

ALLIANCE FOR THE CERTIFICATION OF LAY ECCLESIAL MINISTERS

Self-Assessment Relative to the National Certification Standards: Catechetical Leader

Introduction

This self-assessment is based upon the National Certification Standards for Lay Ecclesial Ministers and is designed to assist candidates for certification to assess their competence relative to those standards and their respective competencies, including the specialized competencies of a given ministry specialization. Submission of a completed self-assessment is a requirement for certification.

This self-assessment is comprehensive and detailed and will take some time to complete. Candidates are encouraged to give it the time it demands. Once completed, it will highlight strengths as well as areas in need of further attention. At the conclusion of the self-assessment is a “ministerial development planning” worksheet that is provided to assist candidates in (a) developing specific plans to address gaps and areas of weakness so as to address these in advance of portfolio submission; and (b) in developing specific plans for ongoing development after certification.

The format of the self-assessment is as follows:

- There are five sections, four of which are devoted to each of the four standards (human, spiritual, intellectual/theological, and pastoral) and a fifth devoted to specialized competencies related to a Catechetical Leader.
- Under each section are listed the competencies that comprise the heart of the self-assessment. Each competency statement calls for reflection and response as follows: (a) evidence of competence, (b) priority level, (c) rating, (d) comment. See below for more detail.
- To assist in the self-assessment, competency indicators are provided at the conclusion of the first four sections (the specialized competencies have no indicators). The indicators provide more information on what competence looks like.
- At the conclusion of the self-assessment there is a “ministerial development planning” worksheet that may be replicated as often as necessary to assist candidates in their planning to address any deficiencies.

Instructions

1. **Section Review:** Choose a section to work on, review all the competencies in that section, then begin with the first competency statement in that section. Indicators are provided (and may be found in Appendix 2) that can be used in determining one’s level competency level. Important: the indicators serve *only* as examples and should be understood solely as a resource, not a checklist of requirements.
2. **Evidence of Competence:** Evidence may include formal education such as courses, training, workshops, practicums, projects, internships, etc., along with examples from your history of ministry in which the particular competency was demonstrated. (Note: Successful

completion of coursework or training, although important, when taken alone does not constitute evidence of competence.) Use the provided indicators for assistance in this step.

3. **Rating:** Use the following scale to rate yourself relative to that competency statement.

3 / Strong Competence: There is significant evidence of education and experience that substantiates strong competence.

2 / Adequate Competence: There is moderate evidence of education and experience that substantiates adequate competence.

1 / Needs Work: There is little or no evidence of education and/or experience.

Comment: Consider (a) how this competency may be documented in your portfolio; and (b) how you will address any areas in need of more work.

Alliance Self-Assessment Instrument

Section One / Standard One: Human

1.0 Standard One

Lay ecclesial ministers demonstrate the qualities of human maturity needed for fruitful ministry with the people of God.

Vision Statement

Lay ecclesial ministers, as all ecclesial ministers, develop their human character and relational abilities so that they can be “a bridge and not an obstacle” for people in their encounter with Jesus Christ.* This development entails the twofold dynamic of strengthening positive traits that foster ministerial effectiveness and lessening negative traits that hinder it. Accordingly, lay ecclesial ministers strive to deepen their knowledge of self and others, grow from experiences of suffering and challenge, maintain a balanced lifestyle and positive relationships, appreciate and value diversity, and demonstrate basic human virtues. Cultivating such traits and skills within a Christ-centered community contributes to the development of “a healthy and well-balanced personality, for the sake of both personal growth and ministerial service” (*Co-Workers*, p. 36).

* Pope John Paul II, *Pastores Dabo Vobis: I Will Give You Shepherds* (1992), 43.

Core Competencies

A lay ecclesial minister will:

- 1.1 Appreciate and affirm the dignity of the human person and the positive values of diverse cultures, races, and socioeconomic groups within their respective self-understandings.

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (select one): _____ 3 _____ 2 _____ 1

c. Comment: _____

- 1.2 Identify personal gifts and limitations through self-reflection, collaboration with others, peer feedback, supervisory assessment processes, and/or spiritual companioning.

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (circle one): _____ 3 ____ 2 ____ 1

c. Comment: _____

1.3 Engage in programs or practices of continuing ministerial formation and lifelong personal growth.

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (circle one): _____ 3 ____ 2 ____ 1

c. Comment: _____

1.4 Recognize both the reality of sin with its personal and social consequences and the power of forgiveness and reconciliation to heal persons and relationships.

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (circle one): _____ 3 ____ 2 ____ 1

c. Comment: _____

1.5 Maintain a healthy lifestyle and a reasonable balance among the legitimate claims of family, community, personal relationships, and ministry.

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (circle one): _____ 3 _____ 2 _____ 1

c. Comment: _____

1.6 Manifest "*psychological health*, marked by integrity, appropriate interpersonal boundaries, and the ability to honor and safeguard the trust that people place in them as Church ministers" (*Co-Workers*, p. 36).

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (circle one): _____ 3 _____ 2 _____ 1

c. Comment: _____

1.7 Understand the power inherent in positions of pastoral leadership and be diligent in the responsible exercise of such power regarding, for example, sexuality, confidentiality, supervision of others, and decision making.

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (circle one): _____ 3 _____ 2 _____ 1

c. Comment: _____

Section One Summary Reflections and Conclusions

- Describe your strengths for ministry: _____

- Summarize your need(s) for further development: _____

- How will you address your need(s) for further development? (See “Ministerial Development Planning” worksheet at the conclusion of the self-assessment for assistance, duplicating the sheet as necessary)

- Calculate the average of your rankings and record it here: _____

Section Two / Standard Two: Spiritual

2.0 Standard Two

Sharing in the common priesthood of all the baptized, a lay ecclesial minister demonstrates Christian spirituality as foundational to ministry, integrated in service with the people of God, and possessing a sacramental view of the world that recognizes the world can be a vessel of God’s presence and God’s transforming grace.

Vision Statement

Having encountered the person and message of Jesus Christ, the hunger of the lay ecclesial minister for union with the Triune God is constant. The result of this hunger is the call to holiness built on the Word of God, experienced in the liturgy and sacraments, formed through suffering, nurtured in joy, and sustained in community with all the baptized and through the Church as Mystical Body. The minister gives witness to a well-formed spirituality through a rich and diversified prayer life, theological reflection, and action rooted in Catholic social teaching. Spiritual formation is grounded in the understanding that “if ministry does not flow from a personal encounter and ongoing relationship with the Lord, then no matter how ‘accomplished’ it may be in its methods and activities, that ministry will lack the vital soul and source needed to bear lasting fruit” (*Co-Workers*, p. 38). Therefore, open to the mystery of God’s love and in touch with the world’s realities, all actions

of the lay ecclesial minister flow from “that fundamental conversion that places God, and not oneself, at the center of one’s life” (*Co-Workers*, p. 38).

Core Competencies

A lay ecclesial minister will:

2.1 Give witness to an integrated spirituality formed by Scripture, theological reflection, sacramental celebration, communal worship, and active participation in parish life.

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (circle one): _____3 _____2 _____1

c. Comment: _____

2.2 Live a life of private and communal prayer that is both formed by and reflective of the breadth and depth of the Catholic spiritual tradition.

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (circle one): _____3 _____2 _____1

c. Comment: _____

2.3 Bear witness to the profound significance of Eucharist in one’s own life, in the life of one’s parish, and in the life of the whole Catholic community.

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (circle one): _____3 ____2 ____1

c. Comment: _____

2.4 Demonstrate sensitivity to the spirituality of the sacred arts, i.e., art, music, and architecture, and the value of their expression in liturgical and communal prayer.

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (circle one): _____3 ____2 ____1

c. Comment: _____

2.5 Honor the call to ministry that is rooted in one's baptism by developing ministerial goals that flow from one's spirituality and reflect an integration of Gospel values.

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (circle one): _____3 ____2 ____1

c. Comment: _____

2.6 Demonstrate an ability to discern the "signs of the times" and address current realities in the Church and the world in light of the Gospel.

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (circle one): _____ 3 ____ 2 ____ 1

c. Comment: _____

2.7 Accept and articulate one's ministerial vocation as coming from God and confirmed by the ecclesial community.

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (circle one): _____ 3 ____ 2 ____ 1

c. Comment: _____

2.8 Display openness to ecumenical prayer, work, and practices that promote Christian unity and acknowledge the gifts afforded the human community from the various world religions.

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (circle one): _____ 3 ____ 2 ____ 1

c. Comment: _____

2.9 Model the spirit of Jesus in one's life and identify with and promote the universal Church and its global mission so that all prayer and ministerial activity flow from that mission.

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (circle one): _____ 3 _____ 2 _____ 1

c. Comment: _____

2.10 Develop a spirituality sensitive to diverse cultural expressions based on conversion, communion, mission, and solidarity.

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (circle one): _____ 3 _____ 2 _____ 1

c. Comment: _____

Section Two Summary Reflections and Conclusions

- Describe your strengths for ministry: _____

- Summarize your need(s) for further development: _____

- How will you address your need(s) for further development? (See “Ministerial Development Planning” worksheet at the conclusion of the self-assessment for assistance, duplicating the sheet as necessary)

- Calculate the average of your rankings and record it here: _____

Section Three / Standard Three: Intellectual

3.0 Standard Three

A lay ecclesial minister demonstrates understanding of the breadth of Catholic theological and pastoral studies as well as the intellectual skill to use that knowledge in ministry with God’s people from diverse populations and cultures.

Vision Statement

“Formation for lay ecclesial ministry is a journey beyond catechesis into theological study” (*Co-Workers*, p. 43). A lay ecclesial minister’s faith and ministry are formed by the study of the Catholic theological tradition focusing on the following core elements: Scripture and its interpretation, dogmatic theology, Church history, liturgical and sacramental theology, moral theology and Catholic social teaching, pastoral theology, spirituality, canon law, ecumenism and interreligious dialogue, the social sciences, humanities, and culture and language studies. Based upon this study, a theologically competent minister can articulate and interpret this Catholic theological tradition with disciples from diverse communities. A key dynamic of effective lay ecclesial ministry is the integration into ministry practices of the key documents and principal theories of pastoral ministry.

Core Competencies

A lay ecclesial minister will:

- 3.1 *Scripture and revelation.* Know and integrate into ministerial practice a theology of revelation as embodied in Scripture, tradition, and creation.

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (circle one): _____ 3 _____ 2 _____ 1

c. Comment: _____

3.2 *Dogmatic theology.* Know and integrate into ministerial practice Trinitarian theology, Christology, pneumatology, missiology, Christian anthropology, and ecclesiology.

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (circle one): _____ 3 _____ 2 _____ 1

c. Comment: _____

3.3 *Church history.* Know and integrate into ministerial practice a foundational understanding of the major events in the history of the Church, with special attention to the Second Vatican Council, and the perspective those events provide on the life of the Church today.

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (circle one): _____ 3 _____ 2 _____ 1

c. Comment: _____

3.4 *Liturgical and sacramental theology.* Know and integrate into ministerial practice theologies of liturgy, worship, and sacraments.

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (circle one): _____ 3 _____ 2 _____ 1

c. Comment: _____

3.5 *Moral theology and Catholic social teaching.* Know and integrate into ministerial practice a theology of the moral life, including Catholic social teaching for the transformation of Church and society.

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (circle one): _____3 _____2 _____1

c. Comment: _____

3.6 *Pastoral theology.* Know and integrate into ministerial practice a theology of pastoral ministry as well as guiding principles for the practice of ministry in a given context.

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (circle one): _____3 _____2 _____1

c. Comment: _____

3.7 *Spirituality.* Know and integrate the history and theology of Catholic spirituality into prayer and ministerial practice.

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (circle one): _____3 ____2 ____1

c. Comment: _____

3.8 *Canon law.* Know and integrate into ministerial practice a foundational understanding of canon law.

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (circle one): _____3 ____2 ____1

c. Comment: _____

3.9 *Ecumenism and interreligious dialogue.* Know and integrate into ministerial practice a respect for other Christian communities and other religious traditions.

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (circle one): _____3 ____2 ____1

c. Comment: _____

3.10 *Social sciences and humanities.* Know and integrate into ministerial practice a foundational understanding of the social sciences and humanities.

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (circle one): _____3 _____2 _____1

c. Comment: _____

3.11 *Culture and language studies.* Know and integrate into ministerial practice knowledge of intercultural communication and linguistic/cultural skills.

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (circle one): _____3 _____2 _____1

c. Comment: _____

Section Three Summary Reflections and Conclusions

- Describe your strengths for ministry: _____

- Summarize your need(s) for further development: _____

- How will you address your need(s) for further development? (See “Ministerial Development Planning” worksheet at the conclusion of the self-assessment for assistance, duplicating the sheet as necessary)

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- Calculate the average of your rankings and record it here: _____

Section Four / Standard Four: Pastoral

4.0 Standard Four

A lay ecclesial minister demonstrates a range of leadership and pastoral skills needed for functioning effectively in ministry.

Vision Statement

As a response to their baptismal call, lay ecclesial ministers accept the grace of leadership and manifest a range of skills and pastoral gifts which allow them to function effectively in ministry. In their role as evangelizers, they operate in a parochial setting which has various dimensions—faith formation, worship, cultural diversity, community life, social justice, and apostolic service. They are effective listeners who foster respect and offer compassionate care within varied family, community, and cultural settings. In the spirit of the Gospel, they serve others as companions on the journey of faith. These ministers demonstrate good stewardship, work collaboratively with other lay and ordained ministers, and exhibit human resource and management skills. They have an ability to discern and nurture the gifts of all the baptized in order to build the Kingdom of God. Lastly, these ministers embrace a professional code of ethics worthy of Catholic ministry and abide by civil and Church law. “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” (*Co-Workers*, page 47).

Core Competencies

A lay ecclesial minister will:

4.1 Exercise sound practices of compassionate pastoral care.

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (circle one): _____ 3 _____ 2 _____ 1

c. Comment: _____

4.2 Foster a pastoral ministry that empowers people to inculturate the Gospel in their own culture and to foster unity in diversity in the Catholic Church by utilizing human, spiritual, theological, and pastoral approaches proper to each culture.

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (circle one): _____3 _____2 _____1

c. Comment: _____

4.3 Implement the principles and processes of evangelization and faith formation as outlined in national and universal Church documents.

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (circle one): _____3 _____2 _____1

c. Comment: _____

4.4 Employ the use of modern means of communication technology to proclaim the Gospel.

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (circle one): _____3 _____2 _____1

c. Comment: _____

4.5 Work effectively with others through utilizing leadership skills of collaboration, visioning, planning, communication, decision making, delegation, and conflict management.

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (circle one): _____ 3 _____ 2 _____ 1

c. Comment: _____

4.6 Exercise effective supervision of employees (part-time or full-time) and volunteers.

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (circle one): _____ 3 _____ 2 _____ 1

c. Comment: _____

4.7 Continually seek opportunities to improve skills.

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (circle one): _____ 3 _____ 2 _____ 1

c. Comment: _____

4.8 Develop and nurture the prayer life of the community in which one serves.

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (circle one): _____ 3 _____ 2 _____ 1

c. Comment: _____

Section Four Summary Reflections and Conclusions

- Describe your strengths for ministry: _____

- Summarize your need(s) for further development: _____

- How will you address your need(s) for further development? (See “Ministerial Development Planning” worksheet at the conclusion of the self-assessment for assistance, duplicating the sheet as necessary)

- Calculate the average of your rankings and record it here: _____

Section Five / Specialized Competencies for a Catechetical Leader

A parish catechetical leader will:

CL 1 Direct the parish catechetical program through design, implementation, and evaluation of parish catechetical processes.

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (circle one): _____3 _____2 _____1

c. Comment: _____

CL 2 Implement the catechumenate model as inspiration for catechesis in age-appropriate ways.

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (circle one): _____3 _____2 _____1

c. Comment: _____

CL 3 Develop a comprehensive lifelong vision and plan for parish catechesis based on ecclesial catechetical documents.

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (circle one): _____3 _____2 _____1

c. Comment: _____

CL 4 Insure the centrality of catechesis in the development of the parish as an evangelizing and catechizing community.

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (circle one): _____ 3 _____ 2 _____ 1

c. Comment: _____

CL 5 Develop and implement parish catechetical policies in accord with (arch)diocesan policies and guidelines.

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (circle one): _____ 3 _____ 2 _____ 1

c. Comment: _____

CL 6 Provide orientation and in-servicing of catechetical committee members and formation teams in their areas of responsibility.

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (circle one): _____ 3 _____ 2 _____ 1

c. Comment: _____

CL 7 Exercise effective supervision of catechetical employees and volunteers while fostering leadership abilities.

a. Evidence of competence (list evidence here): _____

b. Rating (circle one): _____ 3 _____ 2 _____ 1

c. Comment: _____

Section Five Summary Reflections and Conclusions

- Describe your strengths for ministry: _____

- Summarize your need(s) for further development: _____

- How will you address your need(s) for further development? (See “Ministerial Development Planning” worksheet at the conclusion of the self-assessment for assistance, duplicating the sheet as necessary)

- Calculate the average of your rankings and record it here: _____

Concluding Reflections

Review each of the sections of the self-assessment, with special attention to your summary reflections and conclusions at the end of each section, and then proceed to respond to the following:

- My principal strengths relative to the standards and core competencies are: _____

- My principal strengths relative to the specialized competencies are: _____

- Based on this self-assessment, I need further development in the following areas: _____

A “Ministerial Development Planning Worksheet” may be found at www.lemcertification.org/forms and is provided to assist in addressing needs for further development.