



NOTRE DAME SEMINARY
INSTITUTE FOR LAY ECCLESIAL MINISTRY
&
MASTER OF ARTS IN PASTORAL LEADERSHIP
HANDBOOK

2025 – 2026

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A Message from Archbishop Aymond

“Moses said, ‘Are you jealous for my sake? If only all the people of the Lord were prophets! If only the Lord would bestow his spirit on them all!’” (Numbers 11:29)

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

In this verse from the Book of Numbers, we discover the divinely inspired desire of Moses that not only the elders of Israel, but all God’s people, find a calling from God to give witness through the gift of his Spirit. It could be said that this desire has found its fulfillment in the Church of our day and age. We began this lay leadership program commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council. In the years since the conclusion of the Second Vatican Council, the Church has seen a rapid growth, unprecedented in modern times, of lay involvement in ecclesial ministry and spiritual leadership. As the Council envisioned, lay people now serve in capacities that touch every aspect of the Church’s life – in parishes, in schools and in diocesan offices, in catechesis, youth ministry, evangelization, and Christian formation.

Christian ministers are those who communicate the faith through their human personality as a bridge, through a personal witness of faith rooted in a deep spiritual life, and through a thorough knowledge of the Christian faith. In the case of candidates for priesthood, this involves a six to eight-year process of discernment, formation, and education; in the case of candidates for the diaconate, four years; in the case of consecrated men and women, often much longer. And yet this surge in lay leadership in our Archdiocese, the fruit of two generations of lay men and women saying “yes” to the call of the Lord, had not been supported by any special program integrating human, spiritual, pastoral and intellectual formation that corresponds to the role of the laity in ecclesial ministry until the *Institute for Lay Ecclesial Ministry* of Notre Dame Seminary was formed in 2013. Through this program, individuals of exemplary Christian commitment and character who have answered the call to lay ministry now have the opportunity to participate in human, spiritual, and pastoral formation necessary for their ministry.

The *Institute for Lay Ecclesial Ministry*, in conjunction with Notre Dame Seminary, offers a full-fledged formation program for lay ecclesial ministers in the Archdiocese of New Orleans. Through this two-year program, lay men and women serving or preparing to serve in key positions of leadership will have an opportunity to discern the call of the Lord and to be formed for His service through prayer, spiritual direction, theological study, and pastoral training. After successful completion of the entire program, I will personally call and commission these women and men for their respective roles in the Church.

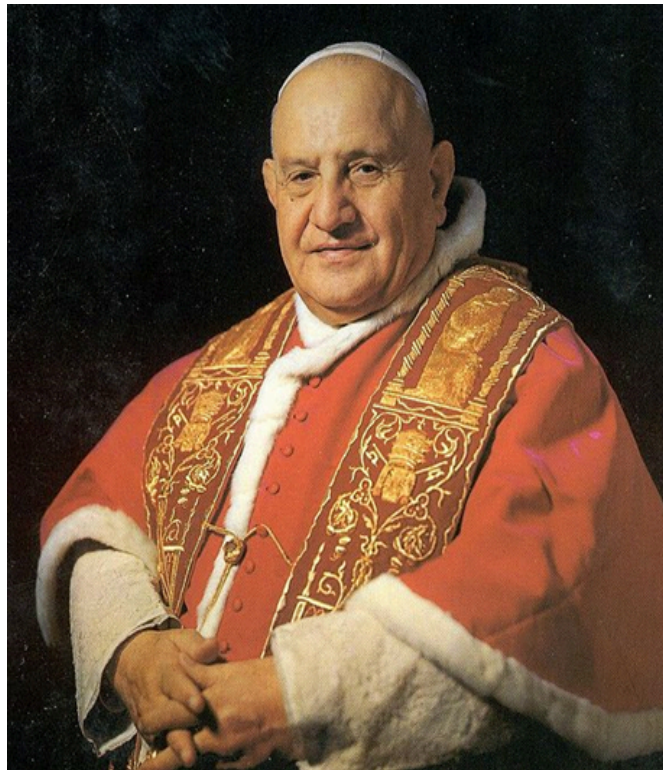
“If only all the people of the Lord were prophets!” As we continue our journey into the third Christian millennium as a Church, may this Institute help to continue to fulfill these words of Sacred Scripture. Placing this Institute under the patronage of Saint John XXIII, may God’s blessings be upon all those who minister in the name of Jesus.

Wishing you God’s blessings, I am

Sincerely in Christ,



Most Reverend Gregory M. Aymond
Archbishop of New Orleans



Almighty God! In Thee we place all our confidence, not trusting in our own strength. Look down benignly upon Thy Church. May the light of Thy supernatural grace aid us in making decisions. Graciously hear the prayers which we pour forth to Thee in unanimity of faith, of voice, and of mind.

O Mary, Help of Christians, dispose all things for a happy outcome to our requests and, with thy spouse, St. Joseph, the holy Apostles Peter and Paul St. John the Baptist and St. John the Evangelist, intercede for us to God.

To Jesus Christ, our most amiable Redeemer, immortal King of peoples and of times, be love, power, and glory forever and ever.

Based on Pope Saint John XXIII's Opening Speech for the Council of Vatican II

Lay Ministry Programs Coordinating Team's Message


"Speak, Lord, your servant is listening." (1 Samuel 3:10)

Notre Dame Seminary offers a number of programs for lay students. The *Institute for Lay Ecclesial Ministry* (ILEM), established by Archbishop Gregory Aymond, is a program of formation designed to assist lay candidates in discerning their ecclesial vocation and to offer a holistic approach to formation that includes the pastoral, spiritual, human, and intellectual dimensions of ministry. This program is designed to assist the Archdiocese of New Orleans and the surrounding areas in forming qualified laypersons capable of exemplary service in Christian leadership. God's people deserve lay leaders who have discerned his call and are well prepared to carry out the mission of Christ and his Church. Notre Dame Seminary also offers a *Master of Arts in Pastoral Leadership* degree for those seeking to obtain more extensive academic and ministerial formation beyond that which is offered through ILEM.

At the beginning of the 3rd millennium, the development of a more systematic and holistic approach to lay ecclesial ministry formation is a crucial movement for the Church in the United States. Since the opening of the Second Vatican Council, the Church has come to a new appreciation of the importance of lay involvement in the Church and has recognized the laity's thirst for a vibrant community of faith, a solid program of formation, and a new clarity of mission to bring the Gospel into the heart of the world. The Church has also come to appreciate the importance of having well-formed lay leaders within our many Catholic institutions, including parishes, schools, hospitals, and charitable agencies.

It is our prayerful hope that our lay programs will offer to all who choose to participate a vigorous, practical, and faith-filled program of formation to better equip lay ministers to serve Jesus and his Church.

In Christ,



Daniel Burns, Ph.D.

*Director of Lay Ministry Programs and Lay Formation
Professor of Dogmatic Theology*

"The laity can also feel called, or in fact be called, to cooperate with their pastors in the service of the ecclesial community, for the sake of its growth and life. This can be done through the exercise of different kinds of ministries according to the grace and charisms which the Lord has been pleased to bestow on them."

(Paul VI, On Evangelization in the Modern World (*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, no. 73))

Lay Ecclesial Ministry in the Archdiocese of New Orleans

Introduction

From the earliest centuries of Christianity, the formation of ministers for the local Church, both those in Holy Orders and laity, have been the responsibility of the bishop. It is the bishop who is the focal point of unity and apostolic activity within his diocese; consequently, any and all ministerial activity remains not only his right but also his responsibility. Often this duty was accomplished by bishops through the formation of priests in seminaries and in promoting the flourishing of religious orders of men and women, but throughout Church history, the laity have been key to the life of the Church.

The Second Vatican Council reaffirmed the necessity of the laity's participation in the Church's mission of making disciples of all nations. In and through their baptism, the laity are called to holiness and discipleship. *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, the Vatican II decree on the apostolate of the laity, recognized that laypeople need proper formation. The formal involvement of the laity in the life of the Church was given renewed impetus during Pope Saint John Paul II's papacy and subsequent popes.

From Vatican II to *Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord*

In 2005, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) published [*Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord*](#). This document recognizes that laypeople deserve formation to help them fulfill their call to discipleship, especially those who are serving in Church ministry.

All of the baptized are called to work toward the transformation of the world. Most do this by working in the secular realm; some do this by working in the Church and focusing on the building of ecclesial communion, which has among its purposes the transformation of the world. Working in the Church is a path of Christian discipleship to be encouraged by the hierarchy. The possibility that lay persons undertake Church ministries can be grounded in Scripture and the teachings of the Church, from St. Paul to the Second Vatican Council, and in more recent documents. "Sharing in the function of Christ, priest, prophet and king, the laity have an active part of their own in the life and activity of the Church. Their activity within the Church communities is so necessary that without it the apostolate of the pastors will frequently be unable to obtain its full effect."

Today in parishes, schools, Church institutions, and diocesan agencies, laity serve in various "ministries, offices and roles" that do not require sacramental ordination but rather "find their foundation in the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation, indeed, for a good many of them, in the Sacrament of Matrimony." What Pope Paul VI said of the laity thirty years ago—and what the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* specifically repeats—has now become an important, welcomed reality throughout our dioceses: "The laity can also feel called, or in fact be called, to cooperate with their pastors in the service of the ecclesial community, for the sake of its growth and life. This can be done through

the exercise of different kinds of ministries according to the grace and charisms which the Lord has been pleased to bestow on them.”¹

Lay Ecclesial Ministry

Magisterial documents tell us that the laity share in the mission of the Church through their baptism and confirmation (LG 31, 33; AA 2, 3; CFL 23) and that some of the laity are called and gifted to serve in Church ministry. These ministers are encouraged to receive special formation and are formally recognized as lay ecclesial ministers. Just as a bishop fosters and guides his ordained priests, so also the bishop fosters and guides his lay ecclesial ministers, testing all things and holding fast to what is good (1 Thes 5).

“Lay ecclesial ministry is a calling that is guided by the Holy Spirit, as are all callings in which Christians are led by the Holy Spirit to participate in the growth of the Body of Christ and the building up of the Kingdom of God.” The development of lay ecclesial ministers complements the ministry of priests and strengthens the Church’s ability to make disciples of all nations. The Church flourishes when both the basic equality of persons and the real distinctions between ordained and lay members of Christ’s faithful are recognized and respected. Because lay ecclesial ministers serve in the name of the Church, the *Institute for Lay Ecclesial Ministry* recognizes that they should be “authorized” or “commissioned” by the bishop of the local Church:

Authorization is the process by which properly prepared lay men and women are given responsibilities for ecclesial ministry by competent Church authority. This process includes the following elements: acknowledgment of the competence of an individual for a specific ministerial role (often called “certification”); appointment of an individual to a specific position (in some dioceses called “Commissioning”), along with a delineation of the obligations, responsibilities, and authority of that position (and length of term, if specified); and finally an announcement of the appointment to the community that will be served by the lay ecclesial minister.²

From Principles to Reality: Lay Ecclesial Ministry in the Archdiocese of New Orleans

In 2009, Gregory Michael Aymond became the 14th Archbishop of New Orleans and immediately began plans for developing the *Institute for Lay Ecclesial Ministry* (ILEM). His plan was to develop a comprehensive program of selecting, forming, and commissioning men and women as lay ecclesial ministers to serve in a wide variety of positions throughout the Archdiocese.

¹ *Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord*, 8-10. Cf. Second Vatican Council, *Decree on the Apostolate of the Lay People (Apostolicam Actuositatem)* (AA), no. 10; see also LG, no. 33, and Congregation for the Clergy et al., *Instruction on Certain Questions Regarding the Collaboration of the Non-Ordained Faithful in the Sacred Ministry of Priests (Ecclesiae de Mystero)* (Washington, DC: USCCB–Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1998), Foreword; Paul VI, *On Evangelization in the Modern World (Evangelii Nuntiandi)* (EN), no. 73, as quoted in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC), 2nd ed. (Washington, DC: USCCB–Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2000), no. 910. See also 1 Cor 12:11 and LG, no. 12.

² *Ibid.*, 54

Applicants for ILEM are those who currently serve in a ministry position or are being considered for a ministry position that would benefit from the service of a commissioned lay ecclesial minister. Applicants must receive approval from their pastor and, if applicable, their ministry supervisor.* Completion of the two-year formation program and all academic requirements would culminate in the granting of a certificate of completion and a formal commissioning by the Archbishop.

ILEM is closely linked to the formation and theological programs at Notre Dame Seminary, which provides a proper setting for fulfilling the ILEM requirements. One such program most closely aligned with ILEM is the *Master of Arts in Pastoral Leadership* (MAPL), which incorporates all of the requirements of ILEM but also offers the opportunity for additional coursework toward an accredited master's degree. See page 18 and following for a detailed description of MAPL.

See Appendix One.

“The unity of the Church is not uniformity, but an organic blending of legitimate diversities. It is the reality of many members joined in a single body, the one Body of Christ. Therefore the Church of the Third Millennium will need to encourage all the baptized and confirmed to be aware of their active responsibility in the Church’s life. Together with the ordained ministry, other ministries, whether formally instituted or simply recognized, can flourish for the good of the whole community, sustaining it in all its many needs: from catechesis to liturgy, from education of the young to the widest array of charitable works.”

-- Pope Saint John Paul II, At the Close of the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000 (*Novo Millennio Ineunte*)

*If the applicant’s ministry is such that he/she has a ministry supervisor other than their pastor (i.e., school principal, DRE, or program director), then the applicant must also be nominated by their ministry supervisor.

Notre Dame Seminary Mission Statement

The Lay Programs are congruent with the mission of Notre Dame Seminary:

From its establishment as a free-standing seminary in 1923 by the Archdiocese of New Orleans, Notre Dame Seminary has as its primary mission the formation of men for the ministerial priesthood in the Roman Catholic Church. The seminary, through an integrated and balanced program of priestly formation, seeks to prepare pastors for the Church who are configured to Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd. Additionally, in order to foster a broader outreach in service to the needs of the local Church, the seminary offers educational and formational opportunities to the lay faithful to prepare them for ecclesial leadership.

While primarily forming men to serve as priests in the southern region of the United States, Notre Dame Seminary participates in the missionary activity of the Church by promoting a spirit of mission among its candidates for priesthood and lay leadership and by assisting certain missionary dioceses in other areas of the world.

ILEM Mission Statement

ILEM offers human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral formation for laymen and laywomen to prepare them for lay ecclesial ministry. ILEM candidates participate in their formation by discerning their call to the ministry of serving God and His Church. Candidates will cultivate a Catholic understanding of lay ecclesial ministry, be formed in the life of Christian virtues, and deepen their grasp of the Catholic faith. Candidates who successfully complete ILEM will be commissioned by the Archbishop of New Orleans as lay ecclesial ministers.

Respect for Equality/Non-Discrimination Policy

Notre Dame Seminary adheres to the principle of equal educational and employment opportunities without regard to race, sex, color, creed, age, disability, or national origin. This policy extends to all programs and activities supported by the seminary, including hiring, training, promoting, salaries, transfers, and working conditions. In addition, Notre Dame Seminary conscientiously seeks to comply with all applicable legislation concerning nondiscrimination in employment practices and in the development of personnel. This pertains to the protection of faculty and student rights of privacy and access of information concerning accommodations for the handicapped. Bearing in mind that language reflects, reinforces, and creates social reality, the seminary expects class conversation and written work to employ language that respects the equal dignity and worth of all human beings. Notre Dame Seminary believes in the equality of all people and respects the dignity of people from all races, cultures, religions, and ideological preferences.

Admission Guidelines for ILEM

1. The applicant must have a nomination and recommendation from his/her pastor and/or ministry supervisor within the Archdiocese of New Orleans.

2. The applicant must prayerfully discern the call to lay ecclesial ministry. If married, applicants must be able to demonstrate that they are in a canonically valid marriage prior to application.
3. The applicant should complete and submit an ILEM application form to the Director or Associate Director, including a non-refundable \$40 Admission Fee, payable to Notre Dame Seminary.
4. All transcripts from colleges, universities, and seminaries attended must be sent by their Registrar(s) to Notre Dame Seminary's Registrar.
5. The applicant should prepare and submit all components of the application process to the Director or Associate Director.
6. A pre-admission interview will be scheduled with the Director, if necessary.

***Please note:** Acceptance into the ILEM commissioning process does not imply acceptance into any theological degree program. In a similar way, acceptance into the MAPL program does not imply acceptance into ILEM. Also, please note that ILEM commissioning does not guarantee that one will be given a permanent position in the Archdiocese of New Orleans as a lay ecclesial minister. All positions provided on behalf of the archdiocese are subject to normal interview and job procedures and policies.*

ILEM Goals

Inspired by the vision of lay ecclesial ministry found in *Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord*, ILEM, which is congruent with the mission of Notre Dame Seminary, seeks to fulfill the following goals:

- To provide a community of well-integrated, educated, and informed lay ecclesial ministers who are commissioned to assist the Archbishop, his fellow bishops, priests, and deacons as they shepherd God's people
- To provide a holistic formation, which includes retreats, workshops, formation days, a ministry practicum, and ongoing spiritual direction and mentoring, while drawing on the resources of Notre Dame Seminary as a place of academic and ministry formation
- To cultivate each cohort in an environment of faith where candidates can offer each other appropriate challenges and support
- To theologically educate and form laymen and laywomen to prepare them for lay ministry
- To promote the truth, beauty, and goodness of Catholicism

- To provide for those ILEM participants who are interested in the opportunity to take additional courses in order to receive a Master of Arts in Pastoral Leadership
- To provide the Archdiocese of New Orleans an active role in the preparation and formation of lay ecclesial ministers

ILEM promotes an intelligent and vibrant orthodoxy in harmony with the Magisterium of the Catholic Church. This program is administered by the Director of Lay Ministry Programs and Lay Formation under the guidance of the Archbishop of New Orleans and the Rector/President of Notre Dame Seminary.

ILEM Outcomes

ILEM is designed to produce the following outcomes:

- Upon completion of ILEM, those commissioned will be well-prepared to serve as competent leaders in an approved ecclesial ministry within the Archdiocese, utilizing the insights and experiences fostered through their active involvement in the four dimensions of formation as designed for lay ecclesial ministers.
- Those to be commissioned will have been immersed in a programmatic vision of formational integration to empower them with the resources they will need to integrate the four dimensions of formation into their various ministerial responsibilities.
- Through the interactive and integrated formation program, a healthy human, spiritual, pastoral, and intellectual community of support and fellowship will be intentionally fostered among the ILEM candidates.
- By participating in both the required and elective theology courses taught at Notre Dame Seminary Graduate School of Theology, those to be commissioned will be prepared to minister in service to the Archdiocese of New Orleans.
- By means of all of the program's formation components, a positive, broad, engaging, and persuasive understanding of the Catholic tradition will be cultivated.
- By successfully completing all aspects of the program, ILEM candidates will be able to obtain credits that can be used in pursuit of a Master of Arts in Pastoral Leadership degree at Notre Dame Seminary.
- To offer a formation program linked to the institutional structures of Notre Dame Seminary, under the supervision of the Seminary Rector/President and the Archbishop of New Orleans.

ILEM Core Curriculum

The academic curriculum is provided by the academic faculty of Notre Dame Seminary. However, required courses that are completed through another accredited Catholic university can be accepted, as defined by the NDS Transfer Policy and subject to the Director's approval.*

In order to fulfill all the requirements for ILEM, the following theology and formation courses must be completed before an ILEM candidate is commissioned:

Courses taken are:

- | | |
|---|----------------|
| ● PS 5301 Spiritual Formation | 2 credit hours |
| ● PS 5302 Human Formation | 2 credit hours |
| ● PS 5303 Intellectual Formation | 2 credit hours |
| ● PS 5304 Pastoral Formation | 2 credit hours |
| ● PS 5350 Practicum | 3 credit hours |
| ● SS 5301 Old Testament | 3 credit hours |
| ● SS 5302 New Testament | 3 credit hours |
| ● DT 5301 Profession of Faith I | 3 credit hours |
| ● MT 5301 Foundations of Moral Theology | 3 credit hours |

TOTAL

23 credit hours

Candidates must maintain a 2.0 GPA in academic courses during candidacy.

For those students who intend to pursue the Master of Arts in Pastoral Leadership degree, successful fulfillment of ILEM requirements is a necessary step in advancing toward candidacy in that program. All twenty-three credit hours earned during ILEM formation are used to fulfill particular course requirements for that degree.

*Exceptions and substitutions are determined on an individual basis and are subject to approval by the Director.

Please note: Acceptance into ILEM does not imply acceptance into any degree program.

ILEM Program Components

ILEM has a number of components that cover the human, intellectual, spiritual and pastoral dimensions of ministerial formation.

Intellectual Formation

Intellectual formation, which engages faith for greater understanding, is an essential foundation for lay ecclesial ministry. In particular, the intellectual task cannot be separated from spirituality. Intellectual formation is foundational, especially for ministries that contain a catechetical or leadership component.

In essence, the goal of intellectual formation is to assist the candidate in his or her development of faith and ministerial skills. The quest for a deeper and more integrated grasp of the faith will help foster a stronger sense of unity in mind and heart within the local Church. The six academic courses required by the program are the foundation for theological formation.

Pastoral Studies/Formation Courses

Each student and cohort will, over the course of two years, enroll in a total of four Saturday formation courses, each of which meets four times per semester, as well as attend an annual weekend retreat. Formation Courses will be designed to provide candidates opportunities to experience spiritual, intellectual, pastoral, and human formation within a supportive community of peers. In these courses, the diverse backgrounds of the candidates will provide a mutually enriching environment and an opportunity to gain new insights and perspectives. Candidates will also gain deeper insight into the history and workings of the Church in the Archdiocese of New Orleans.

Within these courses of formation, theological reflection, mentoring, time for prayer, peer supervision, and lectures will take place. In preparation for these courses, reading and written assignments will be required. Upon completion of the two-year program, candidates are eligible to receive eight graduate credit hours for this component.

Spiritual Direction

Spiritual direction is required and serves as a key component of ILEM. Of the four dimensions of formation, spiritual formation provides an integrating principle of all formation for those who serve the Church in ministry. Spiritual directors assist the candidate in growing in their personal life of faith in the context of the Catholic tradition and their own particular state in life. The spiritual director helps the candidate to cultivate a disciplined life of prayer, a deeper self-knowledge, a livelier awareness of God's presence in ministry, and skills for discerning God's call.

ILEM requires that a spiritual director, in order to best serve our candidates, must meet the criteria established by the Archdiocesan Spirituality Center. In particular, we ask that the spiritual director manifest commitment in leading the candidate to embrace the Catholic Church's authoritative teachings and draw from the rich treasury of her spiritual tradition. ILEM also asks that the spiritual director specifically address the elements of formation present in the four dimensions as they are found in the document, *Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord*. ILEM will collaborate with the Archdiocesan Spirituality Center in providing spiritual directors for our candidates. It is understood that spiritual direction will take place on a monthly basis for the duration of the two years of formation.

Required Assignments

Candidates will be given reading assignments, such as articles, books, study guides, and excerpts from Church documents. Written assignments will also be required. Written assignments may include theological, spiritual, and ministerial reflection papers, book reports, and other instruments used to assess the candidates' progress. The completion of such assignments is required for successful program completion and will be subject to evaluation by the Director.

Candidate Responsibility

It is the candidate's responsibility to meet all deadlines established by the ILEM team regarding all program component requirements. When dates are established for any of these, the candidate must abide by them or take the responsibility for rescheduling (or being formally excused) by contacting the Director of Lay Ministry Programs and Lay Formation.

With respect to being commissioned as a lay ecclesial minister in the Archdiocese of New Orleans, ILEM/MAPL faculty and administration reserve the right to withhold their recommendation for a student's commissioning if:

- A student has a failing grade point average in ILEM coursework
- A student has unpaid tuition bills
- A student has a poor attendance record at mandatory formation days or class attendance
- A student exhibits unprofessional behavior or lacks the discipline or proper decorum toward faculty, staff, and other students

Those pursuing the MAPL degree can seek ILEM commissioning as part of that process, but they also have the option not to. Those MAPL students who are withheld commissioning because of reasons stated above can petition the Director of Lay Ministry Programs and Lay Formation to remain in the program toward earning the degree.

Supervised Ministry Practicum

A goal of the Notre Dame Seminary *Institute for Lay Ecclesial Ministry* (ILEM) is to provide a community of well-integrated, educated, and spiritually mature lay ecclesial ministers for ministry in the Church by addressing the human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral dimensions of formation. In particular, the Supervised Ministry Practicum seeks to encourage the integration of these four dimensions of formation through participation in a reflective and integrating experience of pastoral ministry within the concrete cultural context in which the lay ecclesial minister's faith is lived and expressed.

Because lay ecclesial ministers serve in the name of the Church as pastoral ministers in positions of leadership, ILEM requires all candidates to complete a Supervised Ministry Practicum (PS 5350) as part of their course requirements. The Supervised Ministry Practicum provides a hands-on experience to help the candidates integrate formation and develop leadership skills in their current area of ministry.

Please consult the **ILEM Practicum Handbook** for a detailed explanation of the Practicum process.

Other Policies

Contact Information

All candidates are responsible for providing the ILEM team with updated email address(s), telephone number(s), and physical mailing address. Candidates are responsible for promptly providing the Director or Associate Director with updated information for the duration of their participation in the program.

The ILEM team regularly communicates events and requirements with candidates by email and via the NDS Master of Arts/ILEM Programs Google Classroom. Candidates are expected to check both regularly and are responsible for all information communicated therein. Once accepted as a student, it is essential that NDS email is checked every 24 hrs.

Program Cost

Admission fee of \$40: Paid at time of application (applicant's responsibility). Notre Dame Seminary does not accept credit cards. Checks and cash are acceptable.

Tuition and Fees: It is suggested that the ILEM candidate and the candidate's sponsoring institution will split the cost of the ILEM-required courses. The tuition cost is based on the number of credit hours earned each semester and is payable at the designated deadlines. Tuition and registration fees are due thirty days after receiving the semester invoice. Notre Dame Seminary will offer a 50% tuition reduction for ILEM candidates who complete the *Ecclesial Ministry Discount (EMD) Form* for each semester of the academic year. NOTE: Students who receive the *Handing on the Faith Scholarship* are not required to complete the *EMD* form.

Standard semester fees also apply. See the **Master Fee Schedule** on www.nds.edu for a breakdown of registration, technology, and facility fees.

12 credit hours of academic coursework, 8 credit hours of Pastoral Studies, and a 3 credit hour Practicum must be completed before commissioning.

Handing on the Faith Scholarship Program

The Archdiocese of New Orleans, in its commitment to support the formation of lay ecclesial ministers through ILEM, offers tuition remission packages to candidates for ILEM requirements earned at Notre Dame Seminary who make a commitment to continue their work in the Archdiocese for a three-year period after commissioning and demonstrate financial need. For more information about eligibility and scholarship levels, please contact the Lay Programs Office at 504-866-7426 ext. 742.

Attendance

The scheduled formation courses are key elements of the student's faith development, community building, and the ministerial identity of ILEM. After entrance to the program, candidates become part of a formation community that journeys together. As such, the commitment of each member of this

community contributes to the success of the program as a whole. It is impossible for the group to reach its full potential when candidates are absent.

Therefore, attendance at all formation courses is required and expected of all candidates.

Situations may arise that result in an absence. In the case of illness, emergencies, or unavoidable ministry conflicts, the candidate will notify the Director. In the event of missing a Saturday session, an opportunity for independent study will be assigned, thus fulfilling the requirements of ILEM.

Responsibility for completing all formation requirements rests upon the candidate. Each candidate is responsible for requesting information regarding opportunities to make up the work that they missed. **No more than two formation classes from any given year may be missed.** If more than two absences occur per year, eligibility for participation in the program will be reviewed by the Director. Conflicts due to ministerial commitments should be discussed with the Director well in advance of the formation event in question. After application and acceptance into ILEM, candidates are asked to consider their commitment to ILEM requirements as binding, with every effort made to avoid conflicts between ILEM events and personal/professional commitments.

If a candidate's life situation changes in such a way that it becomes extremely difficult or impossible for them to fulfill the formational requirements, the Director may explore the option of a leave of absence from the program.

Academic Probation Policy

A candidate who obtains a D+ or lower in any academic course is automatically placed on probationary status and must repeat the course. Candidates will be allowed to repeat a course only once, and the course must be repeated at Notre Dame Seminary. Candidate status is then subject to review by the Director.

A candidate whose semester average in coursework is below a 2.0 at any time after the completion of six semester hours is placed on probationary status and is not allowed to register for more than three semester hours the following semester. To be removed from probationary status, the candidate must complete six semester hours with a GPA of 2.0 or higher for those six semester hours. If the candidate on probation for falling below a 2.0 overall GPA is unable to emerge from probationary status by the end of the six-semester hours of the probationary period, the candidate will be dismissed from ILEM.

Access to Seminary Campus

Notre Dame Seminary is a residential campus and a center for priestly formation. Candidates are to abide by all rules pertaining to non-residential persons in regard to their movement around the Notre Dame Seminary campus:

- Students have access to common areas of Shaw Hall: Ground Floor (Restrooms and Courtyards), First Floor (exception: Family Room).
- Candidates are not allowed above the first floor of Shaw Hall or the pool or gym area. The second and third floors and the Family Room of the Seminary are private areas.
- Students have access to common areas of St. Joseph Hall: Ground Floor (entire), First Floor (exception: Practicum Room), Second Floor (Student Lounge, Faculty Offices). The third floor is residential and is a private area.
 - Key Card Access Hours for St. Joseph Hall
 - Sunday: 9:45 am – 7:30 pm
 - Monday – Saturday: 5:00 am – 11:00 pm
- Parking: ILEM/MAPL students are free to park in the main circle on the S. Carrollton side of Notre Dame Seminary. Please refrain from parking in the spots directly next to the ground-level entrance of St. Joseph Hall by the Pastoral Center. These are reserved for resident priests living in St. Joseph Hall. **Occasionally, students may be asked to park on the side streets of S. Carrollton Ave. instead of the main circle when NDS has large outside events and meetings.**
- Dining Hall: ILEM/MAPL students may purchase a meal plan as part of the registration process each semester. Saturday courses have mandatory meal plans.

Dress Code

The dress and grooming of candidates shall reflect the virtue of modesty and good taste and shall not be disruptive of the classroom or campus atmosphere of Notre Dame Seminary. Appearance and attire must be modest at all times on campus.

Men: Pants and collared shirts (jeans are acceptable; appropriate t-shirts with sleeves are acceptable for Saturday courses). Shorts are not allowed, nor are sleeveless shirts/tank tops.

Women: Skirts, dresses, or pants of a reasonable length (capri pants, which fall below the knee, and jeans are acceptable). Shorts are not allowed, nor are halter tops/sleeveless shirts/tank tops. Bare midriffs, bare backs, low-cut tops, transparent fabrics, and skirts hemmed at more than two inches above the knee are not permitted.

Clothing that advertises or displays alcoholic beverages, obscenities, sex, drugs, etc., is not appropriate to be worn.

Master of Arts in Pastoral Leadership

Introduction

The Master of Arts in Pastoral Leadership (MAPL) is composed of Theology courses, as well as a Capstone project, in addition to the completion of the Institute for Lay Ecclesial Ministry (ILEM) program. The MAPL is a 38-credit-hour professional graduate degree program oriented toward those working in ministry. It is composed of 24 credit hours of theological coursework, in addition to 8 credit hours of formation courses, 3 credit hours of ministry practicum, and a final capstone paper (3 credit hours). Through the formation process shared by both MAPL and ILEM, candidates will continue to discern their call to ministry in service to God and his Church, cultivate a Catholic understanding of lay ecclesial ministry, be formed in the life of Christian virtues, and deepen their grasp of the Catholic Faith through theological studies.

Candidates who successfully complete ILEM and reside with the Archdiocese of New Orleans will be commissioned by the Archbishop as a lay ecclesial minister. The MAPL degree program is available to those participants, who by taking on additional courses and assignments, wish to receive such a degree. This degree would then serve to provide additional graduate-level competence for future lay ecclesial ministers.

“In order that the faithful may reach this perfection, they must use their strength accordingly as they have received it, as a gift from Christ. They must follow in His footsteps and conform themselves to His image seeking the will of the Father in all things. They must devote themselves with all their being to the glory of God and the service of their neighbor. In this way, the holiness of the People of God will grow into an abundant harvest of good, as is admirably shown by the life of so many saints in Church history.”

– *Lumen Gentium*, no. 40

Admissions Guidelines to the Master of Arts in Pastoral Leadership

In the beginning of their course of studies, all applicants to the Master of Arts in Pastoral Leadership degree program must first be participants of ILEM. This is applicable to those MAPL students who are seeking lay ecclesial ministry commissioning as part of their degree, as well as to those who are not. However, applicants seeking the MAPL degree should indicate “MAPL” upon application, while applicants seeking only the ILEM commissioning should indicate “ILEM” upon application, and fill out the appropriate forms for their intended track. Applicants to the MAPL should also indicate if their desire is to pursue lay ecclesial ministry commissioning as part of their course of studies.

***Please note:** Acceptance into ILEM does not imply acceptance into any theological degree program. In a similar way, acceptance into the MAPL program does not imply acceptance into ILEM commissioning.*

The admission requirements include the following:

1. All admission materials must be sent to the Lay Programs Office, Notre Dame Seminary Graduate School of Theology, 2901 South Carrollton Avenue, New Orleans, LA., 70018
2. Applicants must have a Bachelor’s Degree from an accredited college/university. (Exceptions are subject to the Director of Lay Ministry Programs and Lay Formation)
3. Payment of a one-time admission fee of \$40 (non-refundable)
4. Receipt by Registrar of all official transcripts of undergraduate and graduate study from granting institutions

MAPL Candidacy Process: Transferring from ILEM to MAPL

Those who are admitted to Notre Dame Seminary as MAPL students are immediately enrolled in the MAPL track, even if their initial formation is congruent with the requirements of the ILEM program. It is possible that those initially seeking admittance only to the ILEM program may, in some cases, later request transferring admittance to the MAPL program. In these cases, the ILEM student will have to demonstrate the capacity for MAPL candidacy and go through the MAPL Candidacy Process.

MAPL Candidacy Process:

Initially, all students seeking admittance to NDS are invited to indicate in their application process whether they wish to pursue one of two tracks: ILEM (formation for lay ecclesial ministry toward commissioning in the Archdiocese of New Orleans) or a Master’s degree in Pastoral Leadership (MAPL). The MAPL includes the entire ILEM formation and coursework process, plus additional coursework, ministry practica, and a capstone paper. While applicants are asked to indicate this choice in the beginning, in certain circumstances, it is possible for students to complete the ILEM program and transition later to the MAPL degree track. Eligibility is determined on a case-by-case basis.

The transition from the ILEM program to MAPL degree is called the MAPL Candidacy Process. The MAPL Candidacy Process includes:

- Demonstrating eligibility to pursue a master's degree
- Demonstrating completion of all ILEM requirements, including PS550A (Practicum).
- Having no outstanding tuition bill or fees
- Having maintained a 3.0 grade point average as an ILEM student at Notre Dame Seminary
- Candidacy interview with the Director of Lay Ministry Programs and Lay Formation

The MAPL Candidacy Process will be available for students upon completion of the fall semester of their second year. The final decision is up to the discretion of the Director.

Respect for Equality/Non-Discrimination Policy:

Notre Dame Seminary adheres to the principle of equal educational and employment opportunities without regard to race, sex, color, creed, age, disability, or national origin. This policy extends to all programs and activities supported by the seminary, including hiring, training, promoting, salaries, transfers, and working conditions. In addition, Notre Dame Seminary conscientiously seeks to comply with all applicable legislation concerning nondiscrimination in employment practices and in the development of personnel. This pertains to the protection of faculty and student rights of privacy and access of information concerning accommodations for the handicapped. Bearing in mind that language reflects, reinforces, and creates social reality, the seminary expects class conversation and written work to employ language that respects the equal dignity and worth of all human beings. Notre Dame Seminary believes in the equality of all people and respects the dignity of people from all races, cultures, religions, and ideological preferences.

Master of Arts in Pastoral Leadership Program Goals and Student Learning Outcomes

The Master of Arts in Pastoral Leadership (MAPL) degree program seeks to ensure that lay ecclesial ministers serving in all Catholic institutions have access to the requisite human, spiritual, academic, and pastoral formation out of which to exercise their ministry effectively. To do so, the faculty and staff of the lay programs have developed program goals and student learning outcomes for the MAPL program.

The program goals for the Master of Arts in Pastoral Leadership degree program are as follows:

- ◇ Provide a framework for the formation and education of lay ecclesial ministers that includes the four dimensions of formation: human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral.
- ◇ Promote a fuller understanding of the practical implications of Catholic theological teaching, in light of Vatican II, on lay ecclesial ministry.
- ◇ Cultivate the human development of candidates by fostering greater self-knowledge and an awareness that the call to ministry requires the development of one's personality, natural virtues, and gifts.

The faculty of the Master of Arts in Pastoral Leadership degree program has developed student learning outcomes to ensure that the program goals are being met.

The student learning outcomes of the program are as follows:

- ◇ Demonstrate growth in theological knowledge (from the required Theology and Pastoral Studies Courses) and practical skills (from the required Lay Ecclesial Training) in all four areas of formation
- ◇ Apply Catholic theological principles and pastoral studies to her/his immediate ministry setting
- ◇ Integrate elements of the four dimensions of formation into her/his ministry (as seen in the Supervised Ministry Practicum)
- ◇ Demonstrate growth in spiritual formation acquired through ongoing spiritual direction and attendance in annual retreats

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access of information concerning accommodations for the handicapped. Bearing in mind that language reflects, reinforces, and creates social reality, the seminary expects class conversation and written work to employ language that respects the equal dignity and worth of all human beings. Notre Dame Seminary believes in the equality of all people and respects the dignity of people from all races, cultures, religions, and ideological preferences.

Program of Studies & Curriculum

The program of studies for the MAPL (38 credit hours) includes the following four components: theological studies, pastoral studies, lay ecclesial ministry training, and a supervised ministry practicum. A final capstone project (composed of both oral and written requirements) will be required to complete this program and will provide the final three credit hours for this degree. All courses will be taken at Notre Dame Seminary Graduate School of Theology, and the ministry practicum and pastoral leadership experiences will take place at approved Roman Catholic ministry sites where the candidates are currently employed or serving in a recognized ministry. In addition, the candidates will receive on-site supervision from a designated ministry supervisor (Pastor, Principal, DRE, Department Chair, etc.), who will receive training from the Director. Following the completion of this graduate-level program, the graduates will receive a Master of Arts in Pastoral Leadership.

The students in the MAPL degree program are required to complete the following courses:

Master of Arts in Pastoral Leadership Required Courses (38 credit hours)

Course Number	Course Name	Credit Hours
PS 5301	Spiritual Formation	2
PS 5302	Human Formation	2
PS 5303	Intellectual Formation	2
PS 5304	Pastoral Formation	2
PS 5350	Practicum	3
PS 6350	Capstone	3
DT 5301	Profession of Faith I	3
DT 6301	Profession of Faith II	3
SS 5301	Old Testament	3
SS 5301	New Testament	3
MT 5301	Foundations of Moral Theology	3
SL 6301	Introduction to Liturgical & Spiritual Theology	3

PT 6301	Pastoral Theology & Catechesis	3
	Elective*	3

*Electives include: MT 6301 Special Topics in Moral Theology, SpT 6301 Introduction to Spiritual Theology, EH 6301 American Catholic History

For a detailed description of each of these courses, please see the **NDS Academic Catalogue**.

Formation Components

Among the MAPL courses listed above, a number of courses count as ministerial formation components. Those that also count for ILEM include PS510-513 Pastoral Studies and PS550A Pastoral Immersion (Practicum). In addition to these formation components that are constitutive of the ILEM process, the MAPL process also includes and culminates with PS 575 Capstone.

Transfer Credit

A maximum of nine applicable credit hours may be transferred from other accredited institutions toward completion of the Master of Arts in Pastoral Leadership. Approval of all transfer credits must be obtained from the Director of Lay Ministry Formation and Lay Programs, who may exercise discretion concerning the relevance of any credits in question. These courses must be verified by an official transcript from the institution at which the courses were taken.

Probation Policy

Passing grades for graduate students are A, B+, B, B-, C+, C, and C-. A graduate student who obtains a D+ or lower in any course is automatically placed on probationary status and must repeat the course. Students will be allowed to repeat a course only once, and the course must be repeated at Notre Dame Seminary. Student status is then subject to review by the Director.

A student whose semester average in coursework is below a 2.7 at any time after the completion of nine semester hours is placed on probationary status and is not allowed to register for more than three semester hours the following semester. To be removed from probationary status, the student must complete six semester hours with a GPA of 2.7 or higher for those six semester hours. If the graduate student placed on probation for falling below a 2.7 overall GPA is unable to achieve this by the end of the six semester hours of the probationary period, the student will be dismissed from the graduate program.

Subject to review of the Director and Master of Arts Faculty, students may be dropped from programs for factors other than GPA without having a probationary period. These factors may include code of conduct, behavioral issues, disregard for NDS policies. The student may then appeal decisions to the Director and Master of Arts Faculty by submitting a written appeal to the Academic Dean.

Additional Policies

ILEM policies listed above about contact information, tuition, attendance, dress code, and access to the seminary campus are also applicable to those enrolled in MAPL.

**Institute for Lay Ecclesial Ministry and Master of Arts in Pastoral
Leadership Team**

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Appendix One:

Recognition as a Lay Ecclesial Minister

Calling and commissioning are separate moments that occur after candidates fully complete ILEM. The framework that leads to recognition as a lay ecclesial minister in the Archdiocese of New Orleans involves a three-step process:

1. Call from God - experienced as a vocational call by the individual within the communal context of the Church and tested by prayer, reflection, spiritual direction, and discernment with pastors and, if applicable, ministry supervisor.
2. Training and Preparation - ILEM and academic formation. Academic formation is theological preparation that utilizes the academic resources of Notre Dame Seminary, with core courses identified below. ILEM includes the more intentional formation activities like spiritual direction, mentoring, retreats, formation courses, etc. ,under the guidance of the ILEM team.
3. Commissioning - Lay ecclesial ministers are commissioned by the Archbishop to minister in their respective roles within the Archdiocese of New Orleans. Once fulfilling all the requirements of ILEM, these men and women will be commissioned by the Archbishop in a public ceremony.

Once commissioned by the Archbishop for service in the Archdiocese of New Orleans, lay ecclesial ministers will be expected to fulfill certain continuing professional and spiritual development requirements. These requirements include ongoing spiritual direction, an annual retreat, and continuing professional development credits. Lay ecclesial ministers are required to submit a bi-annual attestation that such requirements have been completed to the Director of Lay Ministry Programs and Lay Formation.

NOTE: Those participating in ILEM from dioceses other than the Archdiocese of New Orleans are subject to the standards for lay ministry established by their home diocese. Only those residing in and active in the Archdiocese of New Orleans can be commissioned by Archbishop Aymond.

“The program already exists: it is the plan found in the Gospel and in the living tradition, it is the same as ever. Ultimately, it has its center in Christ himself, who is to be known, loved and imitated, so that in him we may live the life of the Trinity, and with him transform history until its fulfillment in the heavenly Jerusalem. This is a program which does not change with shifts of times and cultures, even though it takes account of time and culture for the sake of true dialogue and effective communication. This program for all times is our program for the Third Millennium.”

– Novo Millenio Inuente, no. 29



NOTRE DAME SEMINARY

Graduate School of Theology

Lay Programs Office

2901 South Carrollton Ave.

New Orleans, LA. 70018

<https://nds.edu/lay-formation/>

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