



Diocese of St. Augustine

Ministry Formation Program: UPDATES Newsletter

Spring 2017

Looking Toward our 25th Anniversary!

Mission Statement:

To reflect the mission of the Diocese of St. Augustine, the Ministry Formation Program prepares the participants through academic, spiritual, personal, and pastoral formation for lay ecclesial leadership and service in diocesan parishes and institutions.

Inside this Issue

Mission Statement 25th Anniversary!	1
Emmaus Companions Class of 2020 App. Due	2
Faculty Spotlight Summer Sch. of Theology From the Director	3
Contact Information Program Highlights	4

The fall of 2017 will mark the 25th anniversary of the inauguration of the Ministry Formation Program. We are planning a celebration and will share an invitation with you as soon as details are available. As we look toward that event, here is a recap of our history:

In October, 1990, the Most Rev. John J. Snyder, Bishop of the Diocese of St. Augustine, established a committee to assist him in the development of a comprehensive Ministry Formation Program (MFP). Rev. Fred Parke and Rev. Michael Houle served as co-chairs. The Committee reviewed various diocesan programs similar in size and demographics and consulted with parties throughout the Diocese of St. Augustine. The emphasis on leadership level participants was determined to be critical by Bishop Snyder.

Bishop Snyder mandated that diocesan ministry leadership personnel that had been professionally trained, but without Church background, would need to complete the program. The MFP also became the standard for those teaching in Catholic High Schools and for those serving in parish leadership positions.

In February, 1992, Bishop Snyder thanked the Committee for a job well done and appointed Rev. Michael Houle as Interim Director of the MFP. Margaret McCully was

hired as Administrative Assistant. The Office of Christian Formation provided the staff person and oversight of the program. The MFP admitted its first participants in the fall of 1992, and the first certificate ceremony was held in December, 1995, at Cathedral Basilica in St. Augustine.

The Most Rev. Victor Galeone was ordained and installed as the ninth bishop of the diocese on August 21, 2001. Bishop Galeone implemented a diaconate formation program within the Diocese of St. Augustine. Those men called to the diaconate are required to complete the MFP as an initial step in their process of being ordained.

In the winter of 2009, coordination as well as continued direction of the Ministry Formation Program was entrusted to the Director of the Office of Christian Formation, Ms. Erin McGeever.

The Most Rev. Bishop Felipe J. Estévez was appointed tenth bishop of the Diocese of St. Augustine in 2011. Bishop Estévez has expressed strong support and appreciation for the many years that the MFP has trained lay ministers to work as “co-workers in the vineyard.”

There have been over 360 graduates of the Ministry Formation Program from 1995 to 2017 and they serve in various ministries throughout the diocese.



Annual Retreat

Ministry Formation Program Emmaus Companions

Jeanette Ghioto, Class of 2002: Over the years, I have been an Emmaus Companion to three MFP students. Each time was a different experience based upon the personalities of the students. One factor the students had in common was their desire to serve our Church, which is the exact response the Second Vatican Council document, *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, had in mind. My role for each student was to reassure them: Yes, you can get through this. And, to affirm them: Yes, you have unique gifts given to you as a member of the Body of Christ that is our Church; How blessed are we that you want to share your gifts and help complete this precious body! Watching each student blossom into a ministry leader was a blessing. I also enjoyed keeping up with what was going on in the MFP. The program needs seasoned graduates to keep their fingers on the pulse of what is actually happening in the experience of the students. Our shared insights and perspectives enliven our Church – and the ministries she wishes the laity to lead.



Elia Vega, Class of 2010: I believe the relationship between MFP participants and their Emmaus Companions is a very important part of the program. I remember when I was a candidate, how good I felt in each encounter with my Emmaus Companion. She always lifted me up when I was feeling down, especially at those times when I was worried about my progress in the program. She helped me apply what I was learning to my spiritual journey, and to place my progress in the context of my relationship with Jesus Christ and desire to serve Him. I follow the same path with the participant I walk with as my Emmaus Companion did with me. I like to listen to every word the student wants to share. Once she is comfortable, I guide her to talk about her understanding of the subject or the themes she is noticing at the moment. We then explore a way to apply her experience to her spiritual growth. As she grows in wisdom and knowledge, I am growing with her—we both benefit. I am grateful to serve in this beautiful way.



"What are you discussing as you walk along?"

Ben Heise, Class of 2007: The Emmaus Companion experience was truly a faith journey that “opened the scriptures” in a way that always surprised, but never disappointed. Walking the path with another and seeing the MFP enlightenment that occurred in the student as he struggled, overcame, and then readily faced and joyfully overcame yet another challenge was heartening and inspirational. My faith was enriched. My appreciation for those who are called by the Holy Spirit and step forward was reinforced and increased. As he and I walked toward Emmaus and then turned back toward Jerusalem, we learned to turn our hearts and minds over to our Lord and listen. I experienced and know that where two or more are gathered in His name, He, too is there to guide and support.



Claude Fiori, Class of 2016: The Emmaus Companion component of the Ministry Formation Program is valuable in so many ways. My value to the student is as a friend helping another friend to walk his own unique path while on the same journey that I have taken previously. In that way, I can help him prepare, keep him encouraged, provide feedback, and simply offer a caring ear for any concerns over the three years of the program. The value to the Ministry Formation Program is in my being a supporter and evangelist both to this student as well as to others considering the program. The value to myself is in staying involved in this wonderful program as well as being able to relive many of the experiences that I hold so dear from my time as an MFP participant.



Ministry Formation Program Applications Due

Do you know an active lay minister who might be well-suited to advance their service to the Church by entering the Ministry Formation Program? This three-year program will prepare them to take on leadership roles by facilitating their professional and personal formation. It is often the recognition and encouragement of another that helps us take an important next step on our faith journey.

Applications are accepted year-round, and due for the following fall in May.

Faculty Spotlight: Vincent Reilly



New to the faculty of the Ministry Formation Program in 2017-2018 will be Vincent Reilly. A native of Yonkers, New York, he is currently the Director of Faith Formation at St. Catherine of Siena Catholic Church in Orange Park, Florida since 2008. He has a Master of Arts degree in Theology from the University of Notre Dame and a Certificate of Pastoral Ministry from the Catholic University of America, where he also earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in Theology/ Religious Studies. His primary focus of study was catechesis and liturgy and his thesis focused on the RCIA as the model of all catechesis.

Vincent has been a regular instructor for Level I certification in the Diocese of St. Augustine for eight years. This year, he had several articles published in *Great Events in Religion: An Encyclopedia of Pivotal Events in Religious History*, including an entry on the life of St. Augustine. He also had an article published by Church Life, the online journal of the McGrath Institute for Church Life at the University of Notre Dame, on his work implementing a kerygmatic approach to catechesis at his parish. His current efforts are heavily influenced by Pope Francis' Joy of the Gospel.

He has a passion for sharing the teachings of the Church in a clear and easy to understand manner. This passion has caused him to focus on adult education at his parish, implementing a summer vacation bible study for adults, an adult religious education program during the year, and various workshops on evangelization and ministry throughout the year.

Vincent lives in Orange Park with his wife, Susan, their beagle, Buddy, and two cats.

Summer School of Theology: Canonical Conversations in the Saint John's Bible

Please join us for the ninth annual Summer School of Theology, June 19-23, 2017, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. daily, in the Wisdom Center at Marywood Retreat Center. The theme of this year's school is "Canonical Conversations in the Saint John's Bible." In 1998, English calligrapher Donald Jackson and the Benedictine monks of Saint John's Abbey in Collegeville, Minnesota, began collaborating on the first commissioned illuminated manuscript of the Bible since Gutenberg. The result, the Saint John's Bible, has ignited the spiritual imagination of Christians and non-Christians alike with its numerous illuminations. During this week of immersion, we will look at the repeated symbols in the Saint John's Bible, how those symbols create conversations between different parts of Scripture, and how these conversations cluster around issues in contemporary Catholic biblical interpretation. The Saint John's Bible is not only a monument to exegesis, it is also a masterpiece of art. It is a doorway into how to interpret Scripture. Registration deadline is June 15, with reduced fee early registration by May 27. Weekly and daily registration rates are being offered.



For more information and to register, [visit our website](http://www.dosaformation.org), www.dosaformation.org, Registrations.

From the Director / De la oficina del Director

The Ministry Formation Program is for anyone who is actively involved in ministry and is seeking to be a recognized leader within the diocese, on a parish level, diocesan level, or within our Catholic Schools. The first step in the process is to meet with your Pastor to speak about your interest in the MFP, discuss with him the area of ministry for which you will prepare for leadership; and obtain his endorsement. Once your Pastor has approved the endorsement, contact us at (904)262-3200, ext. 103, or layministry@dosafjl.com. We will answer any questions you may have about the application process, forward you an information packet, and finally, arrange a time to meet with either the director or a member of the MFP Advisory Board to learn about discerning for the program and exploring your sense of call to ministerial leadership. Application deadline is May. The application process takes 4-6 weeks.



El Ministry Formation Program (Programa de Formación para Laicos) es para todas las personas que participan activamente en algún ministerio y buscan ser un líder reconocido dentro de la diócesis, a nivel parroquial, diocesano o dentro de nuestras Escuelas Católicas. El primer paso en el proceso es reunirse con su Párroco para hablar sobre su interés en la MFP, discutir con él el área de ministerio para la cual usted se preparará para el liderazgo; Y obtener su respaldo. Una vez que su Párroco haya aprobado su endoso, comuníquese con nosotros al (904) 262-3200, ext. 103, o layministry@dosafjl.com. Responderemos cualquier pregunta que pueda tener sobre el proceso de solicitud, le enviaremos un paquete de información y, finalmente, acordaremos un tiempo para que se reúna con el director o un miembro de la Junta Asesora de MFP para que conozca y pueda discernir sobre el programa y explorar su llamado al liderazgo ministerial. La fecha límite de solicitud es de mayo. El proceso de solicitud toma 4-6 semanas.

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Program Highlights

June 11, 2017 - Class of 2017 Closing Ceremony, 2:00 p.m. at the Cathedral Basilica. All are welcome.

June 19-23 - Office of Christian Formation School of Theology

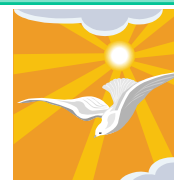
August 5-6 - Orientation for Year I, Class of 2020

August 26 - First class session, Years I & II

September 9 - Class session, Years I & II; Orientation, Year III

October 21 - Prayer and Spirituality Skills Workshop

More information and registration for the annual School of Theology is on our website: www.dosaformation.org



Address Updates

Has your e-mail or mailing address changed? If so, please send us an update so you can continue to receive our newsletters and invitations to join us on the annual retreat.

Miss an issue? Find it on the web at www.dosaformation.org



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