

*Vicariate for Catholic Faith Formation and Education
Office of Lay Ministry and Parish Faith Formation*

Leadership Certification Requirements

I. Director of Religious Education (DRE) or Director of Youth Ministry (DYM)

Requirements for Diocesan Certification

The Director of Religious Education (DRE) and Director of Youth Ministry (DYM) Certification is earned through the completion of the following requirements for one of two certification tracks. Choice of tracks is dependent on one's academic background.

Track I

Master's Degree – in Religious Education, Religious Studies, Theology, or Pastoral Ministry. Participation in skills component in **The Kateri Institute for Lay Ministry Formation** of the Diocese of Albany or competency in these courses.

Track II

Master's Degree in Education or a related field. Completion of **The Kateri Institute for Lay Ministry**

Common Requirements for Tracks I & II

- Completion of **Becoming a Minister of Faith Formation Program (BAMOFF)**.
- Completion of **Basic** and **Intermediate Catechist/Youth Ministry Formation** courses or demonstrated competency or equivalency from another diocese. DRE/DYM would take the required specialization tracks.
- Completion of VIRTUS and background check.
- Completion of a spiritual retreat or spiritual renewal experience of 8 or more hours.
- A minimum of one year successful experience as a Director of Religious Education or Director of Youth Ministry.
- Letter of affirmation from pastor/parish life director as supervisor.

Director of Religious Education (DRE) and Director of Youth Ministry (DYM) certification is awarded upon completion of all requirements. This is a three year certification which is renewed according to the requirements listed below. Provisional Certification as a DRE or DYM is given to persons who have begun the process of working towards full certification and who continue to work towards the completion of this goal. Catechetical and youth ministry leaders working toward certification may request full or provisional certification after their first year of ministry. Provisional certification is renewed annually until all requirements are completed.

Renewal Requirements

Catechetical and youth ministry leaders are expected to continue to grow in knowledge and skills for this ministry. It is recommended that they seek opportunities for growth in scripture and theology, youth ministry/catechetical methods and theory, pastoral issues and practices, and personal spiritual renewal. The Office of Lay Ministry and Parish Faith Formation will send renewal information to Catechetical and Youth Ministry leaders based on their certification status and corresponding renewal date.

Directors of Religious Education and Youth Ministry who seek renewal of their full DRE/DYM certification every three years are expected to complete the following requirements:

- Participation in a minimum of 6 major events (full day or longer over the three years) such as diocesan, state, and national professional conferences, recommended inservices and programs, and courses including approved online courses from colleges and universities
- Participation in an annual retreat or spiritual renewal experience

II. Coordinator of Religious Education (CRE) or Coordinator of Youth Ministry (CYM)

Requirements for Diocesan Certification

The Coordinator of Religious Education (CRE) or Coordinator of Youth Ministry (CYM) Certification is earned through the completion of the following requirements:

- Bachelor's Degree – preferably in Religious Studies, Theology, or Pastoral Ministry.
- Completion of **The Kateri Institute for Lay Ministry Formation** of the Diocese of Albany.
- Completion of **Becoming a Minister of Faith Formation Program (BAMOFF)**.
- Completion of Basic and Intermediate Catechist/Youth Ministry courses or demonstrated competency or equivalency from another diocese. CRE/CYM would take the required specialization tracks.
- Completion of VIRTUS and background check.
- Completion of a spiritual retreat or spiritual renewal experience of 8 or more hours.
- A minimum of one year successful experience as an Coordinator of Religious Education or Coordinator of Youth Ministry.
- Letter of affirmation from pastor/parish life director as supervisor.

Coordinator of Religious Education (CRE) and Coordinator of Youth Ministry (CYM) certification is awarded upon completion of all requirements. This is a three year certification which is renewed according to the requirements listed below. Provisional Certification as a CRE/CYM is given to persons who have begun the process of working towards full certification and who continue to work towards the completion of this goal. Catechetical & Youth Ministry leaders working toward certification may request full or provisional certification after their first year of ministry. Provisional certification is renewed annually until all requirements are completed.

CRE/CYM Renewal Requirements

Catechetical and youth ministry leaders are expected to continue to grow in knowledge and skills for this ministry. It is recommended that catechetical and youth ministry leaders seek opportunities for growth in scripture and theology, catechetical methods and theory, pastoral issues and practices, and personal spiritual renewal. The Office of Lay Ministry and Parish Faith Formation will send renewal information to Catechetical and Youth Ministry leaders based on their certification status and corresponding renewal date.

Coordinators of Religious Education (CRE) and Coordinators of Youth Ministry (CYM) who seek renewal of their full CRE/CYM certification every three years are expected to complete the following requirements:

- Participation at a minimum of 6 major events (full day or longer over the three years) such as diocesan, state, and national professional conferences, inservices and programs, and courses, including approved online courses from colleges and universities.
- Participation in an annual retreat or spiritual renewal experience.

III. Administrator of Religious Education (ARE) or Administrator of Youth Ministry (AYM)

Requirements for Diocesan Certification

Provisional certification as an Administrator of Religious Education (ARE) Certification is earned after the first year of ministry and renewed annually until completion of all requirements. The steps to certification include the following requirements:

- High school diploma.
- Completion of **The Kateri Institute for Lay Ministry Formation** of the Diocese of Albany.
- Completion of **Becoming a Minister of Faith Formation Program (BAMOFF)**.
- Completion of Basic and Intermediate Catechist Formation courses or demonstrated competency or equivalency from another diocese. ARE/AYM would take the required specialization tracks.

- Completion of VIRTUS and background check.
- Completion of a spiritual retreat or spiritual renewal experience of 8 or more hours.
- A minimum of one year successful experience as an Administrator of Religious Education or Administrator of Youth Ministry.
- Letter of affirmation from pastor/parish life director as supervisor

Certification as an Administrator of Religious Education (ARE) and/or Administrator of Youth Ministry (AYM) is awarded upon completion of all requirements, including completion of **The Kateri Institute for Lay Ministry Formation**. Full certification is a three year certification which is renewed according to the requirements listed below. Provisional Certification as an ARE/AYM is given to persons who have begun the process of working towards full certification and who continue to work towards the completion of this goal. Catechetical and Youth Ministry leaders working toward certification may request full or provisional certification after their first year of ministry. Provisional certification is renewed annually until all requirements are completed.

ARE/AYM Renewal Requirements

Catechetical and Youth Ministry leaders are expected to continue to grow in knowledge and skills for this ministry. It is recommended that catechetical and youth ministry leaders seek opportunities for growth in scripture and theology, youth ministry/catechetical methods and theory, pastoral issues and practices, and personal spiritual renewal. The Office of Lay Ministry and Parish Faith Formation will send renewal information to Catechetical and Youth Ministry leaders based on their certification status and corresponding renewal date.

Administrators of Religious Education (ARE) and Administrators of Youth Ministry (AYM) who seek renewal of their full certification every three years are expected to complete the following requirements:

- Participation at a minimum of 3 major events (full day or longer over the three years) such as diocesan, state, and national professional conferences, inservices and programs, and courses, including approved online courses from colleges and universities.
- Participation in an annual retreat or spiritual renewal experience.

IV. Transition between Diocesan Formation Programs

In September 2010, the Diocese of Albany initiated **The Kateri Institute for Lay Ministry Formation** - a three year program for all those seeking formation as lay ministers in the Church. Catechetical and Youth Ministry leaders who were working towards certification using the former Certificate for Designated Ministries Program from St. Bernard's (CDM) are asked to contact the Office of Lay Ministry and Parish Faith Formation for assistance in crediting their formation from the former program. Catechetical and Youth Ministry Leaders seeking to complete their formation under the new **Kateri Institute for Lay Ministry Formation** should contact David Amico, Director (518-453-6670 or kateri.director@rcda.org). Catechetical and Youth Ministry leaders holding certification from another diocese or having completed a professional certification program outside the Diocese of Albany may request to have a prior certification approved as an equivalent program. This decision is made by the Office of Lay Ministry and Parish Faith Formation.

Catechetical and Youth Ministry Leaders who have initiated leadership certification prior to September 2001, may complete their certification under the former directives which included completion of Basic, Intermediate, and Advanced Catechist/Youth Ministry Certification. The former Formation for Ministry Program (FMP) may be used as part of this process.

V. Moving Administrator Certification to Coordinator Certification

Certification as a **Coordinator of Religious Education (CRE) and Coordinator of Youth Ministry (CYM)** may be obtained and will be awarded to **Administrators of Religious Education (ARE) and Administrators of Youth Ministry (AYM)** upon completion of all requirements for ARE or AYM certification, including completion of **The Kateri Institute for Lay Ministry Formation** of the Diocese of Albany. The move to this level of certification is only given to the ARE/AYM who completes the **Kateri Institute** program (or the former **Certificate for Designated Ministries** from St. Bernard's School of Theology and Ministry). Full certification is a three year certification which is renewed according to the requirements listed.

VI. Dual Certification

It is possible to hold Diocesan certification in both catechetical leadership and youth ministry leadership. This is recommended for persons who are responsible for both ministries. It is suggested that the minister complete one area of certification first and then complete the requirements for the other. It is not necessary to repeat common requirements required of both certification tracks for the first certification – for example, the theology/scripture components need only be taken once. The requirements for the second certification are normally in the skills component.

VII. Formation Opportunities for All Catechetical and Youth Ministry Leaders

Formation opportunities that are suitable for leadership certification include Diocesan sponsored or approved inservices, workshops and programs, courses in the **The Kateri Institute for Lay Ministry Formation** program, **St. Bernard's School of Theology and Ministry** graduate courses, *Autumn Diocesan Gathering*, *Spring Enrichment* (leadership and advanced level courses), conferences sponsored by the *National Conference for Catechetical Leadership (NCCL)*, *National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM)*, *National Association for Lay Ministry (NALM)*, *National Catholic Education Association (NCEA)*, courses and programs, including online courses, from accredited colleges and universities and diocesan, vicariate, state and national workshops recommended by the Office of Lay Ministry and Parish Faith Formation.