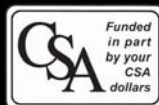


A Study Guide for
Co-Workers in the
Vineyard of the Lord:

A Resource for Guiding
the Development of
Lay Ecclesial Ministry



A Study Guide for *Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord:*

A Resource for Guiding the Development of Lay Ecclesial Ministry

This brief but rich study guide was prepared for the many lay and ordained ecclesial ministers who share ministry within the Archdiocese of Detroit.

It is the committee's hope that this guide will be a valuable resource for not only unpacking *Co-Workers in the Vineyard*, but for enabling parish staffs – in this sharing – to do the following:

- Understand themselves and each other better
- Share their journeys of ministry
- Appreciate each other's vision of ministry
- Strengthen their collaborative ministry

The opportunities for use are limited only by a staff's creativity. Here are some suggestions:

- Formation at regular staff meetings
- Parish staff retreat days
- Staffs coming together in a clustered parish
- Requesting a local retreat center to provide a retreat day using this study guide
- Vicariate meetings of parish staffs

- What is your overall response to the document? Respond in whatever form is comfortable for you: (e.g., prose; poetry; drawing, painting, music, etc.)

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- How do you envision the role of the lay ecclesial minister in ten years? How do you envision ministry in ten years?

- Do you feel affirmed by the document? challenged? In what ways?

As staffs/ministerial groups prepare to use the study guide, some suggestions for its use:

- Meet in a comfortable and relaxed setting for all.
- If it is a prolonged study time, take time for socializing and a meal.
- Depending on the format chosen, an outside facilitator might plan and facilitate the time for the group.
- If an outside facilitator is not used, and the discussion is on-going over time, take turns among the staff facilitating the discussion of the various sections of the document.
- All of the questions might not appeal to the group for discussion; feel free to choose those which will be most helpful for your staff/ministerial grouping.

Study Guide prepared by members of the:
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- What structures could be put into place to assist the lay ecclesial minister with terminations and transitions? What are your greatest concerns about this?

B. Understanding the Realities in Light of Theology and Church Teaching

- How do the various relationships among ministers described in the document (pages 20-26) compare to your own experience as a lay ecclesial minister? What impact has the rise of lay ecclesial ministry had on the traditional ministries of the ordained?

- How are we identifying and calling forth future ministers from our local parish or ministerial setting? How are we providing formation/support as we help them in their initial journey?

- What have been, for you, some of the blessings of the partnership of the lay and ordained in ministry? What have been some of the challenges? As we continue in the future, what will be the blessings? What might some of the challenges be?

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- In what ways could the connection between the archbishop/archdiocese and the lay ecclesial ministers be better strengthened?

C. Authorization for Lay Ecclesial Ministry

- Imagine what might be an appropriate ritual recognition celebration of lay ecclesial ministry. Have you experienced one in the past? What symbols were used? If you were designing one, what words, right actions, symbols, music would celebrate the reality of today's lay ecclesial minister?

Part Two: Pastoral Applications

A. Pathways to Lay Ecclesial Ministry

- Describe your "pathway" into lay ecclesial ministry. Do it in word or drawing. When and how did you first become aware of your call to ministry? How did it develop and grow? Who was instrumental in helping you to discern that call? Who walked with you? What earlier events or experiences in your life planted the seeds?

D. The Ministerial Workplace

- What are the opportunities/gifts within the parish workplace for the lay ecclesial minister? What are the challenges?

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- Of the elements of spiritual formation (pages 39-40), which have been most important for you?

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- Reflect on the list of necessary dispositions for lay ecclesial ministers (page 30). Which do you feel are most important? Would you add any others to the list?

- Of the elements of pastoral formation (pages 47-49), which were done particularly well in your own formation program? Which received less emphasis? What have been the effects of these areas of greater or lesser emphasis, as concerns for your own ministry?

- What does faithfulness to Church teaching mean to you – as a lay ecclesial minister? as the ordained in ministry? What role might prophetic questioning have?

B. Formation for Lay Ecclesial Ministry

- How could formators (those responsible for the human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral formation) help candidates for ministry better reflect on the “lights and shadows” in our culture and reflect more deeply on those in light of the Gospel message? In what ways do all ministers need to be in touch with the cultural context?

- How could today’s candidates for ministry be better prepared amid the cultural diversity present in the contemporary church?

- As you look back at your own formation process, do you now see any areas in which additional formation was needed? What suggestions would you make to the directors/faculty of lay ministry programs?

- How do those of us in ministry meet the challenge of finding time for prayer, reflection, spiritual reading, and retreat time? What are the particular challenges of that for you? What are the blessings and gifts? What are your secrets for finding time? What other spiritual practices have been or are now especially important for you?