**Personal Formation Plan for Family Ministers**

*Called to On-Going Conversion*

**Vision Statement** - What is your personal vision statement for ministry? Take some time to develop a personal vision statement. Here are a few steps to get you started:

* Listen to God speak to you. What have people affirmed in you that could impact your vision statement? How is God speaking to you through others?

VISION

* Listen to your heart.
* What are you passionate about in ministry? What is it that gives you great joy in ministry?
* What gifts and talents do you bring to ministry? How do you think that God is asking you to use these gifts and talents?

**Setting goals and objectives** for your personal formation requires prayerful reflection and honest self-assessment. Use the “what, why, and how” approach to setting goals. Use the following questions to guide your thoughts:

Human Formation

* What are my gifts, talents, and strengths?
* What are my greatest challenges in life?
* How would key people who know me answer those two questions? Am I willing to ask them?
* How do I accept criticism? Am I open to receiving it? Am I “too open,”and act like a doormat? Do my feelings get hurt too quickly?
* Do I live a balanced life? If not, what seems to be “out of alignment?” What would I like to be doing more of? What would I like to be doing less of?
* Do I examine my life, or does it just “happen?”
* Do I embrace diversity? How diverse are my friendships? My workplace? Are there any attitudes that I need to root out in order to be a more loving person?

Spiritual Formation

* How often do I pray? When do I pray? How do I pray?
* What do I know about prayer?

MOTTO

* How has prayer formed me?
* Would I like to pray differently?
* More frequently?
* Learn different styles of prayer?
* Be more intentional in my prayer?
* How would I describe my spiritual life?
* Is there anything that I hunger for? Yearn for?
* What is God asking of me?
* What am I asking of God?
* What could help my spiritual formation?

Intellectual Formation

* What is it that I would like to know more about? What intrigues me in the areas of theology?
* Do I need a basic knowledge, or are there some more advanced courses I could take?
* What should I be reading or listening to or studying?
* What would I need to be well rounded?
* What intellectually based courses would be applicable to my ministry?
* What do I know about Scripture and how could I grow in my knowledge? How about the Trinity, or Christology, ecclesiology, or Christian anthropology, Church History, or the liturgy, moral theology or Catholic Social Teaching? Underline all that apply.
* What do I know about canon law? Or pastoral theology? Or even the study of spirituality?

Pastoral Formation Goals and Objectives

* Who are the people with whom I am ministering?
* What do I know about the culture of the people whom I am called to serve? What do I need to know about family systems, or daily challenges?
* How comfortable am I praying with different people? What are effective ways of praying?
* What are the situations in which I minister?
* What do I need to develop in my skills set for working in this ministry?
* Ask yourself, “What are my strengths, and what do I need to add to my skill set to be a better minister of the Gospel to this specific area where I am called to serve?”
* Am I a Lone Ranger or a collaborator? What do I need to learn to work more effectively with others?
* What laws impact my ministry?
* What do I know about ethics in ministry in general, and about the specific area that I am called to serve?

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| NEXT STEPS, After you have prayed, studied and reflected… | Identify one action you will take | Date |
| Develop your vision statement. |  |  |
| Name one action to take in each of the four areas: |  |  |
| * + Spiritual |  |  |
| * + Human |  |  |
| * + Intellectual |  |  |
| * + Pastoral |  |  |
| Indentify a reflector. |  |  |
| Set up an appointment with your reflector, and be prepared to hear feedback. |  |  |
| Copy your personal vision statement, and carry it with you. It will help you to stay focused. |  |  |
| Review your plan on a regular basis. Did I achieve my goals? Why or why not? Do I need to make adjustments? Has life made adjustments for me? |  |  |
| Every five years or so, you may need to revise your personal vision statement. |  |  |
| Document your growth each year. Ask yourself what the joys, struggles, and challenges were in the year past. |  |  |
| What are you most looking forward to in the year ahead? |  |  |

**Reading:**

Gula, Richard. *The Way of Goodness and Holiness: A Spirituality for Pastoral Ministers*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2011

Sofield, Loughlan. *Collaborative Ministry: Skills and Guidelines.* Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1987.

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**Specialized Competencies: Family Life Minister**

The family life minister shall:

Demonstrate an understanding of the history, vision, goals, themes, and components of Catholic family life ministry as outlined in the U. S. bishops’ pastoral plan and related church documents.

Utilize theories, models, processes and methods of Catholic family life ministry.

Demonstrate an understanding of family developmental needs within the contexts of popular cultures.

Model for and collaborate with the faith community in implementing the components of Catholic family life ministry by:

Utilize the aims, principles, processes, and methods of evangelization and catechesis in implementing faith formation across the lifespan.

Facilitate the development of community among families, church and society.

Invite family members into intimate relationship with Jesus Christ and empowering them to live and witness as disciples in today’s world.

Engage families in the social mission of the church in accord with Catholic social teaching.

Enable healing, growth and healthy development of family members in their relationships.

Enable family members to celebrate and deepen their relationship with the Triune God through individual and communal prayer and participation in the liturgical life of the church.

Engage the church and broader community in voicing and addressing the rights and needs of the family .

Affirm and calling forth the gifts of spouses and parents and providing opportunities for their ongoing spiritual and leadership development.

Affirm and supporting married couples in their vocation as spouses and parents.

Understand and respond to the pastoral needs of those who experience widowhood, divorce, separation, and marital difficulties.