



Dear Applicant for Ministry Formation,

First of all, thank you for your interest in and openness to this formation opportunity. We trust that this will be a grace-filled new step in your own faith development, as well as a generous gift of benefit to the whole Church of Scranton.

It is important that you have adequate information to assist you in discerning God's call for you into ministry. We recognize that some applicants will bring years of experience in certain aspects of parish ministry, and

others will be just beginning. For this reason, the application process includes these steps:

1. Application Form (enclosed here) – Due August 15 for the September starting group, or December 15 for the January starting group, with items #2 and #3 listed here;
2. Letter of Intent (allows you to tell us about yourself and your interest – enclosed here);
3. Recommendations (from three persons– at least one from your pastor or a priest/pastoral minister who knows you well– form enclosed here);
4. Readiness for Ministry (self-assessment, just for your own review);
5. Initial Review – you will be called once your application is complete (Visit with a member of our Ministry Formation Team, to discuss your application, any of your questions about the process, and to review your plan of study – a chance also to present formation experiences you have already completed in recent years);
6. Background Check and Safe Environment Training (enclosed application), and additional information at: <http://www.dioceseofscranton.org/about/compliance-office/virtus/>);
7. Ministry Formation Learning Agreement (to bring with you to Orientation – this includes summary of all components for the Diocesan Certificate in Lay Ministry, as well as the financial commitment involved.)

Also enclosed here is a tentative calendar for the first year. The “course cycles” refer to the online courses taken through the University of Dayton. We recommend that you visit the website for the Virtual Learning Community (<https://vlc.udayton.edu>) and view the video: [Overview of Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation](#). While an accelerated two year process is possible for some, we expect most participants to pursue this Certificate across a full three-year process. There are many timing options, so be assured that we can work with your particular needs and interests.

Please feel free to call with questions or needs (570-207-2213). Please also share this information with others you believe will be interested in **Formation for Servant Leadership: Growing in Faith Together**. The full program description and all application materials can be accessed: www.dioceseofscranton.org.

Peace and good,

Kitty MacLean
Coordinator for Lay Ministry Formation, Office for Parish Life



All application materials are confidential. Access is limited to Office for Parish Life personnel.

Contact Information		
Name (please print)		Date of Birth / /
Spouse's Name (optional)		Marital Status (optional)
Home Phone with area code	Work Phone with area code	Cell Phone with area code
Primary Email Address		How often do you check your email? <input type="checkbox"/> Seldom <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> Often
Mailing Address: Street		Apt. #
City	State	Zip
Name of Parish	City	Years in Parish

Ministry Experience During the Last Five Years			
Description of Ministry and Location	Hours per Month	Years Involved	Currently Involved?
			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Work History During the Last Five Years		
Type of Work and Location	Full or Part-time	Currently Employed?
		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No



Education History (Post Elementary School)			
School or Program and Location	Dates: Begin/End	Area(s) of Study	Degree or Certificate

Describe any other regular time commitments, including the number of hours you invest on a weekly basis (e.g. church groups, scouts, softball league, civic organizations, committees)			
Commitment	Hours per week	Commitment	Hours per week
1.		5.	
2.		6.	
3.		7.	
4.		8.	

Recommendation Letters: List the three people you have selected to write us on your behalf	
Name/Title	Phone Number with area code
1.	
2.	
3.	

Have you shared your Letter of Intent with your pastor? Yes No

Signature: _____ Date: _____



Compose a letter explaining your desire for formal ministry training at this time in your life. If additional space is needed, use the back of this form or a separate sheet.

Although no particular format is required, this letter should address the following questions:

- Why do you want to be a part of **Formation for Servant Leadership: *Growing in Faith Together?***
- How do you understand your call to ministry?
- How do you see yourself engaged in ministry in the future?
- What are your expectations of **Formation for Servant Leadership: *Growing in Faith Together?***
- What do you hope to gain from this process?

Since your pastor may play a pivotal role in enabling your future ministry, it is highly recommended that you share your “Letter of Intent” with him.



RECOMMENDATION

All application materials are confidential. Access is limited to Office for Parish Life personnel unless the applicant **does not** waive her/his right to read the letter of recommendation.

APPLICANT:

Please complete the upper section and make sure to check *one* of the two boxes regarding your access rights. Give this form to each of your recommenders, along with a stamped envelope addressed to:
Office for Parish Life 330 Wyoming Ave. Scranton, PA 18503.
This Letter of Recommendation should be mailed directly to us by the person who completes this form.

Applicant Name (please print)	Home Phone with area code
CHECK ONE: I (the applicant) <input type="checkbox"/> DO <input type="checkbox"/> DO NOT waive my right to read this letter of recommendation.	

RECOMMENDER:

This applicant is applying for **Formation for Servant Leadership: Growing in Faith Together**, culminating in a Diocesan Certificate in Lay Ministry in the Diocese of Scranton. Please comment on your assessment of this person's potential for leadership in ministry; explain what you see as both the applicant's strengths and areas for growth. Use the back of this form or a separate sheet to provide additional comments.

Recommender Name (please print)	Recommender Phone with area code
Your Position / Title and Parish / Agency	
How long have you known the applicant?	In what capacity?
CHECK ONE: <input type="checkbox"/> I recommend. <input type="checkbox"/> I recommend with reservations. <input type="checkbox"/> I do not recommend.	

Please explain:

Recommender's
Signature: _____

Date: _____





Diocese of Scranton

Background Check Application

In accordance with the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* and the Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Laws, the Diocese of Scranton conducts background clearances EVERY 36 MONTHS on all individuals who have direct contact or routine interaction with children. The purpose of this application is to authorize the Safe Environment Office to complete a **State Police Criminal History Check**. Once processed, the clearance results will be sent to the applicant along with instructions on completing additional required background checks.

Please Print Clearly

FIRST NAME - Subject of Record Check	MIDDLE NAME	LAST NAME		
Address	City	State	Zip Code	
Phone Number: () E-mail Address:	Have you resided continuously in PA for the past 10 years? _____ Yes _____ No			
Maiden Name and/or Aliases	Social Security Number	Date of Birth	Gender: ____ Female ____ Male	Race
Name of Parish/School where Background Check is Needed: _____				
Town: _____				

This Background Check is needed because you are:		(Please indicate your status)
_____ Parish Employee	_____ Parish Volunteer	_____ Diocesan Employee
_____ Clergy	_____ Deacon	_____ Religious Order
_____ School Volunteer	Other _____	_____ Applicant for Formation
Name of Organization or Entity		

Applicant Signature: _____ Date: _____

Effective 7/25/15, there is no cost for state clearances for volunteers.

Effective 7/25/15, cost for Employees is \$8.00 per applicant.
Please make check or money order payable to **Diocese of Scranton**.

Mail to: Diocese of Scranton
 ATTN Kathy Bolinski
 300 Wyoming Avenue
 Scranton, PA 18503



Diocese of Scranton

Diocesan Certificate in Lay Ministry

To serve the leadership development needs for parish ministries of Word, Worship, Service and Community, the Diocese of Scranton, through its Office for Parish Life, introduces a lay ministry formation Program, in **partnership with the University of Dayton's Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation (VLCFF)**, and supported by the University of Scranton, Marywood University, King's College and Misericordia University.

Who Will Participate? Persons serving in or interested in such roles as:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Parish DRE/DRF | Catechists for all age levels |
| RCIA Teams | Catholic School Teachers |
| Directors of Music Ministry | Liturgy Coordinators |
| Marriage Support Ministers | Caring Outreach Ministers |
| Parish Pastoral Councils | Parish Finance Councils |
| Commissions Members | Parish Staff Members |

Is this Certificate required for persons serving these roles?

Not at this time, though it is an excellent way both to advance the leadership capacities and to affirm the generous service of all those currently on parish staffs and volunteer teams. Inviting someone into ministry formation is also a way to develop new leaders for your parish

Step One: Request an application packet from the Office for Parish Life. This will provide a great deal more information about the requirements, schedule, and options for how you or your recommended parish leader will participate.

Step Two: Once an interested candidate completes the application, with appropriate recommendations, you will be contacted by a member of the Ministry Formation Team to review the process and to plan ahead for your courses, retreats, spiritual companion, and skills workshops. The practicum experience will be addressed later in the process.

Step Three: All accepted candidates will participate in an Orientation Retreat together in order to meet each other, learn about the VLCFF, and experience the theological reflection process designed for this ministry formation.



"Discipleship is the fundamental vocation in which the Church's mission and ministry find full meaning. This call is, first of all, a gift. Holiness is nothing other than the gift of loving union with God and the sharing of this love in right relationship with others. This gift, in turn, becomes a mission that must shape the whole of Christian life." Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord, USCCB

(See reverse side for more information)

Pre-requisites: These may be accomplished through the previous PFI/Theological Foundations Courses, with the Echoes of Faith course, or through the Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation.

PFI/Theological Foundations

Introduction to Sacred Scripture
 Sacraments in General
 Fundamental Teachings of the Church
 Intro to the Spiritual and Moral Life
 Catholic Church Through Centuries
 Catechetical Methodology OR
 Ministry of Catholic School Teacher

VLCFF

Introduction to Scripture
 Sacraments
 Catholic Beliefs
 Introduction to Christian Morality
 Introduction to Prayer
 Faith and Human Development

Echoes of Faith

The Scriptures
 Liturgy and Sacraments
 I Believe/We Believe
 Catholic Morality
 Church History
 Prayer and Spirituality
 The Learner/Grade Level Methods

Components for the Diocesan Certificate in Lay Ministry

- **Academic Core:** Theological Reflection Seminar; Old Testament, New Testament, Ecclesiology (3 parts); Introduction to Liturgy, Introduction to Practical Morality, Vocation to Ministry
- **Specializations:** (choose at least three courses in one of the four categories)
Word: Intro to Catechesis, RCIA, Vocation, Spirituality and Discipleship of Catechists, A Vision for Catholic Youth Ministry, Spirituality and Inclusive Faith Communities, Foundations and Vision of Adult Faith Formation, Administration in Ministry, Faith Formation for Adults with Special Needs
Worship: Intro to Sacraments of Initiation, RCIA, Spirituality in Adult Learning and Faith Formation, Sacrament of Marriage, Pastoral Approach to Culture, (Pastoral Liturgy track still being developed)
Service: Survey of Catholic Social Teaching, Parish and Social Action, Poverty in US and Around the World, Advanced Catholic Social Teaching, Scripture and Justice
Community: Evangelization and Discipleship, Pastoral Approach to Culture, Spirituality and Inclusive Faith Communities, Study of *The Joy of the Gospel*, Parish as a Learning Community, Relational Ministry with Youth, Many Faces of Adult Learners, Disabilities in Parish Life: An Overview
- **Spiritual Formation:** Orientation Retreat, Culminating Retreat (each one full day)
 Theological Reflection Evenings (1 per semester)
 Formation Weekend (annually, overnight)
 Regular spiritual companion visits
- **Skills Workshops:** (Offered four times per year; choose two) Examples:
 Communication, Group Dynamics and Facilitation Skills, Collaboration and Consensus-Forming, Public Speaking/Presentation Skills, Designing and Leading Prayer, Working with Volunteers, Essential Church Documents and their use in Ministry
- **Practicum/Field Study** (across 4-6 months near completion of process)
 Guided ministry experience or project in area of specialization; demonstration of planning, skills application, theological reflection, and identifying future personal growth goals (written elements; portfolio)



The inventory will assist you in identifying present strengths as well as areas for growth. It is also designed to help you assess several fundamental areas within ministry formation, such as:

- theological learning
- interpersonal skill development
- spiritual growth
- personal growth

This assessment is for your personal use. Therefore, *please do not submit this form with your application*. There are no right or wrong answers, and this will not be used in determining admission into the program. However, the personal interview phase of the application process will draw on these topics as a basis of conversation. You may want to use it as a reference for your personal interview.

Take time to think about each statement. Then indicate how well it describes you at this point in your life.

- KEY: (1) Does not describe me at all
 (2) Does not describe me very well
 (3) Describes me somewhat
 (4) Describes me well
 (5) Describes me extremely well

	Not at All	Not Well	Some-what	Well	Very Well
1. I have a good relationship with my family.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I have the support of my spouse and friends for growing in ministry.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I am aware of my personal family history and how it has shaped my present values, attitudes, and beliefs.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I am actively involved in parish life, e.g., liturgy, RCIA, community building activities, service organizations, etc.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I take time for regular personal reflection and prayer.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I am comfortable sharing my feelings with others.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I have good relationships with friends and co-workers.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I take time for recreation and rest.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I tend to be self-motivated and take the initiative in projects in which I am involved.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I take interest and am involved in social and political issues.	1	2	3	4	5



11.	People know me as someone who not only can begin a project but can also finish what I've started.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	I have good communication skills, e.g. the ability to listen and express myself in small and large groups.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	I can appreciate and respect points of view different from my own.	1	2	3	4	5
14.	I am comfortable and in touch with my emotions.	1	2	3	4	5
15.	I basically like myself and the direction my life has taken.	1	2	3	4	5
16.	I live my life in a way consistent with the values I hold.	1	2	3	4	5
17.	I am willing to take responsibility and leadership in groups as well as let others affect and direct me.	1	2	3	4	5
18.	I like to read and am interested in a variety of subjects.	1	2	3	4	5
19.	I value tending to my overall health and well-being.	1	2	3	4	5
20.	I have a good sense of humor and can laugh at myself.	1	2	3	4	5
21.	I am aware of the issues and concerns of others and how they experience God in their lives.	1	2	3	4	5
22.	I am sensitive to the racial, ethnic, and cultural values of others.	1	2	3	4	5
23.	I have reflected on my own motivation for ministry, and my personal interests are secondary to the needs and interests of others.	1	2	3	4	5
24.	I am able to admit the mistakes that I make.	1	2	3	4	5
25.	I am ready and willing to make a commitment of my time and energy to this formation program.	1	2	3	4	5



Preparation and Active Engagement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I will try to develop a spirit of cooperation, openness and mutual respect in my group. I will try to maintain a high quality of participation in the group by: speaking for myself; initiating discussion, not always waiting for someone else to begin; and contributing to discussion without monopolizing. I will try to be diligent in the reading, writing and project tasks assigned. I will keep confidentiality about personal information shared in the group.
Components of the Diocesan Certificate
<p>I understand that the Diocesan Certificate in Lay Ministry includes successful completion of all of the following components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Courses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theological Reflection Seminar Prerequisite Courses-determined on an individual basis for each candidate Old Testament New Testament Ecclesiology – three course series Introduction to Liturgy Introduction to Practical Morality Vocation to Ministry Specialization – three courses in either Word, Worship, Community OR Service Spiritual Companion Checkpoints (5-6 times per year)(usually begins after first semester of study) Skills Workshops (once per semester, usually Saturday) Theological Reflection (once per semester, usually weeknight evening) Annual Retreat (usually Friday evening, overnight and Saturday) Mentored Practicum (Individualized plan developed during specialization courses)
Financial Responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Virtual Learning Community -- \$40-50 per course (additional cost for books per course, variable) (payable online directly at the VLCFF website where you enroll for courses) Skills Workshops \$30each (some variables, based on your choice) Spiritual Formation \$400/year (Retreats, Theological Reflection, Companion, Practicum Mentor) <p>Estimated total (depending on number of courses per year) \$800-1000 Annually</p> <p>Financial arrangements are the responsibility of the participant. If your parish or agency is assuming some of the costs, please give the name and phone number of responsible party:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>NAME PHONE</p>

Applicant's
Signature: _____

Date: _____



Tentative Schedule 2016

Below is a tentative calendar for 2016 — once candidates are accepted into the Diocesan Certificate in Lay Ministry process, regular communication and calendar updates will be provided, along with information for course enrollment. This calendar applies for new and continuing candidates.

- **January 9 2015** Orientation Retreat for new candidates (if warranted)
- **January 10 - February 13** VLCFF Course Cycle 1
- **January 30** Skills Workshop: Living Your Strengths
- **February 19-20** Annual Retreat for all Candidates; Danville, Motherhouse of Sisters of Cyril and Methodius
- **April 3 - May 7** VLCFF Course Cycle 3
- **April 23** Skills Workshop: Understanding Family Systems
- **April 23** Diocesan Men's Conference, King's College
- **May 17-18** **RCIA Seminar Days**
- **May 22 - June 25** VLCFF Course Cycle 4
- **June 6** Evening of Theological Reflection
- **June 11 and 25** Listening with the Heart
- **July 10 - August 13** VLCFF Course Cycle 5
- **August 8-12** Catechist Camp
- **August 28-October 1** VLCFF Course Cycle 6
- **September 17 and 24** Listening with the Heart
- **September 24** Skills Workshop: Tending to Self
- **October 7-8** Diocesan Congress: Revolution of Tenderness
- **October 16-November 19** VLCFF Course Cycle 7
- **November 5** Workshop for new Directors/Coordinators of Religious Education
- **November 12** Skills Workshop: In My Father's House There Are Many Mansions
- **November 13** Closing of the Holy Doors for Jubilee of Mercy – Cathedral of St. Peter
- **November 30** Evening of Theological Reflection