LAY ECCLESIAL MINISTRY INSTITUTE

Office of Christian Formation
Catholic Diocese of Richmond
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Forming catechetical leaders in the Diocese of Richmond since 2011.
Welcome to the Lay Ecclesial Ministry Institute

The Lay Ecclesial Ministry Institute (LEMI) provides spiritual, human, intellectual and pastoral formation to those in catechetical-related leadership positions.

LEMI enables you to:

- Enhance your ministerial skills and your own spirituality
- Achieve an academic degree or certificate of study
- Enjoy significant savings on tuition with subsidized rates
- Qualify for the highest level of diocesan recognition for lay leaders: Commissioning by the Bishop
- Upon commissioning receive a financial award and promotion in pay grade
Why Lay Ecclesial Ministry?

“Lay persons who devote themselves permanently or temporarily to some special service of the Church are obliged to acquire the appropriate formation which is required to fulfill their function properly and to carry it out conscientiously, zealously, and diligently.”
Code of Canon Law, Canon 231

Who is a Lay Ecclesial Minister?

A Lay Ecclesial Minister is a man or woman whose ecclesial service is characterized by:
- **Authorization** of the Bishop to serve publicly in the local church
- **Leadership** in a particular ministry
- **Close mutual collaboration** with the pastoral ministry of bishop, priests, and deacons
- **Preparation and formation** appropriate to the level of responsibilities that are assigned to them

Who Chooses Lay Ecclesial Ministry Institute (LEMI)?

In the Diocese of Richmond, the men and women who choose formation through LEMI are:
- Directors/Coordinators of Religious Education
- Youth Ministers
- Adult Faith Formation Coordinators
- RCIA Coordinators
- Campus Ministers
- Catholic School Religion Teachers
Lay Ecclesial Ministry Institute (LEMI)  
Program Structure

Two paths may culminate in Commissioning by the Bishop:

**LEMI-Traditional (3-5 years)**
- Application and assessment process
- Earn a Master's degree in Theology/related field
- Diocesan workshops in human and pastoral formation
- Attend LEMI overnight Spiritual Retreat each year
- Attend LEMI Orientation Session

**LEMI-Certificate (3-4 years)**
- Application and assessment process
- Choose from 4 online certificate programs provided by the University of Dayton
- Earn nationally recognized certificate with CEUs
- Diocesan workshops in human and pastoral formation
- *Upper Room* overnight leadership workshop
- Attend LEMI overnight Spiritual Retreat each year
- Attend LEMI Orientation Session

**Application Process**

LEMI candidates will complete an online application that includes a spiritual autobiography. In addition, online reference forms are provided for feedback from the candidate's pastor, a professional colleague, and a personal acquaintance.

**Applications for a new LEMI class will be available in November 2018.**

Applications will be reviewed by the LEMI Advisory Panel. Successful applicants will receive an invitation to undergo a psychological assessment and evaluation by Kelly Counseling and Consulting.

Upon acceptance into the LEMI program, candidates will enroll in their chosen graduate degree or certificate of study program and begin classes in September. A LEMI orientation session will take place in the fall at the Pastoral Center.

For more information and to request an application, please contact Bernadette Harris, Director for Lay Ecclesial Ministry Institute at LEMI@richmonddiocese.org or 804-622-5157.
Authorization/Commissioning

Completing the requirements of the LEMI formation program can lead to, but does not guarantee, commissioning as a Lay Ecclesial Minister. Individuals will be commissioned at the discretion of the Bishop of Richmond following recommendation by LEMI administration. Consideration for commissioning will be based upon an ongoing process of prayer, discernment, evaluation, and completion of requirements.

Self-Assessment Tool

In order to be considered for commissioning, each individual will complete a LEMI self-assessment tool that employs the National Certification Standards for Lay Ecclesial Ministers. It is designed to assess ministerial growth in the four formation categories: human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral. This written document will be discussed with the LEMI Director and shared with the candidate’s Pastor or school principal in an atmosphere of prayer and respect.

Withdrawal Policies

LEMI candidates are allowed one graduate class withdrawal without financial penalty. After that, candidates who withdraw from a graduate class will be required to pay back the $600 tuition subsidy to the diocese.

Request for withdrawal from the LEMI program altogether must be made in writing to LEMI administration and may incur some financial reimbursement by the candidate for tuition subsidies.

LEMI Requirements

You must:

- Be a practicing Catholic in Full Communion with the Catholic Church
- Be actively ministering in a leadership position in the Diocese of Richmond for a minimum of 1 year
- Be 21+ years old
- Desire formation for ministry

Application Process

All applicants submit:

- A written application with Spiritual autobiography
- Reference forms from Pastor and others
- Transcript(s) if applicable

Those applicants recommended by the LEMI Advisory Panel:

- Have an in-person interview
- Have an individual, confidential psychological evaluation by licensed professionals
- Attend a LEMI Orientation Session
Formation Policies

The Lay Ecclesial Ministry Institute (LEMI) is a comprehensive program that integrates formation in four areas: human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral.

- **Human qualities** critical to form wholesome relationships and necessary to be apt instruments of God’s love and compassion.

- A **spirituality** and practice of prayer rooted in God’s Trinitarian life, grounding and animating all one does in ministry.

- Adequate **knowledge** in theological and pastoral studies, along with the **intellectual skill** to use it among the people and cultures of our country.

- **Pastoral formation** cultivates the knowledge, attitudes, and skills that directly pertain to effective functioning in the ministry setting.

*Formation Workshop Requirements*

LEMI-Traditional and LEMI-Certificate candidates are required to attend one workshop (5 hours) in each of the human and pastoral quadrants every year while in LEMI.

In addition, all candidates are required to attend the annual overnight **Spiritual** Retreat sponsored by the Diocese of Richmond in November of each year.

LEMI candidates commit to ongoing formation after having completed the LEMI program. (See pp. 50-52 “Ongoing Formation” in *Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord*.

**Personal Tracking Form**

A **Personal Tracking Form** is provided for candidates to record attendance at the various LEMI workshops. Candidates will be required to submit a form to LEMI administration at the end of each year.
Spiritual Formation

An overnight spiritual retreat is held each November for LEMI candidates at a local retreat center. Registration, meals, and lodging are included for a low, subsidized fee of $50.

Carefully chosen, professional retreat leaders bring strong theological backgrounds, common sense, and humor to their lay ecclesial audience.

Past retreat topics have included:

- Human & Holy: Incarnational Spirituality for Ministry
- And All Shall Be Well: The Compassion of Christ (Julian of Norwich)
- Ignation Spirituality: Finding God in All Things

Intellectual Formation

The intellectual formation is provided by the Catholic institution from which candidates choose to receive their academic degree or Certificate of Study.

LEMI-Traditional

Those LEMI candidates pursuing a graduate degree in theology or pastoral studies will receive a $600 tuition subsidy toward each required 3-credit graduate course. Candidates are responsible for the remaining portion of the tuition invoice.

Candidates may select any regionally accredited Catholic university and complete their degree completely online. St. Leo University, St. Joseph’s College of Maine, and Franciscan University of Steubenville are some of the institutions LEMI candidates currently attend.
(Intellectual Formation continued)

LEMI-Certificate
Those pursuing a Certificate of Study from the University of Dayton Institute for Pastoral Initiatives may choose one of four online certificate programs:

Certificate in Catechesis
Certificate in Youth Ministry
Certificate in Adult Formation Leadership
Certificate in Foundations for Leadership in Ministry

- There are no precise set meeting hours
- No driving to and from sessions
- Log into your e-course from anywhere
- A computer, an internet connection and a few basic computing skills and you are on your way!

Candidates are afforded reduced tuition rates through a diocesan partnership with Dayton. The fee for a five-week online course is $50 and for a three-week seminar is $40. The number of courses required varies with the program chosen. Typically, candidates complete a certificate over three years.

Pastoral, Human, and Spiritual Formation

Pastoral, human, and spiritual formation is provided through diocesan-sponsored workshops coordinated by the Office of Catholic Education and the Lay Ecclesial Ministry Institute.

In developing these workshops the office follows the guidelines provided by the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops (USCCB) in Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord: A Resource for Guiding the Development of Lay Ecclesial Ministry.

“Effective formation methods address the whole person: emotions, imagination, will, heart, and mind. It is the whole person who ministers, so the whole person is the proper subject of formation.”
(Co-Workers)

Previous Human Formation workshops:
- Family Systems
- Assertiveness Training
- Principled Ministry
- Strengthfinders Gifts Assessment

Previous Pastoral Formation workshops:
- Jesus-Style Recruiting
- Canon/Law/Annulment Workshop
- Building Intercultural Competencies for Ministry
- Facilitating with Confidence