

A.3: Reference Form Packet

Requesting References to Apply For MCEA Certification

DIRECTIONS for the Lay Ecclesial Minister Seeking Certification

- Please make three or four copies of the Reference Form packet
 - Directions for Completing the MCEA Reference Form
 - Overview of MCEA Certification
 - 3-page Reference Form
- On each copy of the reference forms, fill in your name and the certification category and specialization for which you are applying.
- *Give one copy of the form to each of the persons who have supervised or served with you in leadership roles at your current or previous parishes.* At least one person must be a member of the clergy from the current diocese you serve within, preferably the pastor of the parish in which you serve. One reference must also be from the pastor or canonical administrator of the parish where you are currently an active member, i.e. the parish you call 'home.' If you are a member of the same parish as the one you serve the pastor of that parish only needs to fill out one set of reference forms.
- *Ask each person to complete the form and return it directly to the address below.*
- If you have any questions about the reference or application process, please contact the diocesan staff person listed below.

Thank you.

ADDRESS TO SEND COMPLETED FORMS

Brian Pizzalato
MCEA Certification Reference
2830 E. 4th St.
Duluth, MN 55812

DIOCESAN CONTACT

Diocesan Staff Person: Brian Pizzalato
Telephone number: (218) 724-9111
Email address: bpizzalato@dioceseduluth.org

Directions for Completing the MCEA Certification Reference Form

You have been asked to provide an honest reference regarding whether the Lay Ecclesial Minister is appropriate and ready in your opinion to become a candidate for certification within the State of Minnesota. An overview of Minnesota Catholic Education Association (MCEA) certification accompanies these directions for your information.

It is important that you ***complete all parts of this form and mail it directly to the address below.*** This reference is confidential. If you have any questions about completing the form, please contact the diocesan staff person indicated below. Thank you.

LAYOUT OF THE FORM

The MCEA State Certification process for Lay Ecclesial Ministers serving as catechetical leaders or youth ministry leaders utilizes the *National Certification Standards for Lay Ecclesial Ministers* approved by the USCCB Commission on Certification and Accreditation as the basis for evaluating competence and granting certification. The five certification standards are listed in a grid format on the following pages.

RATING SCALE EXPLANATION

Please use the 4-point scale described below to rate the Lay Ecclesial Minister's current competence level on each of the five standards. Please add any comments following each standard that might help to explain your rating.

- NA I have had no opportunity to observe this behavior or skill; or it was not applicable to the lay ecclesial minister's role or job. (not applicable)
- 1 I have actually seen the opposite behavior or skill in the lay ecclesial minister in situations where I believe it was appropriate or necessary indicating the need for significant improvement in this area (an extremely poor rating).
- 2 I have seen the behavior or skill sometimes in situations where I believe it was appropriate or necessary indicating that the lay ecclesial minister could benefit from development in this area (average rating).
- 3 I have seen the behavior or skill consistently (most of the time or always) in situations where I believe it was appropriate or necessary indicating a demonstration of competence and effectiveness by the lay ecclesial minister (excellent rating).
- 4 Regarding this behavior or skill the lay ecclesial minister is a role model for others or has taught this skill or behavior (exemplary rating).

Overview of MCEA Certification

What does it mean to be certified by a diocese through the joint certification process sponsored by the dioceses in the state of Minnesota?

A lay ecclesial minister serving as either a catechetical leader or youth ministry leader who has received certification has documented his or her attainment of a specified level of competence, ability, training, and/or preparation for his or her particular ministry. The individual's competence has been evaluated, measured, and/or judged, relative to the established national certification standards and competencies for lay ecclesial ministers, through a peer review process. These national standards cover broad areas of ministerial competence, authoritatively identified by national professional ministry organizations as the norm by which an individual's ministerial competence is assessed.

In light of the fact that lay ecclesial ministers in Minnesota have completed various types of ministry education and formation, three categories related to the type of education received in preparing for ministry have been created. Each category of certification represents compliance with the five national standards and their competencies. However, the category denotes the type and level of education received by the Lay Ecclesial Minister (LEM). The three categories of certification and their explanations follow. The applicants for the first pilot group in the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis will be drawn from those who meet the requirements for Categories II and III.

What are the requirements for the various Certification Categories?

Category I: Practitioner Certification

The lay ecclesial minister has demonstrated competence in all of the five core standards and common competencies and in the corresponding specialized competencies for the specialization as a youth ministry leader or catechetical leader through participation in a ministry formation program sponsored by a diocese, independent organization, or institution of higher education.

Category II: Professional Certification

The lay ecclesial minister has demonstrated competence in all of the five core standards and common competencies and in the corresponding specialized competencies for specialization as a youth ministry leader or catechetical leader, through the attainment of a bachelor of arts or bachelor of science degree from an accredited college or university in a related field or the equivalency.

Category III: Master Certification

The lay ecclesial minister has demonstrated competence in all of the five core standards and common competencies and in the corresponding specialized competencies for the specialization as a youth ministry leader or catechetical leader, through the attainment of an advanced degree (master's level or higher) from an accredited college or university in a related field or the equivalency.

What are the standards and competencies used in the MCEA certification process?

The common standards and specialized competencies for leaders in catechetical or youth ministry referenced in the certification process are those outlined in the *National Certification Standards for Lay Ecclesial Ministers*. These standards were approved by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Commission on Certification and Accreditation in 2003.

What does "Specialization as a Youth Ministry Leader or Catechetical Leader" mean?

Lay ecclesial ministers receiving certification in one of the six arch/dioceses in Minnesota can be certified in the ministry specialization of either youth ministry or catechesis by demonstrating competence in the national specialized competencies for youth ministry leaders or parish catechetical leaders. Persons demonstrating competence in both areas of specialization will receive dual certification.

MCEA Certification Reference Form
Please Print

Name of Lay Ecclesial Minister (LEM) Seeking Certification: _____

The Lay Ecclesial Minister is applying for the following category of certification:

- Practitioner**
- Professional**
- Masters**

With a specialization as a:

- Youth Ministry Leader**
- Catechetical Leader**
- Both**

Name of Person Providing Reference: _____

Name of Parish, City: _____

Current Position or Job Title: _____

Phone number: _____

Relationship with the Lay Ecclesial Minister (*Check one*):

- Current Pastor where applicant is a member
- Current Associate Pastor where applicant is a member
- Current Pastor/Canonical Administrator at parish applicant serves in ministry
- Current Associate Pastor at parish applicant serves in ministry
- Previous Pastor
- Previous Associate Pastor
- Peer of LEM from current parish
- Peer of LEM from another parish
- Parish Leader from current parish
- Parish Leader from previous parish
- Parish Director/Parish Administrator from current parish
- Parish Director/Parish Administrator from previous parish
- Other: _____

How many years have you known the LEM? _____

How many years have you worked with her/him in a ministry context? _____

Competency Ratings for (LEM name) _____

Rating Scale Reminder

The five certification standards outlined in the *National Certification Standards for Lay Ecclesial Ministers* are listed in a grid format on the following pages. Please use the rating scale described in the directions to rate the Lay Ecclesial Minister's current competence level on each of the five standards. Please add any comments following each standard that might help to explain your rating.

NA = not applicable 1 = extremely poor rating 2 = average rating 3 = excellent rating 4 = exemplary rating

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| <p>Certification Standard One</p> <p>Personal and Spiritual Maturity: A lay ecclesial minister demonstrates personal and spiritual maturity in ministry with the people of God.</p> | <p>NA 1 2 3 4</p> |
| <p>Comments:</p> | |
| <p>Certification Standard Two</p> <p>Lay Ecclesial Ministry Identity: A lay ecclesial minister identifies the call to formal and public ministry as a vocation rooted in baptism.</p> | <p>NA 1 2 3 4</p> |
| <p>Comments:</p> | |
| <p>Certification Standard Three</p> <p>Roman Catholic Theology: A lay ecclesial minister integrates knowledge of Roman Catholic faith within ministry.</p> | <p>NA 1 2 3 4</p> |
| <p>Comments:</p> | |

