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**ALLIANCE FOR THE CERTIFICATION OF
LAY ECCLESIAL MINISTERS
(ACLEM)**

Member Organizations:

**Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions
National Association for Lay Ministry
National Association of Pastoral Musicians
National Conference for Catechetical Leadership
National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry**

1 **NATIONAL CERTIFICATION STANDARDS**
2 **AND**
3 **CERTIFICATION PROCEDURES**
4 **FOR LAY ECCLESIAL MINISTERS**

5 **Serving as**
6 **Director of Worship**
7 **Parish Life Coordinator**
8 **Pastoral Associate**
9 **Director of Music Ministries**
10 **Parish Catechetical Leader**
11 **Youth Ministry Leader, including *Pastoral Juvenil Hispana***
12 **Diocesan Youth Ministry Leader**

13
14 **October 26, 2010 DRAFT**

15
16
17 **GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

18
19 Five national Catholic ministry associations have come together to form the Alliance for the
20 Certification of Lay Ecclesial Ministers (ACLEM), including the Federation of Diocesan
21 Liturgical Commissions (FDLC), the National Association for Lay Ministry (NALM), the
22 National Association of Pastoral Musicians (NPM), the National Conference for Catechetical
23 Leadership (NCCL), and the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM).
24 Task groups of the Alliance consisting of representatives from the five partner organizations
25 have been working together for the past several years to develop the certification standards
26 and procedures described in the following pages, which are herein presented to the
27 organizations for approval to authorize submission to the United States Conference of
28 Catholic Bishops Commission on Certification and Accreditation (USCCB/CCA).
29

30 The first section contains the proposed revision of the *National Certification Standards for*
31 *Lay Ecclesial Ministers*, originally approved in 2003 by the USCCB/CCA. The second
32 section contains a summary of the proposed national certification process. These standards
33 and procedures have been developed for the following lay ecclesial ministry roles:
34

- 35 • Director of Worship
- 36 • Parish Life Coordinator
- 37 • Pastoral Associate
- 38 • Director of Music Ministries
- 39 • Parish Catechetical Leader
- 40 • Youth Ministry Leader, including *Pastoral Juvenil Hispana*
- 41 • Diocesan Youth Ministry Leader
- 42

43 Following their approval by the USCCB/CCA in 2003 for a period of seven years, the
44 *National Certification Standards* were published in book form, and this book has proven to
45 be a useful resource for considering the various competencies required for lay ecclesial

1 ministry. Just two years later an important development in the field of lay ecclesial ministry
2 occurred with the publication of *Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord* after its adoption by
3 the USCCB. Following the *Program of Priestly Formation*, the bishops of the United States
4 viewed formation for ministry in a four-fold structure: human, spiritual, intellectual, and
5 pastoral. The USCCB/CCA indicated to ACLEM that any revision of the *National*
6 *Certification Standards* should follow the structure found in *Co-Workers*.

7
8 In 2007 ACLEM established two task groups: one to undertake a revision of the *National*
9 *Certification Standards* and another to develop a process for the certification of various
10 specialized ministries. In November 2009 the task groups circulated drafts of the proposed
11 certification standards and procedures to the member organizations of ACLEM and to a
12 variety of related organizations. Both groups revised their work rather substantially in
13 response to the feedback that they received. The proposed standards and procedures found
14 in this document are now being submitted to each of the five member organizations of
15 ACLEM for the approval of their policy-making bodies.

16
17 The standards name core competencies common to all lay ecclesial ministers as well as
18 specialized competencies for each of these lay ecclesial ministry roles. Similarly, the
19 certification procedures have common and specialized elements, since there are no “generic”
20 lay ecclesial ministers, only lay ecclesial ministers serving in specialized ministry roles, as
21 above.

22
23 There is an integral relationship between the certification standards and the certification
24 procedures described in the following pages. Candidates for certification will need to reflect
25 carefully on the standards and discern how well the various competencies are demonstrated
26 in their own lives and ministries. They will not only need to *know* about ministry but also be
27 able to *demonstrate* the necessary personal, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral competencies.

28
29 The ministry leaders who developed these standards and procedures did so to contribute to
30 the continuing development and formation of men and women who serve the Catholic
31 Church in the USA as lay ecclesial ministers. The work presented here is a testament to a
32 powerful shared commitment to well-prepared and fruitful lay ecclesial ministry. We trust
33 that this work will in turn have an enduring positive impact on our Catholic faith
34 communities. The standards and procedures described here also can serve as a resource for
35 the leaders and institutions that form persons for lay ecclesial ministry, including bishops,
36 pastors, diocesan offices, academic institutions, and ministry formation programs.

37
38 We who developed these standards and procedures on behalf of ACLEM offer our work to
39 our respective partner organizations for approval. We believe that this work, a product of
40 unprecedented national cooperation and collaboration, represents a significant contribution to
41 the unfolding reality of lay ecclesial ministry here in the United States.

42
43 *Standards Task Group*

44 William H. Johnston, NALM, *Chair*

45 Christopher C. Anderson, NALM

46 Catherine Combier-Donovan, FDLC

47 Charlotte McCorquodale, NFCYM

48 Leland D. Nagel, NCCL

49 Daniel Wyatt, NPM

- 1 *Process Task Group*
- 2 Sean P. Reynolds, NFCYM, *Chair*
- 3 Betty Deerwester, NALM
- 4 Kathleen DeJardin, NPM
- 5 Angela Gannon, CSJ, NALM
- 6 Kenneth Gleason, NCCL
- 7 Carol Jadach, NCCL
- 8 Robert McCarty, NFCYM
- 9 J. Michael McMahon, NPM
- 10 Lisa Tarker, FDLC
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SECTION ONE
PROPOSED NATIONAL CERTIFICATION STANDARDS

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Preface

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Feedback received from the consultation on a revised draft of standards and competencies for lay ecclesial ministry that took place between November 2009 and March 2010 with national ministry associations was largely positive. It affirmed that the draft material was clear and understandable, comprehensive, appropriate for the respective ministries, and realistic; and that it will be useful in the certification process and will help foster the development of lay ecclesial ministry in the USA.

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At the same time, several themes emerged with some consistency in the consultation feedback, offering either suggestions or requirements for change and improvement. First, the material needed to be made more relevant to the wide range of the cultural communities that constitute the Church in the USA. Second, the material appeared lengthy and somewhat complicated; simplification would represent improvement. Third, there were suggestions for additional competencies. Fourth, all responding organizations recommended keeping the indicators, which serve as illustrations of ways in which a competency could be demonstrated. However, there was considerable misunderstanding of what the indicators are and how they do and do not function in the process (see below).

44
45

The Standards Task Group (composed of representatives of all the partner associations of the Alliance) studied the feedback carefully and took steps to respond to each of these four points. First, with the help of some very useful follow-up consultation, efforts were made to make the competencies more reflective of and useful for the rich diversity of cultural contexts in which Church life and ministry take place in the USA today. This sensitivity, in fact, was the major focus of the revision of the consultation draft. Second, the standards and competencies are presented here in a simpler format. Third, various additions were made, for example, evangelization, supervision of volunteers, and management skills.

Fourth, the indicators—concrete examples of ways in which the competencies can be demonstrated—have been moved to an appendix. Moving them to a separate section allows the indicators to be seen more clearly for what they are, namely, *not* requirements that need to be met by those applying for certification but supplementary material meant only to assist those applying for certification and those reviewing such applications to see a few possible examples of the kind of behaviors that could demonstrate that an applicant possesses the competency in question. Some of those consulted seemed to understand the indicators to be a list of behaviors applicants needed to demonstrate; this is not the case. The indicators have also been expanded to account for a broader cultural diversity among lay ecclesial ministers and more culturally varied ministerial settings.

The Standards Task Group was grateful for the feedback, and believes the material presented here for your approval—the four standards with their core competencies and

1 each ministry association's specialized competencies—is greatly improved as a result of
2 that feedback.
3
4

1 1.7 Understand the power inherent in positions of pastoral leadership and be diligent
2 in the responsible exercise of such power, for example, regarding sexuality,
3 confidentiality, supervision of others, and decision making.
4
5

6 **Standard Two: Spiritual**

7 8 **2.0 Standard Two**

9 Sharing in the common priesthood of all the baptized, a lay ecclesial minister
10 demonstrates Christian spirituality as foundational to ministry, integrated in service with
11 the people of God, and possessing a sacramental view of the world that recognizes the
12 world can be a vessel of God's presence and God's transforming grace.
13

14 **Vision Statement**

15 Having encountered the person and message of Jesus Christ, the hunger of the lay
16 ecclesial minister for union with the Triune God is constant. The result of this hunger is
17 the call to holiness; built on the Word of God, experienced in the liturgy and sacraments,
18 formed through suffering, nurtured in joy, and sustained in community with all the
19 baptized and through the Church as Mystical Body. The minister gives witness to a well-
20 formed spirituality through a rich and diversified prayer life, theological reflection, and
21 action rooted in Catholic social teaching. Spiritual formation is grounded in the
22 understanding that "if ministry does not flow from a personal encounter and ongoing
23 relationship with the Lord, then no matter how 'accomplished' it may be in its methods
24 and activities, that ministry will lack the vital soul and source needed to bear lasting fruit"
25 (*Co-Workers*, p. 38). Therefore, open to the mystery of God's love and in touch with the
26 world's realities, all actions of the lay ecclesial minister flow from "that fundamental
27 conversion that places God, and not oneself, at the center of one's life" (*Co-Workers*, p.
28 38).
29

30 **Core Competencies**

31 A lay ecclesial minister will:
32

33 2.1 Give witness to an integrated spirituality formed by Scripture, theological
34 reflection, sacramental celebration, communal worship, and active participation in parish
35 life.
36

37 2.2 Live a life of private and communal prayer that is both formed by and reflective
38 of the breadth and depth of the Catholic spiritual tradition.
39

40 2.3 Bear witness to the profound significance of Eucharist in one's own life, in the
41 life of one's parish, and in the life of the whole Catholic community.
42

43 2.4 Demonstrate sensitivity to the spirituality of the sacred arts, i.e., art, music, and
44 architecture, and the value of their expression in liturgical and communal prayer.
45

1 2.5 Honor the call to ministry that is rooted in one's baptism by developing
2 ministerial goals that flow from one's spirituality and reflect an integration of Gospel
3 values.

4
5 2.6 Demonstrate an ability to discern the "signs of the times" and address current
6 realities in the Church and the world in light of the Gospel.

7
8 2.7 Accept and articulate one's ministerial vocation as coming from God and
9 confirmed by the ecclesial community.

10
11 2.8 Display openness to ecumenical prayer, work, and practices that promote
12 Christian unity, and acknowledge the gifts afforded the human community from the
13 various world religions.

14
15 2.9 Model the spirit of Jesus in one's life and identify with and promote the universal
16 Church and its global mission so that all prayer and ministerial activity flow from that
17 mission.

18
19 2.10 Develop a spirituality sensitive to diverse cultural expressions based on
20 conversion, communion, mission, and solidarity.

21 22 23 **Standard Three: Intellectual**

24 25 **3.0 Standard Three**

26 A lay ecclesial minister demonstrates understanding of the breadth of Catholic
27 theological and pastoral studies as well as the intellectual skill to use that knowledge in
28 ministry with God's people from diverse populations and cultures.

29 30 **Vision Statement**

31 "Formation for lay ecclesial ministry is a journey beyond catechesis into theological
32 study" (*Co-Workers*, p. 43). A lay ecclesial minister's faith and ministry is formed by the
33 study of the Catholic theological tradition focusing on the following core elements:
34 Scripture and its interpretation, dogmatic theology, Church history, liturgical and
35 sacramental theology, moral theology and Catholic social teaching, pastoral theology,
36 spirituality, canon law, ecumenism and inter-religious dialogue, the social sciences,
37 humanities, and culture and language studies. Based upon this study, a theologically
38 competent minister can articulate and interpret this Catholic theological tradition with
39 disciples from diverse communities. A key dynamic of effective lay ecclesial ministry is
40 the integration into ministry practices of the key documents and principal theories of
41 pastoral ministry.

42 43 **Core Competencies**

44 A lay ecclesial minister will:
45

1 3.1 *Scripture and revelation.* Know and integrate into ministerial practice a theology
2 of revelation as embodied in Scripture, tradition, and creation.

3
4 3.2 *Dogmatic theology.* Know and integrate into ministerial practice Trinitarian
5 theology, Christology, pneumatology, missiology, Christian anthropology, and
6 ecclesiology.

7
8 3.3 *Church history.* Know and integrate into ministerial practice a foundational
9 understanding of the major events in the history of the Church, with special attention to
10 the Second Vatican Council, and the perspective those events provide on the life of the
11 Church today.

12
13 3.4 *Liturgical and sacramental theology.* Know and integrate into ministerial
14 practice theologies of liturgy, worship, and sacraments.

15
16 3.5 *Moral theology and Catholic social teaching.* Know and integrate into ministerial
17 practice a theology of the moral life, including Catholic social teaching for the
18 transformation of Church and society.

19
20 3.6 *Pastoral theology.* Know and integrate into ministerial practice a theology of
21 pastoral ministry as well as guiding principles for the practice of ministry in a given
22 context.

23
24 3.7 *Spirituality.* Know and integrate the history and theology of Catholic spirituality
25 into prayer and ministerial practice.

26
27 3.8 *Canon law.* Know and integrate into ministerial practice a foundational
28 understanding of canon law.

29
30 3.9 *Ecumenism and interreligious dialogue.* Know and integrate into ministerial
31 practice a respect for other Christian communities and other religious traditions.

32
33 3.10 *Social sciences and humanities.* Know and integrate into ministerial practice a
34 foundational understanding of the social sciences and humanities.

35
36 3.11 *Culture and language studies.* Know and integrate into ministerial practice
37 knowledge of intercultural communication and linguistic/cultural skills.

38 39 40 **Standard Four: Pastoral**

41 42 **4.0 Standard Four**

43 A lay ecclesial minister demonstrates a range of leadership and pastoral skills needed for
44 functioning effectively in ministry.

45 46 **Vision Statement**

1 As a response to their baptismal call, lay ecclesial ministers accept the grace of leadership
2 and manifest a range of skills and pastoral gifts which allow them to function effectively
3 in ministry. In their role as evangelizers, they operate in a parochial setting which has
4 various dimensions—faith formation, worship, cultural diversity, community life, social
5 justice, and apostolic service. They are effective listeners who foster respect and offer
6 compassionate care within varied family, community, and cultural settings. In the spirit
7 of the Gospel, they serve others as companions on the journey of faith. These ministers
8 demonstrate good stewardship, work collaboratively with other lay and ordained
9 ministers, and exhibit human resource and management skills. They have an ability to
10 discern and nurture the gifts of all the baptized in order to build the Kingdom of God.
11 Lastly, these ministers embrace a professional code of ethics worthy of Catholic ministry
12 and abide by civil and Church law. “Pastoral formation cultivates the knowledge,
13 attitudes, and skills that directly pertain to effective functioning in the ministry setting
14 and that also pertain to pastoral administration that supports direct ministry” (*Co-
15 Workers*, page 47).

16

17 **Core Competencies**

18 A lay ecclesial minister will:

19

20 4.1 Exercise sound practices of compassionate pastoral care.

21

22 4.2 Foster a pastoral ministry that empowers people to inculturate the gospel in their
23 own culture and to foster unity in diversity in the Catholic Church by utilizing human,
24 spiritual, theological, and pastoral approaches proper to each culture.

25 4.3 Implement the principles and processes of evangelization and faith formation as
26 outlined in national and universal Church documents.

27

28 4.4 Employ the use of modern means of communication technology to proclaim the
29 gospel.

30

31 4.5 Work effectively with others through utilizing leadership skills of collaboration,
32 visioning, planning, communication, decision making, delegation, and conflict
33 management.

34

35 4.6 Exercise effective supervision of employees (part-time or full-time) and
36 volunteers.

37

38 4.7 Continually seek opportunities to improve skills.

39

40 4.8 Develop and nurture the prayer life of the community in which one serves.

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1 **Catechetical Leader: Specialized Competencies**

2
3 By their baptism every Christian is called to proclaim the Good News. The Spirit singles
4 out individual and invites them to the specialized role of catechetical leader within their
5 faith community, and many respond in faith to that invitation. As competent catechetical
6 leaders they collaborate with others in creating a culture of formation within their faith
7 communities that enables each committed Christian to nurture and grow in their
8 relationship with God.

9
10 As such the catechetical leader will be well formed in the study of catechesis—its
11 theology, its history, and its right praxis.

12
13 A parish catechetical leader will:

14
15 CL 1 Direct the parish catechetical program through design, implementation, and
16 evaluation of parish catechetical processes.

17
18 CL 2 Implement the catechumenate model as inspiration for catechesis in age-
19 appropriate ways.

20
21 CL 3 Develop a comprehensive life-long vision and plan for parish catechesis based on
22 ecclesial catechetical documents.

23
24 CL 4 Insure the centrality of catechesis in the development of the parish as an
25 evangelizing and catechizing community.

26
27 CL 5 Develop and implement parish catechetical policies in accord with (arch) diocesan
28 policies and guidelines.

29
30 CL 6 Provide orientation and in-servicing of catechetical committee members and
31 formation teams in their areas of responsibility.

32
33 CL 7 Exercise effective supervision of catechetical employees and volunteers while
34 fostering leadership abilities.

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36

1 **Director of Worship: Specialized Competencies**

2 The arch/bishop is the chief liturgist of his arch/diocese. He appoints the pastor and other
3 ministers to care for the liturgical life of his people. In collaboration with these ministers,
4 a competent lay liturgist will prepare and execute liturgies with style and grace. He/she
5 will be responsible for the liturgical formation of the assemblies, especially those
6 ministers who serve the assemblies in liturgical celebrations.

7

8 In addition to the competencies and standards listed above, the lay liturgist will be well
9 formed in the study of sacred liturgy—its theology, its history, and its right praxis.

10

11 A director of worship will:

12

13 DW 1 Demonstrate an ability to evaluate liturgical celebrations in fidelity to the official
14 liturgical books and Catholic liturgical theology.

15

16 DW 2 Demonstrate an ability to explain the history of Catholic liturgy and the cultural
17 contexts which impacted it.

18

19 DW 3 Demonstrate proficiency and intercultural sensitivity in preparing, coordinating,
20 and implementing communal prayer and liturgy by appropriately celebrating the
21 seasons, weeks, days, and hours of the liturgical year and the sanctoral cycle.

22

23 DW 4. Demonstrate facility with the Church's official liturgical books and be able to
24 implement the various rites used in celebrating the sacraments of the Church in
25 their appropriate liturgical contexts.

26

27 DW 5 Demonstrate familiarity with the richness of the devotional and sacramental life of
28 the Church and guide its authentic celebration in a parish or broader context.

29

30 DW 6 Develop a parish program for the effective formation, training, enrichment,
31 supervision, and evaluation of liturgical ministers and a similar program for a
32 parish worship committee.

33

34 DW 7 Create opportunities for liturgical catechesis: catechesis through liturgy, catechesis
35 for liturgy, and the link between liturgy and social justice.

36

37 DW 8 Demonstrate an understanding of the ritual, spiritual, and cultural dimensions of
38 music as integral to the sacred liturgy, and demonstrate the ability to collaborate in
39 evaluating its musical, liturgical, and pastoral appropriateness in a particular rite.

40

41 DW 9 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of current legislation, documentation,
42 and pastoral practice in order to prepare liturgical rites and celebrations.

43

1 DW 10 Develop parish liturgical and music guidelines and policies in accord with
2 universal and diocesan norms.

3

4 DW 11 Develop a comprehensive and long-range vision for parish liturgical life based on
5 Church documents and directives.

6 *It is assumed that a Diocesan Director of Liturgy, one who serves the bishop and clergy*
7 *and the faithful of the diocese, will possess at least a master's degree in liturgical studies*
8 *from an accredited university program.*

9

10

1 **Director of Music Ministries: Specialized Competencies**

2
3 The parish or arch/diocesan director of music ministries is the person who organizes and
4 directs the program of sacred music for the liturgical and devotional life of the parish or
5 arch/diocese under the direction of the pastor or bishop and in collaboration with the
6 pastoral staff.

7
8 In addition to the competencies and standards listed above, the director will be well
9 formed in the art of music and study of liturgy.

10
11 A director of music ministries will:

12
13 DMM 1. Demonstrate knowledge of music theory and harmony, including basic
14 understandings of orchestration, counterpoint, and harmonic analysis.

15
16 DMM 2. Have knowledge of and competency in the historical treasury, contemporary
17 body, and multi-cultural expressions of church music and demonstrate skills to
18 use them effectively within the worship life of the parish or diocesan community.

19
20 DMM 3. Demonstrate knowledge of liturgical history, legislation, documentation, and
21 current pastoral and cultural practices in order to prepare liturgical rites and
22 celebrations.

23
24 DMM 4. Demonstrate knowledge of the rites of the Church and their theological
25 underpinnings for preparing and planning parish and diocesan prayer and
26 liturgical celebrations.

27
28 DMM 5. Promote and develop the art of music as an integral and necessary part of the
29 sacred liturgy and as a constitutive element of the Catholic faith experience.

30
31 DMM 6. Demonstrate skills in leading congregational song, choral conducting, and at
32 least one other musical specialization (organ, piano, guitar, voice).

33
34 DMM 7. Develop parish music and liturgy guidelines and policies in accord with
35 universal and diocesan norms.

36
37 DMM 8. Develop a comprehensive and long-range vision for the parish music and
38 liturgical life based on Church documents and directives and sensitivity to
39 intercultural needs in order to promote full, conscious, and active participation of
40 all the people.

41
42 DMM 9. Recognize, motivate, and empower musical talent and skills from the parish
43 community with special attention to children, youth, and young adults.

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1 **Parish Life Coordinator: Specialized Competencies**

2
3 A parish life coordinator is a professional minister who is entrusted by the arch/diocesan
4 bishop with the pastoral care of a parish (Canon 517.2). In collaboration with a
5 presbyteral moderator appointed by the diocesan bishop, the parish life coordinator has
6 the responsibility of overseeing the entire Catholic community within a specific locale.
7 The parish life coordinator enables and empowers the community to be a sign of the
8 reality of the Kingdom of God.

9
10 A parish life coordinator will:

11
12 PLC 1 Exercise responsibility for coordinating the pastoral care of the parish in all of its
13 dimensions: communal, liturgical, prophetic-catechetical, service, evangelizing, and
14 institutional.

15
16 PLC 2 Exhibit a capacity for leadership and collaboration in all aspects of parish life and
17 ministry including multicultural competencies appropriate to the diversity of the
18 community.

19
20 PLC 3 Seek the guidance of parishioners as expressed by the parish council, the parish
21 trustees, and other collaborative structures in the parish and/or region.

22
23 PLC 4 Foster the spiritual growth of all parishioners and encourage them to put their
24 talents and their baptismal gifts/charisms at the service of others.

25
26 PLC 5 Integrate Catholic social justice teachings within ministry by incorporating
27 opportunities for justice and service to the Church and broader community and provide
28 theological reflection on those opportunities.

29
30 PLC 6 Develop a parish rich in worship and prayer in all of its dimensions by
31 collaborating with the worship committee and the sacramental minister (Canon 517.2) in
32 providing for the liturgical and sacramental life of the parish.

33
34 PLC 7 Promote the ministry of the word and preach effectively in appropriate pastoral
35 settings in accord with national and diocesan/eparchial norms.

36
37 PLC 8 Preside at liturgies, including Sunday celebrations in the absence of a priest, in
38 accord with liturgical principles and national and diocesan/eparchial norms.

39
40 PLC 9 Provide pastoral care and assistance to petitioners and respondents in marriage
41 nullity cases.

42
43 PLC 10 Exercise effective pastoral care for the sick, the dying, and the grieving in
44 the parish community.

45
46 PLC 11 Initiate, develop, and support specialized pastoral ministries according to

1 the needs of the parish community.

2

3 PLC 12 Collaborate in the catechesis and pastoral care of those preparing for
4 sacraments and promote life-long faith formation for all parishioners.

5

6 PLC 13 Collaborate effectively with organizations, diocesan and parish staff and
7 groups, parish lay ecclesial ministers, the presbyteral moderator, and the sacramental
8 moderator (Canon 517.2).

9

10 PLC 14 Collaborate with the local diocese in a way that honors its vision for
11 pastoral care of parishes, its programs for parish enrichment, its policies and procedures
12 for parish administration, the sacramental moderator who represents the bishop and the
13 diocese, and the deanery or regional structure in which the parish resides.

14

15 PLC 15 Ensure the observance of all applicable civil laws and accepted non-profit
16 management practices.

17

18 PLC 16 Oversee the proper care for and use of parish facilities in accord with
19 diocesan/eparchial norms and civil law.

20

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Pastoral Associate: Specialized Competencies

A pastoral associate is a professional minister who shares the overall care of the parish with the pastor or on-site pastoral team. He/she is a member of the parish staff, usually full-time, and is accountable to the pastor. The ministry of the pastoral associate is comprehensive, relating to all aspects of parish life, but with designated responsibilities, e.g., liturgy, faith formation and development, administration, pastoral care, or social outreach. The responsibilities assigned to the pastoral associate depend on the needs of the parish and the gifts of the pastoral associate as well as the gifts of other members of the pastoral staff.

A pastoral associate will:

PA 1 Exhibit a capacity for leadership and collaboration in all aspects of parish life and ministry including multicultural competencies appropriate to the diversity of the community.

PA 2 Recognize, address, respect, and assist with the implementation of the parish vision and mission.

PA 3 Foster the faith life of the community by providing opportunities that address the spiritual, moral, and life-long formation of all parishioners.

PA 4 Promote evangelization as one of the primary activities of one's ministry.

PA 5 Demonstrate a sensitivity to the multicultural concerns that affect the community and seek ways to celebrate its cultural diversity.

PA 6 Engage in appropriate and effective communication with persons of cultures other than one's own and recognize the need to develop intercultural competencies.

PA 7 Integrate Catholic social justice teachings within ministry by incorporating opportunities for justice and service to the Church and broader community including theological reflection on those opportunities.

PA 8 Preach effectively in appropriate pastoral settings in accord with national and diocesan norms.

PA 9 Preside at liturgies, including Sunday celebrations in the absence of a priest, in accord with liturgical principles and national and diocesan/eparchial norms.

PA 10 Provide pastoral care and assistance to petitioners and respondents in marriage nullity cases.

PA 11 Collaborate in the catechesis and pastoral care of those preparing for sacraments.

1 PA 12 Exercise effective pastoral care of the sick, the dying, and the grieving in the
2 parish community.

3

4 PA 13 Initiate, develop, and support specialized pastoral ministries according to the
5 needs of the parish community.

6

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1 **Youth Ministry Leader, Including *Pastoral Juvenil Hispana*:**
2 **Specialized Competencies**

3
4 A lay ecclesial minister serving as a youth ministry leader is responsible for overseeing
5 ministerial efforts directed to all the Catholic youth (*adolescentes* in Spanish) in a parish,
6 a school, and/or a community-based setting, and is pastorally responsive to the ethnic and
7 cultural makeup thereof. An important and unique form of ministry in the United States
8 is *pastoral juvenil Hispana* (PJH), which serves unmarried youth and young adults, often
9 together. Ministry with Hispanic young people requires the competencies presented
10 below for all youth ministry leaders (YML 1-4.1), plus those specific for *pastoral juvenil*
11 *Hispana* (PJH 4.2).

12
13 A youth ministry/*pastoral juvenil Hispana* leader will:

14 YML 1.0 Demonstrate an understanding of the history, mission, vision, goals,
15 principles, themes, components, and dimensions of Catholic youth ministry and
16 *pastoral juvenil Hispana* as outlined in the U.S. bishops' pastoral plans and related
17 Church documents.

18 YML 2.0 Demonstrate an understanding of the developmental needs of youth and young
19 adults in the U.S. context, with its particular popular, ethnic, and family sub-cultures, as
20 appropriate to the faith community being served.

21 YML 3.0 Be capable of applying the theories, models, processes methods, resources,
22 and best practices of Catholic youth ministry and/or *pastoral juvenil Hispana* as
23 appropriate to the ministry setting.

24 YML 4.0 Demonstrate the ability to collaborate with the faith community in
25 planning, implementing, and evaluating outreach to and pastoral ministry for
26 young people, utilizing the components of Catholic youth ministry and/or mission
27 and principles of *pastoral juvenil Hispana* as appropriate to the ministry setting.

28 YML 4.1 Be capable of implementing the components of Catholic youth
29 ministry with young people by:

30 4.1.1 Utilizing the aims, principles, processes, and methods of catechesis
31 with youth in implementing faith formation.

32 4.1.2 Facilitating the development of community among youth, their
33 families, and within the Church and society, including the
34 development of small faith communities by youth from different
35 cultures, spiritualities, or pastoral models.

36 4.1.3 Inviting youth to and facilitating opportunities for youth to
37 grow in intimate relationship with Jesus Christ and empowering
38 them to live and witness as disciples in today's world.

1 4.1.4 Engaging youth in the social mission of the Church in accord with
2 Catholic social teaching.

3 4.1.5 Fostering healing and promoting healthy growth and development
4 in youth and in their relationships as a vital part of their human and
5 Christian maturity process.

6 4.1.6 Empowering youth to celebrate and deepen their relationship with
7 the triune God through individual and communal prayer and
8 participation in the liturgical and devotional life of the Church.

9
10 4.1.7 Engaging the Church and the broader community in voicing and
11 addressing the rights, responsibilities, and needs of youth.

12
13 4.1.8 Affirming and calling forth the unique gifts of youth and the adults
14 serving them by providing opportunities for their ongoing spiritual
15 growth, leadership development, and vocation discernment.

16
17 PJH 4.2.0 Be capable of implementing the mission and principles of *pastoral*
18 *juvenil Hispana* with young people by:

19
20 4.2.1 Facilitating the development of a personal and communal
21 relationship between the young people and the Triune God—Father,
22 Son, and Holy Spirit.

23
24 4.2.2 Drawing young people into a deeper communion and participation
25 in the life and evangelizing mission of the Church as missionary
26 disciples of Christ, especially with respect to their peers.

27
28 4.2.3 Fostering a “*pastoral de conjunto*” across organized ministries and
29 *pastoral juvenil Hispana* committees (i.e., catechesis, sports/recreation,
30 prayer, Scripture study, choir, drama, dance, prevention, intervention,
31 academic assistance, etc.), geographies (intra-parish, inter-parish,
32 diocesan, regional, national, international), groups, communities, and
33 movements.

34
35 4.2.4 Recognizing and fostering the gifts and protagonism* of
36 adolescents and *jóvenes* in *pastoral juvenil Hispana* and in the mission
37 of the Church in their homes, neighborhoods, and wider community.

38
39 4.2.5 Implementing holistic faith formation processes that include:
40 vocational discernment, continuous conversion, catechesis, liturgy,
41 personal and communal prayer, and popular piety.

42
43 4.2.6 Nurturing the preservation of the Spanish language and cultural
44 traditions, values, and customs in order to promote a sound Latino
45 integrated with ~~their~~ Catholic identity through an evangelizing process

1 of inculturation.

2
3 4.2.7 Creating pastoral models and open ecclesial spaces that are
4 linguistically and socio-culturally appropriate for Latino adolescents and
5 *jóvenes* of diverse backgrounds, based on a pastoral plan that responds
6 to their needs, in a Church that is a community of communities with
7 shared leadership and vision.

8
9 4.2.8 Taking the personal, sociocultural, and religious reality of the
10 young people as the starting point for ministry and utilizing the pastoral
11 circle methodology to engage them in a critical analysis that leads to
12 finding ways to build the Reign of God in their own surroundings.

13
14 4.2.9 Promoting academic education among Latino young people;
15 offering means to help them reach a high school diploma, decrease the
16 high level of Latino drop outs, increase attendance to higher education,
17 and guiding young people toward greater personal and professional
18 achievement.

19
20 4.2.10 Prioritizing service and outreach to young people who find
21 themselves in situations of poverty, loneliness, crisis, marginalization,
22 and discrimination.

23
24 4.2.11 Accompanying the young people in their development as whole
25 persons through processes that integrate all the dimensions of life and
26 faith, as they move from preadolescence to adolescence and young
27 adulthood.

28
29 * Protagonism: This concept is essential in *pastoral juvenil*; it indicates that young
30 people are the main pastoral agents among their peers, and that the role of the adults is
31 to empower them by: (a) helping them assume their baptismal call; (b) accompanying
32 them in their faith journey; (c) advising them in their efforts of ministering to their
33 peers; and (d) supporting them as they undertake and fulfill their call to evangelize
34 their contemporaries and transform their social environment according to gospel
35 values, as indicated in many Church documents.
36
37
38

1 **Diocesan Youth Ministry Leader: Specialized Competencies**

2 As an agent of the local ordinary, a diocesan youth ministry leader (DYML) has the
3 necessary competencies to oversee, assess, develop, model, and promote Catholic youth
4 ministry and/or *pastoral juvenil Hispana* as appropriate to the local culture(s) and
5 demographics of the arch/diocese.

6 A diocesan youth ministry leader will:

7 DYML 1.0 Demonstrate an understanding of the history, mission, vision, goals,
8 principles, themes, components and dimensions of Catholic youth ministry and
9 *pastoral juvenil Hispana* as outlined in the U.S. bishops' pastoral plans and related
10 Church documents.

11 DYML 2.0 Demonstrate an understanding of the developmental needs of youth and
12 young adults in the U.S. context, with its particular popular, ethnic, and family sub-
13 cultures, as appropriate to the faith communities being served.

14 DYML 3.0 Be capable of applying the theories, models, processes, methods, resources,
15 and best practices of Catholic youth ministry and/or *pastoral juvenil Hispana* as
16 appropriate to various ministry settings.

17 DYML 4.0 Demonstrate capability in advocacy as a spokesperson for young people and
18 youth ministry to the Church and the civic community.

19
20 DYML 5.0 Demonstrate the ability to develop, implement, and oversee arch/diocesan
21 policies and procedures regarding child safety/protection and ministerial ethics in accord
22 with the *USCCB Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*.

23
24 DYML 6.0 Be capable of designing, organizing, and implementing gathered youth
25 ministry programming, including retreats, conferences, rallies, pilgrimages, etc
26

27 DYML 7.0 Be capable of providing consultation, training and resources for
28 comprehensive parish youth ministry, including *pastoral juvenil Hispana*.

29
30 DYML 8.0 Be capable of cultivating volunteers through professional youth ministry
31 leadership, including applying best practices in hiring.

32
33 DYML 9.0 Demonstrate the ability to develop and lead pastoral planning for youth
34 ministry in accord with arch/diocesan priorities, structures, policies, procedures, and
35 resources.

36
37 DYML 10.0 Demonstrate the ability to lead and manage an arch/diocesan office,
38 including supervision of staff, managing a budget, and collaborating with other
39 arch/diocesan offices and departments.

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SECTION TWO

PROPOSED NATIONAL CERTIFICATION PROCESS AND PROCEDURES

8

Preface

9 The proposed certification process and procedures described here provide a way for
10 candidates to be assessed relative to the core and specialized competencies articulated in
11 the revised *National Certification Standards for Lay Ecclesial Ministers*.

12 In developing this certification process, the five partner organizations in the Alliance for
13 Certification of Lay Ecclesial Ministers (ACLEM) have collaborated on a common
14 approach to assessing competence for ministry and at the same time have developed their
15 own criteria for assessing the competencies needed for each of the following specialized
16 ministries:

- 17
- 18 • Director of Worship
 - 19 • Pastoral Associate
 - 20 • Parish Life Coordinator
 - 21 • Director of Music Ministries
 - 22 • Parish Catechetical Leader
 - 23 • Youth Ministry Leader, including *Pastoral Juvenil Hispana*
 - 24 • Diocesan Youth Ministry Leader
- 25

26 *Administration of the Certification Process*

27

28 During the course of their work toward certification in one of the specialized ministries,
29 candidates will encounter three groups involved in the administration of the process.

30

31 *Partner Certification Review Committee (PCRC)*. Each of the five ACLEM partner
32 organizations will establish a PCRC that receives, reviews, and approves applications to
33 begin the certification process; appoints and monitors the work of certification advisors;
34 receives, reviews, and approves the completed portfolios of certification candidates; and
35 sends approved portfolios to the National Certification Review Committee.

36

37 *National Certification Review Committee (NCRC)*. ACLEM will establish an NCRC
38 made up of one representative from each of the PCRCs. The NCRC reviews and
39 approves the submission of final applications and portfolios that have been approved by
40 the PCRCs and makes the recommendation for certification of candidates to the Alliance
41 Commission.

42

43 *Alliance Commission (AC)*. The AC is the governing body of ACLEM. In addition to
44 its governance role, the AC reviews recommendations for certification from the NCRC

1 and is responsible for final approval and granting of certification for each of the
2 specialized ministries. Certification for each specialized ministry is granted in the name
3 of both the Alliance and the respective partner organization.

4
5 In addition, an *Alliance Appeals Panel* will be established to address grievances and
6 appeals from candidates when these have not been resolved to their satisfaction by the
7 NCRC and the AC. In each case the determination of the Appeals Panel is to be
8 considered final.

9 10 *Consultation on the Certification Process*

11
12 From November 2009 through March 2010, each of the five partner organizations and a
13 number of other organizations offered feedback on the proposed process for certification
14 of lay ecclesial ministers. The task group responsible for designing the certification
15 process carefully considered the responses that it received and made substantial changes,
16 especially regarding simplification, clarity, attention to cultural differences, and how best
17 to demonstrate intellectual competence. These concerns have been addressed primarily
18 in the development of a certification portfolio that provides for clarity and flexibility.

19
20 The certification portfolio is a collection of documents assembled by the candidate that
21 provide various types of evidence of one's competence for a particular lay ecclesial
22 ministry. Based on the *National Certification Standards for Lay Ecclesial Ministers*, the
23 portfolio includes several different ways by which the candidate can demonstrate his or
24 her competence, such as:

- 25
- 26 • *testimony*, in the form of assessments provided by the candidate, a supervisor, a
27 peer in ministry, and a subordinate;
- 28 • *evidence of successful academic study* in theology, pastoral ministry, and other
29 fields appropriate to each ministry, or other methods that manifest competence in
30 these areas of study;
- 31 • *demonstration of ability* in one's own particular ministerial specialization, such as
32 a project, program description, or recital;
- 33 • *integration paper* that shows the candidate's ability to approach ministry in a way
34 that includes one's personal, spiritual, intellectual, pastoral, and specialized
35 competencies.
- 36

37 The task group developed a portfolio structure that includes a number of common
38 elements. Within that common structure, each organization has also specified elements
39 particular to individual ministries. For example, while specifying the number of hours
40 of course work expected in theology, pastoral ministry, and other areas of intellectual
41 formation, each organization has also provided for equivalencies—various ways that
42 intellectual competence may be demonstrated.

1 **PROPOSED NATIONAL CERTIFICATION PROCESS AND PROCEDURES**

2
3 The proposed certification process consists of three steps:

- 4
- 5 1. Application for Admission to the Certification Process.
- 6 2. Certification Preparation Process.
- 7 3. Submission of Certification Documentation for Review and Decision.
- 8

9 In these three steps, the Alliance has provided a process and procedures that will allow
10 applicants sufficient time and the opportunity to work closely with an advisor in
11 developing and compiling the necessary documentation for certification as well as
12 addressing the development of necessary competencies.

13 14 15 **Step One. Application for Admission to the Certification Process**

- 16
- 17 1. Prerequisites for admission to the certification process
- 18 a. Education in a field related to one's specialized ministry (for example, a
- 19 bachelor's degree or equivalent).
- 20 b. A minimum of three years of full-time (min. 30 hrs./week) or six years of
- 21 part-time (min. 15 hrs./week) pastoral ministry experience in the particular
- 22 ministry specialization.
- 23 2. Application
- 24 a. Each partner organization will provide the application form and other
- 25 related application materials and determine the deadline(s) for accepting
- 26 applications for admission to the certification process.
- 27 b. Applications will be submitted to the appropriate Partner Certification
- 28 Review Committee.
- 29 c. Applications will include:
- 30 i. Three references, one from the pastor (or equivalent) and two from
- 31 colleagues in ministry who have observed the candidate in
- 32 ministry.
- 33 ii. Ministerial autobiography with information on the applicant's
- 34 human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral formation and
- 35 experience.
- 36 iii. Other standard information, such as:
- 37 1. Evidence of full communion with the Catholic Church.
- 38 2. Education/formation history,
- 39 3. Ministry experience: A minimum of three years of full-time
- 40 staff-level (min. 30 hrs./week) or six years of part-time (15

1 hrs./week) staff-level pastoral ministry experience in the
2 particular ministry specialization.

3 4. Criminal offense record information.

4 5. Application fee, to be set by each partner organization in
5 consultation with the Alliance Commission.

6 3. Application Review and Decision

7 a. One member of the PCRC will conduct a conversation with each applicant
8 to review his/her materials. Each application will then be submitted for
9 approval by the full PCRC.

10 b. Applications are approved based on:

11 i. The applicant's qualifications.

12 ii. The potential of the applicant to complete the certification process.

13 iii. The applicant's suitability for ministry.

14 c. Decisions of the PCRC on admission to the certification process will be
15 communicated in a timely fashion.

16

17 **Step Two. Certification Preparation Process**

18 1. Preparation of the Candidate

19

20 a. Upon acceptance into the certification process, each candidate conducts a
21 self-assessment to determine his or her strengths, qualifications,
22 challenges and weaknesses in relation to the certification standards. The
23 self-assessment also includes a checklist of elements to be included in the
24 certification portfolio to determine which have been completed and which
25 remain to be fulfilled. If appropriate, the candidate then draws up a plan
26 for completion of all components in the certification portfolio.

27

28 b. The candidate may be assisted by a certification advisor in performing the
29 self-assessment and developing a plan for completion of requirements for
30 the certification portfolio.

31

32 c. When the candidate (and advisor, if appropriate) have determined that the
33 portfolio is completed, the candidate then submits the portfolio to the
34 PCRC with a request that certification be granted (see Step 3 below).

35

36 2. Certification Advisor

37

38 a. Advisor Selection, Preparation and Appointment:

- 1 i. Policies and Procedures: The Alliance Commission establishes
2 policies and procedures regarding recruitment, selection,
3 preparation, and appointment of advisors.
- 4 ii. Recruitment and selection: Each PCRC will appoint advisors,
5 based on the following criteria:
 - 6 1. Competence in the ministry specialization.
 - 7 2. Willingness to become thoroughly knowledgeable about
8 the certification process.
- 9 iii. Orientation and ongoing formation of advisors shall include:
 - 10 1. Mission of the organization and how certification fits into
11 that mission.
 - 12 2. Mission, goals, policies, and procedures of the certification
13 process.
 - 14 3. Skills, including but not limited to:
 - 15 a. Facilitating learning through assessment and
16 planning.
 - 17 b. Coaching, advising, problem-solving, resourcing.
 - 18 c. Tracking progress.
- 19 b. Role and Responsibilities:
 - 20 i. Assist the applicant in self-assessment to build on strengths,
21 identify areas in which additional formation is needed, and develop
22 a plan to address them.
 - 23 ii. Assist the applicant in gathering documentation and assembling the
24 portfolio.
 - 25 iii. Coach, advise, and suggest resources as necessary.
 - 26 iv. Determine when and if the candidate's portfolio is suitable for
27 submission.
 - 28 v. Recommend in a final report to the PCRC whether or not to
29 certify.
- 30 c. Stipend: Advisors shall receive a stipend for their service. The Alliance
31 Commission will determine the amount.

32 **Step Three. Submission of Certification Documentation for Review and Decision**

33 *Submission of Portfolio*

34 Each candidate assembles and submits to the PCRC a portfolio documenting evidence of
35 competence relative to approved certification standards, including the pertinent
36
37

1 specialized standards. The table on the following pages provides a summary of portfolio
2 requirements for certification candidates for each lay ecclesial ministry specialization.
3
4
5

LAY ECCLESIAL MINISTRY	Director of Worship (FDLC)	Parish Life Coordinator (NALM)	Pastoral Associate (NALM)	Director of Music Ministries (NPM)
Cover Letter	A cover letter in which the applicant formally requests certification			
Application Materials	All initial application materials for admission to the certification process			
Assessments	Written assessments by the candidate, supervisor, a peer or colleague, a subordinate, and the bishop or diocesan director	Written assessments by the candidate, supervisor, a peer or colleague, and a subordinate		
Evidence of Theological Study	120 clock hours or 12 credits in four core disciplines, with an additional 120 hours to be completed before the first renewal of certification. Equivalency may be demonstrated by a paper, examination, lecture, or other approved method	Master's degree in theology, pastoral ministry, or allied field. Equivalency in one or more of the core theological areas may be demonstrated by a combination of research paper, lecture, or other approved method	Preferably a master's degree in theology, pastoral ministry, or allied field. Minimum of 300 clock hours or 30 credits. Equivalency in one or more of the core theological areas may be demonstrated by a combination of research paper, lecture, or other approved method	120 clock hours or 12 credits in four core disciplines, with an additional 120 hours to be completed before the first renewal of certification. Equivalency may be demonstrated by a paper, examination, lecture, or other approved method

1

Evidence of Specialized Study	18 graduate or undergraduate credits in liturgical studies. Equivalency may be demonstrated by a paper, examination, lecture, or other approved method	N/A	N/A	Preferably a master's degree in liturgical music or related disciplines. Minimum of 18 graduate hours of musical study. Equivalency may be demonstrated by examination, paper, lecture, or other approved method.
Demonstration of Competence in One's Specialized Ministry	Evidence of successful completion of major parish or arch/diocesan liturgical celebrations	Evidence of successful leadership in a pastoral context (e.g., job description, programs, planning documents)	Evidence of successful leadership in a pastoral context (e.g., job description, programs, planning documents)	Evidence of successful completion of juried recital or concert in one's area of musical concentration
Integration Paper	Integration paper that applies personal, spiritual, theological, pastoral, and specialized competence to the practice of pastoral ministry			

2

3

LAY ECCLESIAL MINISTRY	Parish Catechetical Leader (NCCL)	Diocesan Youth Ministry Leader (NFCYM)	Youth Ministry Leader, Including <i>Pastoral Juvenil Hispana</i> (NFCYM)
Letter	A cover letter in which the applicant formally requests certification		
Application Materials	All initial application materials for admission to the certification process		
Assessments	Written assessments by the candidate, supervisor, a peer or colleague, and a subordinate	Written assessments by the candidate, supervisor, a peer or colleague, a subordinate, and the diocesan director	
Evidence of Theological Study	<p>Preferably a graduate degree in catechesis, religious education, theology, or allied field. Equivalency may be demonstrated by providing certificates or diplomas and transcripts from diocesan, national, or foreign pastoral institutes. Equivalency may also be demonstrated by a paper, examination, lecture, or other approved method.</p>	<p>Preferably a master's degree in theology, pastoral ministry, or allied field. Equivalency in one or more of the core theological areas may be demonstrated by a combination of research paper, lecture, or other approved method</p>	<p>120 clock hours or 12 credits in four core disciplines, with an additional 120 hours to be completed before the first renewal of certification. Equivalency may be demonstrated by a paper, examination, lecture, or other approved method. Equivalency may also be demonstrated by providing certificates or diplomas and transcripts from diocesan, national, or foreign pastoral institutes.</p>
Evidence of Specialized Study	120 hours of training and formation in catechesis and/or	120 hours of youth ministry training and formation	90 hours of training and formation in youth ministry and/or <i>pastoral</i>

	<p>religious education. Equivalency may be demonstrated by a paper, examination, lecture, or other approved method. An additional 90 hours to be completed before the first renewal of certification. Equivalency may be demonstrated by a paper, examination, lecture, or other approved method.</p>		<p><i>juvenil Hispana (PJH)</i>. For PJH candidates, additional evidence of knowledge and skill in various aspects of Hispanic ministry.</p>
<p>Demonstration of Competence in One's Specialized Ministry</p>	<p>Evidence of successful leadership in a catechetical context (e.g., job description, meeting outlines, program brochures)</p>	<p>(1) Overview of a three-month period in ministry, showing successful implementation of two diocesan programs or projects. (2) Outline of a sample presentation on Catholic youth ministry and/or <i>pastoral juvenil Hispana</i></p>	<p>Overview of a three-month period in ministry, including evidence of successful implementation of two programs or projects</p>
<p>Integration Paper</p>	<p>Integration paper that applies personal, spiritual, theological, pastoral, and specialized competence to the practice of pastoral ministry</p>		

1
2

1 *Approval and Granting of Certification*

2 There are three formal approvals pursuant to certification, as follows:

3 1. Approval by the PCRC

- 4 a. Each partner organization will determine the date(s) for accepting
5 portfolios.
- 6 b. The PCRC reviews and approves each candidate's portfolio. Decisions
7 are made based upon satisfactory documentation of competence relative to
8 approved standards and the recommendation of the certification advisor.

9 2. Approval by the NCRC

- 10 a. Portfolios approved by the PCRC are forwarded to the NCRC.
- 11 b. Decisions by the NCRC are made based upon satisfactory documentation
12 of competence relative to approved standards and recommendation of the
13 PCRC.

14 3. Approval by the AC

- 15 a. Affirmative recommendations for certification by the NCRC are
16 forwarded to the AC.
- 17 b. The AC renders final decisions to grant certification in the name of
18 ACLEM.

19 4. Communication of decision

- 20 a. Certification decisions will be communicated to candidates in writing
21 within thirty days of the decision.
- 22 b. The term of initial certification is seven years.

23

24 *Renewal of Certification*

25

26 Certification renewal is contingent upon evidence of commitment to ongoing ministry
27 formation and education and continuing good standing relative to one's partner
28 organization's code of ethics. Certification renewal standards and procedures will be
29 provided at the time of granting of certification, and formal notification of upcoming
30 renewal will be sent one year before expiration.

31

32 Renewal of certification takes place every seven years upon approval of a completed
33 certification renewal application.