

*Deepen your Catholic faith and develop your pastoral abilities through the Lay Formation Institute.*



**“Through the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist every Christian is called to participate actively and co-responsibly in the Church's mission of salvation in the world”**

– U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Called and Gifted for the Third Millennium*.



**Office of Ministries**  
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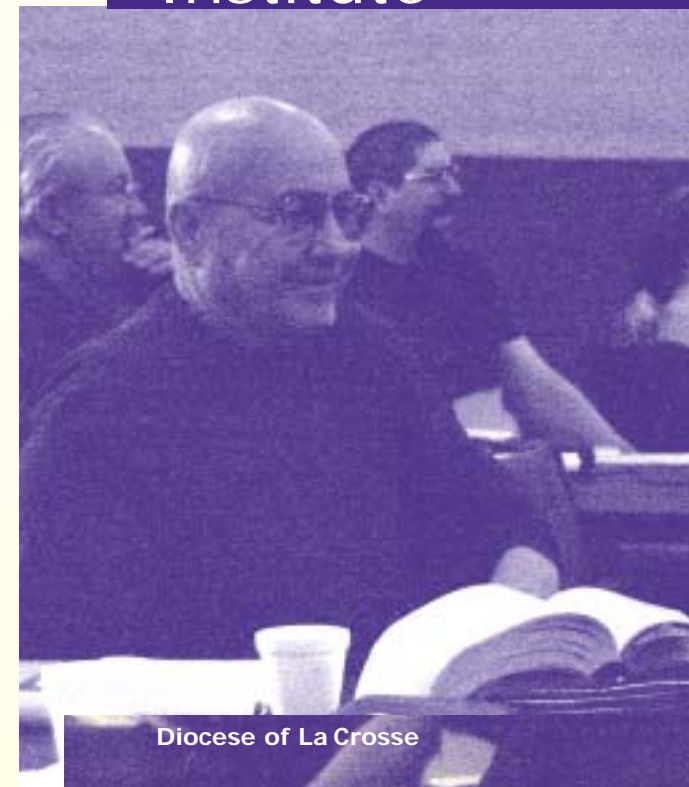


# The Lay Formation Institute

Postage

“The eyes of faith behold a wonderful scene: that of a countless number of lay people, both women and men... untiring laborers who work in the Lord's vineyard. Confident and steadfast through the power of God's grace, these are the humble yet great builders of the Kingdom of God in history”

Pope John Paul II,  
*The Lay Members of Christ's Faithful People*, n. 17



Diocese of LaCrosse

## The Mission

The mission of the Lay Formation Institute, or LFI (formerly Lay Ministry), is to help lay men and women to deepen their knowledge of the Faith and develop their pastoral abilities, so that they may answer with confidence the call of the Second Vatican Council to spread the Gospel in word and deed, acting as a leaven in their parishes and in the world.

## The Format

The program consists of classes that meet one weekend per month (Friday evening to Saturday evening), September through May, for two years at several retreat facilities within the Diocese. A new cycle is begun every two years. The core curriculum includes the following courses:

- Old Testament
- New Testament
- The Church
- Liturgy and Sacraments
- Spiritual Theology
- Divine Revelation
- Creed and Doctrine
- Church History
- Moral Theology
- Catholic Social Teaching
- Introduction to Canon Law
- Introduction to Catechesis and Evangelization
- Introduction to Pastoral Care of the Family

## LFI Participant Comments:

*"The Mass has come alive for me. My parish family is closer to my heart, and I have a much deeper appreciation of the sacraments.... I can become so impassioned. So much has 'fallen into place' that I now feel comfortable discussing and sharing my faith confidently."*

– Catechist, Parish Religious Education

## Specialized 'Tracks'

At the end of the two-year cycle, a weekend is devoted to specialized "tracks" focusing in depth on areas of practical, pastoral service. Each participant is invited to select (at the start of year two) one of these tracks, which include such areas as:

- Catechesis and Evangelization
- Pastoral Care of Marriage and the Family
- Liturgical Ministry
- Catholic Social Action

## Spiritual and Community Formation

The goal of the Lay Formation Institute is to address not only the academic and practical formation of its participants, but their spiritual and community formation as well. For this reason, the program includes:

- A retreat at the beginning of the first year and the conclusion of the second
- Morning Mass on all the Saturdays, with LFI students assisting in the liturgies
- Liturgy of the Hours prayed each morning and evening on the weekends
- Shared meals and social time

These aspects develop the spirituality of the participants and foster bonds of friendship that endure well beyond the conclusion of the program.

## Continuing Education

Each year, continuing education seminars are offered to LFI graduates within the Diocese. They are also encouraged to continue their personal development with the help of a spiritual director and periodic retreats.

## Entrance Requirements

Candidates may apply from any parish or religious institution of the Diocese of LaCrosse (with a maximum of three from any one parish). A candidate must be a practicing Catholic and be recommended by his or her pastor. Participants typically are sponsored by their parishes in exchange for a commitment to provide service to the parish. At the time of this printing, cost for the Lay Formation Institute is \$750 per person per year, which covers all tuition, books, overnight accommodations and meals.\*



It should also be noted that completion of the Lay Formation Institute is a normal prerequisite for acceptance into formation for the permanent diaconate in the Diocese of LaCrosse.

## How to Apply

If you wish to apply to the Lay Formation Institute, you should speak first with your pastor. You may then call the Office of Ministries at (608) 791-2667 or send an e-mail indicating your interest to [cruff@dioceseoflacrosse.com](mailto:cruff@dioceseoflacrosse.com). Feel free to contact the Office of Ministries with any questions you may have. Please note that space in the Lay Formation Institute is limited and applications are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis.

\*Each year, the gifts of many to the Bishop's Annual Appeal in the Diocese of LaCrosse help support the Lay Formation Institute, keeping tuition costs modest for both parishes and individuals.

*"How abundant our faith, how merciful my God! It's like I've been in a dark room and someone lit a match. The match lit a candle—I look forward to the electricity to see the whole room! Thank you, thank you, to all who are taking the time to teach me."*

– RCIA and Adult Education Team Member, Parish Deanery Representative, Justice and Peace Committee Member