



CERTIFICATION HANDBOOK

YOUTH MINISTRY CERTIFICATION USING THE NATIONAL COMPETENCIES FOR LAY ECCLESIAL YOUTH MINISTERS **DIOCESE OF COLUMBUS**

Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry
197 East Gay Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215-3229

September 2003

I. INTRODUCTION

“The Ministry Coordinator, must always be qualified and well trained, as well as have an excellent reputation. He or she facilitates the people, programming, and resources of the parish or school community in a comprehensive ministry effort. The coordinator is primarily responsible for facilitating planning, administering programs, developing a leadership system for adult and youth leaders (recruitment, training, and support), and serving as an advocate and link for young people to the faith community and wider community.” (*Renewing the Vision: A Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry*, p. #41.)

“Lay people, who are pledged to the special service of the Church, whether permanently or for a time, have a duty to acquire the appropriate formation which their role demands, so that they may conscientiously, earnestly and diligently fulfill this role.” (*Code of Canon Law*, 231 §1)

In the Diocese of Columbus, support for coordinators of youth ministry is the responsibility of parishes and schools in collaboration with the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry and other diocesan offices and agencies. The goal of this certification process, in conjunction with other opportunities for continuous improvement, is to foster the total formation of the coordinator of youth ministry. The objectives of this process are based upon the National Competencies for Lay Ecclesial Youth Ministers, developed by the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (with the National Conference for Catechetical Leadership and National Association for Lay Ministry) and approved by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Commission on Certification and Accreditation.

The certification of lay ecclesial youth ministers yields many compelling benefits, including providing coordinators of youth ministry with a meaningful credential. While this process is designed for parish coordinators of youth ministry and high school campus ministers, the process would also be beneficial for DREs/CREs, youth ministry team members, pastoral ministers and others who work with adolescents in the Catholic Diocese of Columbus.

No one certification process or diocesan office could ever effectively address all of the competencies identified for lay ecclesial youth ministers. While the handbook outlines the courses and procedures developed by the OY&YAM, this certification process and the individuals seeking this certification have benefited greatly from the work of our collaborative partners in the Department of Religious Education and the Ministry Formation Office.

II. REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTIFICATION

Individuals apply for Diocesan Certification for Lay Ecclesial Youth Ministers with the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry. Certification is granted based on the following requirements:

1. Completion of Advanced Catechist Certification (Department of Religious Education) or a bachelor's degree in theology, youth ministry or a related field.
2. Completion of Component 1 (Ministry Formation Office) or 5 years experience in full-time ministry in the Diocese of Columbus.
3. Completion of Youth Ministry Studies Program (see appendix A) or demonstrate equivalent competency in a ministry portfolio (see appendix B.)
4. Possession of a minimum of 3 years experience in Catholic Youth Ministry.
5. Compliance with diocesan policies and guidelines regarding criminal background checks, code of conduct, and child sexual abuse prevention.

III. RENEWAL OF CERTIFICATION

Certification must be renewed by obtaining a minimum of 10 hours CEC (Continuing Education Credit) every two years. CEC hours may be earned by attending diocesan, regional, and national workshops, inservices, and conventions that focus on Catholic Youth Ministry. Throughout the year, the OY&YAM offers workshops on topics such as volunteer recruitment, service-learning opportunities, retreats, and more. In order to receive a renewal certificate, individuals must submit evidence of participation to the OY&YAM. There is no fee for renewal.

IV. "GRANDPARENTING"

Certain persons may apply for certification based on years of service in Catholic youth ministry. To qualify for this, a person must:

1. Possess 10 years experience in Catholic Youth Ministry, at least 8 of which must be in full-time employment. A minimum of two professional references must be included.
2. Demonstrate evidence of 30-clock-hours of previous education and training related to Youth Ministry.
3. Possess Advanced Catechist Certification or its equivalent.
4. Demonstrate compliance with diocesan policies and guidelines regarding criminal background checks and child sexual abuse prevention.

Individuals granted certification in this way are subject to the above certification renewal process.

This grandparenting process will be phased out on June 30, 2006.

V. APPLYING FOR CERTIFICATION

An individual applies for certification by submitting:

1. A complete application form and \$10 certification fee.
2. Evidence that all requirements have been fulfilled.
3. A copy of their valid baptismal certificate and a reference from the applicant's pastor regarding the applicant's participation in the life of his/her parish.

Materials submitted will be reviewed by the Diocesan Catholic Youth Ministry Advisory Commission. If a ministry portfolio is used, the applicant will be interviewed by the Commission. The Commission will make a recommendation to the diocesan director of youth and young adult ministry regarding certification for each applicant. Applications and other materials must be received 30-days prior to the Commission meeting in order to be reviewed by the Commission.

Certification will be granted three times per year, ordinarily within 30-days after commission meetings. Certification is granted for a period of two-years and must be renewed biannually.

VI. FINAL DECISION-MAKING

Final decision-making for granting certification rests with the diocesan director of youth and young adult ministry.

VII. GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS PROCESS

A grievance is defined as "an alleged violation of ethical and/or professional conduct affording reason for a complaint." If an individual applying for certification feels such a violation has taken place, they may appeal the decision of the diocesan director of youth and young adult ministry to the vicar for education. Such appeals must be made in writing and submitted to the vicar for education within 60-days of the grievance.

VIII. COURSES OF THE YOUTH MINISTRY STUDIES PROGRAM

The Youth Ministry Studies Program consists of twelve courses. Each course is 3-clock-hours in length. Courses will be offered regularly by the OY&YAM, ordinarily within a period of 2-years. There is a \$20 registration fee for each course. For specific course objectives, see Appendix A.

Course 1: What is Catholic Youth Ministry?
Course 2: The Lay Ecclesial Youth Minister
Course 3: Professional Practices of the Lay Ecclesial Youth Minister
Course 4: Adolescent Development and Youth Culture
Course 5: Adolescent Catechesis
Course 6: Creating Community

Course 7: Evangelization and Youth Ministry
Course 8: Pastoral Care of Adolescents
Course 9: Prayer and Worship with Teens
Course 10: Advocating for and with Youth
Course 11: Leadership Development for Youth and Adult Leaders
Course 12: Promoting Justice and Service

APPENDIX A COURSE OBJECTIVES

Course 1: What is Catholic Youth Ministry?

1. Describe the history, vision, goals, themes, and components of Catholic youth ministry as outlined in the U. S. Bishop's pastoral plan and related church documents.
2. Identify theories, models, processes and methods of Catholic youth ministry.
3. Recognize ways to collaborate with the faith community in implementing the components of Catholic youth ministry.

Course 2: The Lay Ecclesial Youth Minister

1. Identify personal gifts and challenges through self-reflection.
2. Create ministerial goals integrated with Gospel values.
3. Describe one's ministerial vocation as coming from God and confirmed by the ecclesial community.
4. Recognize Jesus as the model of ecclesial ministry, collaboration, and leadership.
5. Identify the steps needed to maintain a support system for his/her ministry.
6. Recognize responsible boundaries that balance ministry, community, family, and personal and pastoral relationships.

Course 3: Professional Practices of the Lay Ecclesial Youth Minister

1. Describe the leadership skills needed in youth ministry, including visioning, planning, communication, decision-making, delegation, and conflict management.
2. Identify best practices in the organization and administration of ministry programs. Understand how to conduct himself/herself in a manner consistent with the professional code of ethics and the provisions of civil and Church law.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of diocesan personnel, policies, programs, systems, and structures.

Course 4: Adolescent Development and Youth Culture

1. Identify the stages of adolescent biological, cognitive, and spiritual development.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of adolescent developmental needs within the contexts of youth and popular cultures.
3. Understand and appreciate the gifts of the diverse cultures in which youth participate, and what these cultures bring to the faith community.
4. Recognize the family perspective of youth ministry and greater understanding of the diversity of family structures in ministry.

Course 5: Adolescent Catechesis

1. Identify the principles and processes of faith formation as outlined in the *General Directory for Catechesis*, and other national and universal Church documents.
2. Utilize the diocesan Religion Graded Course of Study in a comprehensive youth ministry.
3. Recognize the need to provide developmentally appropriate content and processes around key themes of the Catholic faith that are responsive to the age-appropriate needs, interests, and concerns of adolescents.
4. Describe various learning methods, programs, and activities through which adolescents can explore and learn important religious concepts of the Scriptures and Catholic faith.
5. Identify ways to connect the life experience of adolescents, fostering a shared dialogue between the life of the adolescent—with its joys, struggles, questions, concerns, and hopes—and the wisdom of the Catholic faith.

Course 6: Creating Community

1. Describe ways to create an environment characterized by gospel values that nurtures meaningful relationships among young people and between adolescents and adults.
2. Identify friendship-making and friendship-maintaining skills that are grounded in Christian values.
3. Identify the process of helping adolescents develop a healthy and Christian perspective of the joys, pains, and responsibility of relationships.
4. Recognize the need for adolescents to be involved in the life, activities, and ministries of the parish in meaningful and age-appropriate ways.

Course 7: Evangelization and Youth Ministry

1. Identify the principles and processes of evangelization as outlined in the *General Directory for Catechesis*, and other national and universal Church documents.
2. Identify ways to proclaim Jesus Christ and the Good News so that young people will come to see in Jesus and his message a response to their hungers and a way to live.
3. Describe ways to reach out to young people by meeting them in their various life situations.
4. Recognize ways that young people can be evangelizers of other young people, their families, and the community.

Course 8: Pastoral Care of Adolescents

1. Recognize ways to nurture growth toward wholeness, provide guidance in decision making and challenge obstacles to the positive development of young people.
2. Identify ways to develop the life skills of adolescents, such as relationship building, assertiveness, nonviolent conflict resolution, decision making, and planning.
3. Describe ways to guide young people in making important life decisions, such as career and college choices, and discerning their particular Christian vocation.
4. Explain the spiritual development of young people and the healthy integration of their sexuality and spirituality.
5. Recognize the signs of need for professional help in an individual and offering resources/referral for assistance.

Course 9: Prayer and Worship with Teens

1. Describe ways to promote the authentic participation of youth in liturgy.
2. Explain the challenges of preparing youth for liturgy and preparing the liturgy well.
3. Identify opportunities for creative prayer with adolescents in peer, family, and intergenerational settings.
4. Explain the need to provide adolescents with effective and intentional catechesis for liturgy, worship, and sacraments.
5. Recognize ways to advocate for youth involvement in liturgical ministries.

Course 10: Advocating for and with Youth

1. Recognize the sanctity of human life as a gift from God and the need to build societal respect for those who most need protection and support—the unborn, the poor, the disadvantaged, the sick, and the elderly.
2. Identify ways of standing with and speaking on behalf of young people and their families on public issues that affect their lives.
3. Describe ways to empower young people by giving them a voice and calling them to responsibility and accountability around the issues that affect them and their future.
4. Describe ways to help the voices and needs of young people be honored and heard in the Church.

Course 11: Leadership Development for Youth and Adult Leaders

1. Identify ways to utilize adult and adolescent leaders in a variety of leadership roles necessary for comprehensive ministry.
2. Describe leadership systems that invite, train, support, and nourish adult and adolescent leaders.
3. Recognize the need to develop and nurture adult leaders with solid theological understandings, relational and ministry skills, and organizational ability appropriate to their particular role in ministry with adolescents.
4. Describe ways to empower all young people for leadership and ministry with their peers.

Course 12: Promoting Justice and Service

1. Describe ways to engage young people in discovering the call to justice and service in the Scriptures, in the life of Jesus, and in Catholic social teaching.
2. Identify ways to involve adolescents, their families, and parish communities in actions of direct service to those in need and in efforts to address the causes of injustice and inequity.
3. Recognize ways to develop the assets, skills, and faith of young people by promoting gospel values in their lifestyles and choices.
4. Describe the need to nurture a lifelong commitment to service and justice involvement.

APPENDIX B MINISTRY PORTFOLIOS

Ministry portfolios should be assembled as follows:

Gather materials in a three ring binder

Organize material in the following order

Include Cover Sheet with Table of Contents

Section A. Personal/Spiritual Maturity and Identity

1. Formation for Ministry
2. Philosophy/Theology of Ministry

Section B. Roman Catholic Theology

1. Theology Workshops/Training

Section C. Pastoral and Professional Practices

1. Evaluations/Supervisory Reports
2. Letters of Reference and Observations
3. Youth Ministry Trainings
4. Projects
5. Program Materials
6. Videos

Section D. Other

Explanation

Section A.1. Formation for Ministry: Include here records and descriptions of various formation programs/processes, including retreats, spiritual direction, pastoral supervision, mentoring or other formation opportunities.

Section A.2. Philosophy/Theology of Ministry: A statement (minimum 3-5 pages, double-spaced) of the applicant's philosophy/theology of youth ministry. This statement should address the following: What are the theological foundations of youth ministry? What are its purposes and goals? Explain the personal significance this theology has for you in terms of your call to ministry and your personal vision of youth ministry.

Section B.1. Theology Workshops/Training: Include descriptions of all relevant workshops and training opportunities. (Catechist Certification or transcripts should be included.)

Section C.1. Evaluations/Supervisory Reports: If one's ministry is formally evaluated by a supervisor, included copies of those evaluations here.

Section C.2. Letters of References and Observances: Applicants will provide a minimum of three letters of reference, one of which must be submitted by a priest of the diocese who had direct contact with the applicant with his/her youth ministry efforts. Other letters should be written by individuals who have either an expertise in youth ministry or an opportunity to observe the applicant in action.

Section C.3. Youth Ministry Trainings: Include descriptions of all relevant workshops and training opportunities. Include dates for workshops provided by the OY&YAM. For workshops sponsored by other departments, include the date(s) of the program(s) and summaries of content.

Section C.4. Projects: Include project reports for projects relevant to youth ministry.

Section C.5. Program Materials: Include representative materials from youth ministry programs or events for which one was directly responsible. Such materials might include publicity flyers, event outlines, and summaries of program evaluations.

Section C.6. Videos: Applicants may also include any videos that help demonstrate competence in some area of youth ministry.

Section D. Other: Use this category for any material that does not belong in one of the other categories but still helps to demonstrate your competence in some area of ministry.

Submission

Ministry portfolios must be submitted, along with the application and fee for certification, 30-days prior to the Youth Ministry Advisory Commission meeting in order for the candidate to be interviewed at the meeting. Portfolios will be returned to the applicant when: 1.) Certification is granted or 2.) the portfolio is determined to be insufficient in demonstrating competence and is in need of revision.

APPENDIX C
CATECHIST CERTIFICATION AND COMPONENT 1

Catechist Certification

Catechist Certification is granted through the diocesan Department of Religious Education. Courses are designed to train parish and school personnel in facilitating life-long faith formation. Courses are offered every summer by the Department of Religious Education and throughout the year by parishes and schools using both traditional courses and alternative methods. For more information on the requirements of this program, please contact the religious education consultant assigned to your geographic vicariate.

Department of Religious Education

197 East Gay Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215-3229
(614) 221-4633
www.cdeducation.org/dre

Component 1

Component 1 is a program offered through the diocesan Ministry Formation Office. The five sessions of Component 1 are designed to help form lay ecclesial ministers for service within the Diocese of Columbus. Sessions are offered every spring by the Ministry Formation Office and are generally held at the Pontifical College Josephinum and the Catholic Center in downtown Columbus. Prior permission from your pastor is required in order to participate in this program. For more information on this program, please contact the Ministry Formation Office.

Ministry Formation Office

197 East Gay Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215-3229
(614) 241-2544
www.colsdioc.org (“offices”)

**APPENDIX D
APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION**

I. PERSONAL INFORMATION

Full Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip Code: _____

Daytime Telephone: _____

Evening Telephone: _____

E-mail: _____

II. EMPLOYMENT HISTORY/EXPERIENCE (Only list positions/experience in Catholic youth ministry or other related ministries within the last five years. List in order, beginning with your current/most recent position.)

Parish/School: _____ City: _____

Position Title: _____

Position Status: Full-Time Part-Time Volunteer

Name of Supervisor: _____

How long have you been/were you in this position? _____

Parish/School: _____ City: _____

Position Title: _____

Position Status: Full-Time Part-Time Volunteer

Name of Supervisor: _____

How long were you in this position? _____

Parish/School: _____ City: _____

Position Title: _____

Position Status: Full-Time Part-Time Volunteer

Name of Supervisor: _____

How long were you in this position? _____

Parish/School: _____ City: _____

Position Title: _____

Position Status: Full-Time Part-Time Volunteer

Name of Supervisor: _____

How long were you in this position? _____

III. DEMONSTRATION OF COMPETENCE/COMPLETION OF COURSEWORK

- 1A. Advanced Catechist Certification **or** 1B. Degree in Theology/Related Field
Date Conferred: _____
Date Conferred: _____
School: _____
Degree: _____
Major: _____
- 2A. Ministry Formation Component 1 **or** 2B. 5-years of full-time ministry in the
Date Completed: _____
Diocese of Columbus (see part II.)
- 3A. Youth Ministry Studies Program **or** 3B. Ministry Portfolio
Date Completed: _____
4. Protecting God's Children Training Date Completed: _____

IV. DOCUMENTATION AND MATERIALS THAT MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THIS COMPLETED FORM

- Copy of Advanced Catechist Certification certificate or original college/university transcript
- Copy of certificate showing completion of Component 1 (if needed)
- Copy of record showing completion of YMSP or a Ministry Portfolio
- Verification of attendance at Protecting God's Children Program
- Copy of the Code of Conduct signed by the applicant
- Copy of the most recent BCI&I criminal background check
- Copy of a valid Baptismal Certificate
- Reference from pastor of the parish the applicant is registered at
- \$10 Application Fee (Payable to OY&YAM)

V. VERIFICATION OF AUTHENTICITY

I attest that the information enclosed is complete and truthful to the best of my knowledge.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Return to: Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry, 197 E. Gay St., Columbus, OH 43215

APPENDIX E
APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION “GRANPARENTING”

I. PERSONAL INFORMATION

Full Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip Code: _____

Daytime Telephone: _____

Evening Telephone: _____

E-mail: _____

II. EMPLOYMENT HISTORY/EXPERIENCE (Only list positions/experience in Catholic youth ministry or other related ministries within the last 10 years. At least 8-years must be in full-time employment. List in order, beginning with your current/most recent position.)

Parish/School: _____ City: _____

Position Title: _____

Position Status: Full-Time Part-Time Volunteer

Name of Supervisor: _____

How long have you been/were you in this position? _____

Parish/School: _____ City: _____

Position Title: _____

Position Status: Full-Time Part-Time Volunteer

Name of Supervisor: _____

How long were you in this position? _____

Parish/School: _____ City: _____

Position Title: _____

Position Status: Full-Time Part-Time Volunteer

Name of Supervisor: _____

How long were you in this position? _____

Parish/School: _____ City: _____

Position Title: _____

Position Status: Full-Time Part-Time Volunteer

Name of Supervisor: _____

How long were you in this position? _____

III. DEMONSTRATION OF COMPETENCE/COMPLETION OF COURSEWORK

1A. Advanced Catechist Certification **or** 1B. Degree in Theology/Related Field
Date Conferred: _____
Date Conferred: _____
School: _____
Degree: _____
Major: _____

2. Previous Education/Training Related to Youth Ministry (30-Clock-Hours needed. Please include: name of activity, sponsoring organization, date, clock-hours, and topic/theme. Certificates of completion or attendance should also be included.)

3. Protecting God’s Children Training Date Completed: _____

IV. DOCUMENTATION AND MATERIALS THAT MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THIS COMPLETED FORM

- Copy of Advanced Catechist Certification certificate or original college/university transcript
- Copy of certificates of completion/attendance for workshops, trainings, etc.
- Verification of attendance at Protecting God’s Children Program
- Copy of the Code of Conduct signed by the applicant
- Copy of the most recent BCI&I criminal background check
- Copy of a valid Baptismal Certificate
- Reference from pastor of the parish the applicant is registered at
- Two professional references
- \$10 Application Fee (Payable to OY&YAM)

V. VERIFICATION OF AUTHENTICITY

I attest that the information enclosed is complete and truthful to the best of my knowledge.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX D
APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION RENEWAL

I. PERSONAL INFORMATION

Full Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip Code: _____

Daytime Telephone: _____

Evening Telephone: _____

E-mail: _____

Date of Youth Ministry Certification: _____

II. DOCUMENTATION OF CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDIT (10-Clock-Hours needed in an area related to Catholic Youth Ministry. Please include: name of activity, sponsoring organization, date, clock-hours, and topic/theme. Certificates of completion or attendance should also be included.)

V. VERIFICATION OF AUTHENTICITY

I attest that the information enclosed is complete and truthful to the best of my knowledge.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Return to: Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry, 197 E. Gay St., Columbus, OH 43215