

Core Certification Standards and Competencies of the Director of Music Ministries (DMM)

The Core Certification Standards and Competencies found in this document were developed collaboratively by the [National Association for Lay Ministry \(NALM\)](#), the [National Conference for Catechetical Leadership \(NCCL\)](#), and the [National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry](#), and were subsequently approved by the [United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Commission on Certification and Accreditation \(USCCB CCA\)](#).

These core standards and competencies were adopted by the Board of Directors of the Director of Music Ministries Division (DMMD) of the National Association of Pastoral Musicians (NPM). DMMD has also developed a number of specialized competencies for the Director of Music Ministries. In March, 2005, the Board of Directors of the [USCCB CCA](#) gave NPM approval to adopt the common core standards and competencies along with the specialized competencies for directors of music ministries. The Commission has also approved the procedures developed by NPM for awarding the designation of Certified Director of Music Ministries (CDMM).

The standards, core competencies, and specialized competencies of all the participating organizations have been published in book form, which also provides a great deal of helpful background information. You may order the book online or by phone from NALM, NFCYM, or NCCL.

Certification Standard One: Personal and Spiritual Maturity

- 1a. *A lay ecclesial minister demonstrates personal and spiritual maturity in ministry with the people of God.*

Vision Statement:

- 1b. A lay ecclesial minister exhibits personal maturity through a balanced lifestyle, a positive self-image, and appropriate relationships. The minister develops a spiritual maturity formed in theological reflection, based on Gospel values, and nurtured in private, communal, and liturgical prayer. The minister views God, church, and the world in a holistic manner and engages in communal worship and social justice.

Core Competencies:

A lay ecclesial minister shall:

- 1.1 Discern and respond to the call of the Holy Spirit to live as a disciple of Jesus Christ.
- 1.2 Identify personal gifts and challenges through self-reflection and spiritual companioning.
- 1.3 Reflect commitment to the Gospel through regular prayer, ongoing study and theological reflection, action on behalf of justice, and fulfillment of ministerial responsibilities.
- 1.4 Discern and address current realities in the Church and the world in light of the Gospel.
- 1.5 Give witness to an integrated spirituality formed by scripture, theological reflection, prayer, and communal worship.¹
- 1.6 Relate respectfully with a diversity of persons, age groups, and cultures.
- 1.7 Engage in personal, life-long faith formation and continuing education.

Certification Standard Two: Lay Ecclesial Ministry Identity

- 2a. *A lay ecclesial minister identifies the call to formal and public ministry as a vocation rooted in baptism.*²

Vision Statement:

- 2b. A lay ecclesial minister accepts ministerial vocation as a baptismal call from Christ mediated through the people of God. The minister acknowledges this call as affirmed, recognized, and nurtured by the Church and the local community, as well as in ministerial and personal relationships.

Core Competencies:

A lay ecclesial minister shall:

- 2.1 Develop ministerial goals integrated with Gospel values.
- 2.2 Maintain a support system and set responsible boundaries in order to balance ministry, community, family, and personal and pastoral relationships.
- 2.3 Accept and articulate one's ministerial vocation as coming from God and confirmed by the ecclesial community.

¹ Congregation for the Clergy, United States Catholic Conference. *General Directory for Catechesis* (Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, Inc., 1997), 240.

² *Lay Ecclesial Ministry: The State of the Questions: A Report of the Subcommittee on Lay Ministry* (Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, Inc., 1999), 8.

- 2.4 Model ecclesial ministry, collaboration, and leadership on the example of Jesus.
- 2.5 Identify with the universal Church and its global mission so that all ministerial activity flows from that mission.

Certification Standard Three: Roman Catholic Theology

- 3a. *A lay ecclesial minister integrates knowledge of Roman Catholic faith within ministry.*

Vision Statement:

- 3b. A lay ecclesial minister's faith is formed in the Catholic theological tradition. Theological formation includes ongoing foundational education in revelation and sacred Scripture, Christology, Christian anthropology, sacramental theology, ecclesiology, pastoral theology and inculturation, moral theology, Catholic social teaching, spirituality, ecumenism, liturgy, and worship. A minister articulates and interprets a Catholic understanding of scripture, tradition, and doctrine, and uses this knowledge to form a community of disciples engaged in the mission of the Church.

Core Competencies:

A lay ecclesial minister, using biblical, historical, doctrinal and ecclesial sources, shall:

- 3.1 Know and integrate into ministerial practice a theology of revelation as embodied in scripture, tradition, and creation by:
 - 3.1.1 Utilizing the insights of scripture and tradition as a resource for worship, evangelization, social justice, and theological reflection.
 - 3.1.2 Explaining how the scriptures were divinely inspired and were shaped by the ideas, laws, concepts, and texts of the people of God within their cultural context.
 - 3.1.3 Identifying major themes and concepts in scripture and tradition in light of Church teaching, diverse cultural interpretation, and contemporary critical exegesis and hermeneutics.
 - 3.1.4 Identifying the contents of major biblical texts and concepts and their relationship to one another and human experience.
- 3.2 Know and integrate into ministerial practice a theology of God as One and Triune, Jesus Christ, and the human person by:

- 3.2.1 Identifying the historical development and meanings of the credal statements associated with the three persons of the Trinity.
 - 3.2.2 Describing the meanings and message of the paschal mystery.
 - 3.2.3 Integrating basic principles of Christian anthropology – an understanding of human existence, nature, grace, sin, and redemption – into ministerial practice.
 - 3.2.4 Describing the activity of the Spirit in the church and world.
- 3.3 Know and integrate into ministerial practice a theology of church as it developed through history by:
- 3.3.1 Demonstrating an ecclesiology of domestic church, parish, arch/diocesan church, and universal church.
 - 3.3.2 Describing the nature and structure of the Roman Catholic Church, including its apostolic origins, church as communion and sacrament, magisterium and authority, and mission.
 - 3.3.3 Interpreting ecclesial events in the light of church history, Vatican II documents, and subsequent Church teaching.
 - 3.3.4 Explaining the role of Mary and the communion of saints in prayer and Church tradition.
 - 3.3.5 Articulating the vision for the inculturation of the Gospel and the new evangelization as expressed in current church documents.³
- 3.4 Know and integrate into ministerial practice a theology of liturgy/worship by:
- 3.4.1 Explaining basic liturgical principles, the liturgical year, liturgical ministries, the devotional and sacramental life of the church, and components of liturgical celebrations.
 - 3.4.2 Utilizing pastoral and liturgical skills to design and, when appropriate, lead community prayer.
- 3.5 Know and integrate into ministerial practice a theology of sacraments by:
- 3.5.1 Identifying major sacramental concepts, including Jesus as the primordial sacrament, the sacramental nature of the Church, and the development and meaning of the seven sacraments.
 - 3.5.2 Explaining the meaning of the sacraments as celebrations of the paschal mystery and of grace.
- 3.6 Know and integrate into ministerial practice a theology of pastoral ministry by:

³Refer to documents and resources published by the USCCB, e.g., *Circle of the Spirit: A Saga of Native Americans in the Catholic Church*, *Ecclesia in America*, *Encuentro and Mission: A Renewed Pastoral Framework for Hispanic Ministry*, *Keep Your Hand on the Plow: The African American Presence in the Catholic Church*, etc.

- 3.6.1 Articulating pastoral responses that invite the community into discipleship and witness according to the pastoral needs of people from various cultures.
 - 3.6.2 Demonstrating skill in theological reflection.
 - 3.6.3 Understanding a theology of pastoral ministry that supports collaboration among bishops, presbyters, deacons, lay ecclesial ministers, and all the people of God.
- 3.7 Know and integrate into ministerial practice a theology of the moral life, including Catholic social teaching for the transformation of church and society, by:
- 3.7.1 Articulating the principles for Catholic moral teaching and personal moral decision-making.
 - 3.7.2 Articulating the basic principles of Catholic social teaching.
 - 3.7.3 Utilizing Catholic social teaching to read the signs of the times in both church and society.
- 3.8 Know and integrate a theology of Catholic spirituality into prayer and ministerial practice by:
- 3.8.1 Integrating into ministry an understanding and appreciation of diverse forms and multi-cultural expressions of individual and communal Catholic spirituality and prayer.
 - 3.8.2 Fostering the connection between spirituality and social action.
- 3.9 Know and integrate into ministerial practice a respectful understanding of ecumenism and other faith traditions by:
- 3.9.1 Identifying the historical background of the church's moments of separation and its efforts towards unity.
 - 3.9.2 Promoting opportunities for dialogue, prayer, and actions for justice with others in ecumenical and interfaith contexts.

Certification Standard Four: Pastoral Praxis

- 4a. *A lay ecclesial minister engages in pastoral activity that promotes evangelization, faith formation, community, and pastoral care with sensitivity to diverse situations.*

Vision Statement:

- 4b. A lay ecclesial minister applies the process of pastoral praxis in building a community of disciples engaged in the transformation of society. The minister incorporates the dimensions of evangelization, faith formation, worship, inculturation, community, justice, and service within pastoral activities. The minister is an effective listener who fosters respect and

compassionate care within diverse family, community, and cultural settings in the spirit of Gospel values.

Core Competencies:

A lay ecclesial minister shall:

- 4.1 Implement the principles and processes of pastoral care by:
 - 4.1.1 Promoting celebrations of sacraments and all significant life-moments of individuals, groups, and cultures.
 - 4.1.2 Listening with empathy and solidarity in the spirit of Gospel values.
 - 4.1.3 Working toward inclusion of persons with disabilities in every area of parish life.
 - 4.1.4 Recognizing the signs of need for professional help in an individual and offering resources for assistance.
 - 4.1.5 Knowing the signs of physical, sexual, and psychological abuse and adhering to civil and ecclesial procedures for reporting abuse.
 - 4.1.6 Nurturing communities of wellness and responding to persons-at-risk in collaboration with other pastoral ministers through programs of prevention and pastoral care.
 - 4.1.7 Developing ways to respond to community crises in collaboration with other pastoral ministers and community resources.
- 4.2 Implement the principles and processes of evangelization and faith formation as outlined in the *General Directory for Catechesis*,⁴ and other national and universal Church documents.
- 4.3 Understand and appreciate the gifts diverse cultures bring to the faith community.
- 4.4 Foster multicultural faith experiences.
- 4.5 Integrate a family perspective and greater understanding of the diversity of family structures in ministry.
- 4.6 Empower others to develop and articulate their own personal faith and to identify and utilize their unique gifts.

Specialized Competencies for the Director of Music Ministries

⁴ Congregation for the Clergy, United States Catholic Conference. *General Directory for Catechesis*, 1997.

- 4.10 DMM Promote and develop the art of music as an integral or necessary part of the sacred liturgy and as a constitutive element of the Catholic faith experience.
- 4.11 DMM Have knowledge of and competency in the historical treasury and contemporary body of church music and demonstrate the skills to use them effectively within the worship life of the parish community.
- 4.12 DMM Have a firm grasp of liturgical history, legislation, documentation, and current pastoral practice in order to prepare liturgical rites and celebrations.
- 4.13 DMM Demonstrate knowledge of the rites of the church and their theological underpinnings for preparing and planning parish prayer and liturgical celebrations .

Certification Standard Five: Professional Practice

- 5a. *A lay ecclesial minister provides effective leadership, administration, and service, in the spirit of collaboration.*

Vision Statement:

- 5b. A lay ecclesial minister understands leadership theory and applies it in a ministerial setting. The minister demonstrates a knowledge of and ability to work with parish and arch/diocesan systems and structures. The minister recognizes the importance of administration of parish programs and uses appropriate resources. The minister lives by the code of ethics applicable to ministry and abides by civil and Church law.

Core Competencies:

A lay ecclesial minister shall:

- 5.1 Utilize leadership skills in ministry, including visioning, planning, communication, decision-making, delegation, and conflict management.
- 5.2 Demonstrate proficiency in the organization and administration of ministry programs.
- 5.3 Conduct self in a manner consistent with a professional code of ethics and the provisions of civil and Church law.
- 5.4 Work effectively with parish and arch/diocesan personnel, systems, and structures.

- 5.5 Collaborate with the community leaders of the various cultural groups present in the parish or diocese to develop culturally appropriate responses to particular pastoral needs.
- 5.6 Exhibit a spirit of discipleship in ministerial service.

Specialized Competencies for the Director of Music Ministries

- 5.10 DMM Demonstrate professional level understanding of music theory and music history and an ability to apply this knowledge appropriately.
- 5.11 DMM Demonstrate proficiency in leading congregational song, choral conducting and at least one other musical specialty (organ, piano, guitar, voice).
- 5.12 DMM Develop parish liturgical and music guidelines and policies in accord with universal and diocesan norms.
- 5.13 DMM Develop a comprehensive and long-range vision for parish liturgical life based on church documents and directives.
- 5.14 DMM Exercise effective supervision of musical employees and volunteers
- 5.15 DMM Recognize, motivate, and empower musical talents and skills from the parish community
- 5.16 DMM Collaborate and communicate closely with pastoral staff and volunteers to develop and implement a unified approach to liturgical, catechetical, and apostolic work in the parish.

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