

Expectations for a Pastoral Life Coordinator (PLC)

A person certified as a PLC is a minister who is entrusted by the diocesan bishop with the pastoral care of a parish. In collaboration with a canonical pastor appointed by the diocesan bishop, the PLC has the responsibility of overseeing the entire Catholic community within a specific locale. The PLC enables and empowers the community to be a sign of the reality of the kingdom of God.

Specific Responsibilities:

The PLC, appointed by the bishop and accountable to the canonical pastor, is expected to provide for the overall day-to-day pastoral care and administration of a parish. Sacramental ministry reserved to clergy is provided by ordained clergy appointed by the bishop.

The PLC is expected to provide pastoral leadership and service to meet the sacramental, temporal, formational, and other ministerial needs of the parish. To do this effectively, the PLC is expected to:

- Have a deep love for God and those they serve, faith in Christ and commitment to the Church, a spirit of hope, the habit of regular prayer, and a sense of call to ministry as coming from God and affirmed by the Church.
- Have adequate initial and ongoing formation (in spiritual practice, academic study in theology or pastoral ministry/leadership skills, prior ministerial background, and life experience) to provide leadership and service for the many areas of parish ministry.
- Provide leadership in collaboratively developing a vision and a mission for the parish that are faithful to the Gospel, inspiring, and responsive to community needs.
- Provide direction for pastoral decisions and action.
- Facilitate quality ministries of Catholic faith formation, evangelization, ecumenism, and justice that reflect and actualize the reign of God.
- Demonstrate the administrative ability to handle parish leadership responsibilities, working collaboratively with the parish pastoral council, serving as liaison between the parish and the bishop and diocesan offices, and fulfilling all provisions of the Bishop's delegation of pastoral responsibility in the parish.
- Provide for the sacramental life of the parish, together with the canonically appointed sacramental minister.
- Oversee the parish's compliance with all provisions of civil and canon law and diocesan policy.
- Supervise parish finances, in collaboration with the parish finance council.
- Coordinate and supervise the ministry of all parish staff members, with fair administration of just and equitable human resources policies and practices.
- Have the inter-personal and group communication and collaboration skill needed to foster a positive parish spirit and to work well with others in the ministry setting, including parishioners, co-workers on the parish staff, diocesan staff, and persons or groups in the wider community.

- Cultivate the art and ability to help others discern God's call in their lives and respond to that call with faith and commitment, supporting that response as needed with prayer, formation, advice and encouragement.

Adapted from the **National Certification Standards for Lay Ecclesial Ministers**, by the National Association for Lay Ministry, the National Conference for Catechetical Leadership, and National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry; 2003

Expectations for a Parish Catechetical Leader (CL)

The CL is the person who organizes and directs the program of lifelong faith formation for parishioners under the direction of the pastor and in collaboration with the pastoral staff.

Currently, those who carry out the above functions do so under a variety of titles, which are often set in accordance with diocesan policy. In some dioceses the title, director of religious education, is reserved for those who hold a master's degree in religious education or a related field. Other titles include director of faith formation, coordinator of religious education, and director of catechetical ministry. Pastoral associates, permanent deacons, and pastoral life coordinators may also be charged with overseeing a parish's catechetical program.

Specific Responsibilities:

Program Development

- Develop and maintain catechetical programs for all age groups.
- Review, select, and acquire suitable materials for these programs.
- Develop curriculum in keeping with guidelines of the diocese and the *National Catechetical Directory*.
- Work with parents to ensure their support and involvement in the parish's catechetical program.
- Work collaboratively with other parish ministries to ensure an integrated approach to the parish's catechetical efforts.

Recruitment and Training of Volunteer Personnel

- Recruit sufficient volunteers and aides to conduct the parish's catechetical programs.
- Provide regular in-service to train volunteers in basic theology, the methods of catechesis, and the use of materials to be employed in their teaching.
- Encourage volunteer catechists to obtain diocesan certification and support them in these efforts.
- Provide periodic spiritual enrichment and community building experiences (evenings of recollection, appreciation dinners, etc.)
- Evaluate catechists annually and offer constructive suggestions for improvement as needed.

Administration

- Supervise religious education office staff and volunteers.
- Develop comprehensive calendar of all aspects of the catechetical program and coordinate this with the parish's master calendar.
- Prepare annual budget and oversee expenditures after its approval by finance committee.
- Arrange for use of the facilities needed to conduct the catechetical program; oversee the proper use and maintenance of these facilities.
- Maintain accurate records related to registration, attendance and student evaluations, as well as any required documentation related to sacramental preparation and celebration.

Communication

- Attend parish staff meetings; update members regularly on matters pertaining to the catechetical program.
- Inform parents in a timely manner of program events and policies: registrations, fee/tuition policy, sacramental preparation schedule and policies, parent meetings, enrichment opportunities, etc.
- Serve as staff representative to the parish religious education committee; submit reports as requested.
- Maintain regular contact with diocesan office to stay informed of its policies and any programs it is offering.

Continuing Education and Professional Development

- Continue personal and spiritual formation, as well as professional growth, through reading, peer associations, institutes, study days, and diocesan meetings.

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