity
- A genuine respect and concern for others
- Virtues of Christian discipleship

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Goal of Spiritual Formation

To 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 ministry, and the practices of prayer and spirituality that foster these attitudes and dispositions. It promotes and strengthens that fundamental conversion that places God, and not oneself at the center of one's life. Openness to this ongoing conversion is a prerequisite for fruitful spiritual formation.

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Elements of Spiritual Formation

- Living in union with Christ
- Build on the word of God
- Based on liturgy, specially the sacraments
- Incarnational spirituality of presence and the paschal spirituality of loving service
- Awareness of sin
- Spirituality of suffering
- Marian spirituality

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Elements of Spiritual Formation, cont.

- Love for the Church
- Devotion to the Eucharist
- Ecumenical spirit

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Goal of Intellectual Formation

To develop the lay ecclesial minister's understanding and appreciation of the Catholic faith that is rooted in God's revelation and embodied in the living tradition of the Church. It consists chiefly of the study of theology, but draws upon a wide variety of other disciplines: philosophy, literature and the arts, psychology, sociology, medical ethics, business administration, law, organizational development, etc.

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Elements of Intellectual Formation

- Scripture
- Church doctrine
- Church history
- Liturgical and sacramental theology
- Moral theology and Catholic social teaching
- Pastoral theology
- Spiritual theology
- Canon law

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Goal of Pastoral Formation

To cultivate the knowledge, attitudes, and skills that directly pertain to effective functioning in ministry settings and that also pertain to pastoral administration that supports direct ministry.

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Elements of Pastoral Formation

- Methods for providing formation to others
- Leading community prayer and preaching
- Pastoral ministry skills
- Family mission and family perspective
- Effective relationship and communication skills
- Collaboration
- Discernment of signs of the times

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Elements of Pastoral Formation, cont.

- Gift discernment and volunteer ministry management
- Change and conflict management skills
- Basic counseling skills
- Culture and language studies
- Administration skills
- Leadership and organizational development
- Applicable civil law
- Ministerial code of ethics

Authorization

- By an ecclesiastical authority
- For certain ministerial tasks in the name of the local church
- Occurs after appropriate formation

Elements of Authorization

- Acknowledgement of competence (may require certification)
- Appointment to a specific position (possibly by a commissioning ritual) Emphasizes relationship of diocesan bishop with LEM and underscores importance of the role
- Delineation of obligations, responsibilities, and authority of the position
- Announcement of appointment to the community served by the LEM

Role of the Bishop

- Oversight
- Ensures suitability
- Attentive to proper preparation
- Identifies those roles essential to collaborating in pastoral care
- Reserve the right to review credentials before appointments
- Authorization process allows bishop to demonstrate support for LEM and model collaboration

Role of Pastor

- Responsible for pastoral care of parish
- Support crucial

Certification

- Process that documents the attainment of specific standards and competencies required for the fulfillment of a specialized ecclesial ministry.
- Requires a process for assessing that a given candidate has the education, formation, and professional skills necessary to serve in a particular role.

Certification

Certification is frequently handled by professional organizations such as The National Association for Lay Ministry, (www.nalm.org), National Conference for Catechetical Leadership (www.nccl.org), the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (www.nfcym.org). These three organizations published *the National Certification Standards for Lay Ecclesial Ministers Serving as Parish Catechetical Leaders, Youth Ministry Leaders, Pastoral Associates, and Parish Life Coordinators and the National Certification Standards for Pastoral Ministers*.

Last, but not least, The National Association of Catholic Chaplains. This last is an example of extra-parochial LEM.

See also the U.S. conference of Catholic Bishops Commission on Certification and Accreditation (USCCB/CCA). The certification handbook has been under revision, so call for current information.

Recapitulation

- Authorization: Ecclesial recognition and designation by competent ecclesiastical authority
- Certification: Acknowledgement of competency by a professional ministerial organization

The Ministerial Workplace

- Faith community: Gospel values
- Modern organization: Best organizational practices

Questions?