

Formation for Servant Leadership Practicum Guidelines



Purpose: to spend 4-6 months doing theological praxis in the candidate's area of specialized ministry in a concentrated way.

Outcome: The candidate will demonstrate the ability to bring the formation he/she has received in *Formation for Servant Leadership* into dialogue with his/her chosen area of specialization. The dialogue will be thoughtful, prayerful, and able to show competency and improvement in the candidate's ministry. Successful completion of the practicum will be demonstrated by the submission of an integration paper and a presentation.

Steps to Reach This Outcome:

1. **Choose a focus:**

- A new project or program to implement in one's ministry OR
- A new approach to an existing ministry that the candidate would like to try and which he/she will examine critically

Furthermore, the focus should meet needs that the parish/agency, pastor and/or parish pastoral council have already expressed. The need may come from a parish pastoral plan.

Implied in all of this, of course, is that the parish leadership approves the project, as well as the candidate's ministry at the parish. The candidate's onsite supervision will be decided on by the parish/agency itself.

2. **Meet with a mentor**

The mentor will be:

- someone who does not work with the candidate and who is not a friend of the candidate;
- someone who ministers in the same area of specialization; and
- is assigned by the Office for Parish Life.

The mentor and candidate will meet 3 times:

- Initial meeting - to discuss the focus, hopes and direction of the project
- Mid-project meeting - to look at the progress of the project and for the mentor to offer redirection, insight, resources, or to prompt the candidate to go more deeply
- Final meeting - just prior to submitting the paper to the Office for Parish Life - to provide editorial feedback and final insights and to discuss future study

3. **Write the integration paper** (double-spaced, 12 point font) **including the following information:**

- A. *Description of the area of focus* (1-2 pages) –elaborate on your initial project proposal and share your hopes for the outcome of your practicum.
- B. *Discuss material* from Scripture, Church teaching, theology and other pertinent areas of study that address the focus of your practicum project (4-5 pages);
- C. *Description of the practicum experience* (3-4 pages): How did this project unfold? Offer some high points, challenges, steps of implementation and who you collaborated with; and
- D. *Provide a reflection* on how the theological learnings of *Formation for Servant Leadership* interfaced with the practical elements of the curriculum (ie: How did 'faith' interact with 'daily life' in the doing of this project?). As a result of project efforts, what new revelations did the candidate have regarding areas for further growth and study? (3-4 pages).

It is the hope that the integration paper will be written in stages (See *Practicum Planning Worksheet*)

4. ***On-Site Visit from Members of Lay Ministry Formation Team***

- This visit will be arranged approximately mid-way through the practicum project, to witness the practicum ministry in action, as well as to potentially offer suggestions for further development.
- A member of the Ministry Formation Team will reach out to the practicum candidate, and the pastor/ practicum site supervisor to settle on a suitable time for visitation.

5. ***Make a presentation to share and express what the candidate did, created and learned.***

This will be an opportunity to let others learn from the candidate's experience/reflection and to have a professional conversation; this presentation is not an oral exam, or a defense of the practicum paper.

- 20-30 minutes total length, including questions and conversation
- Audience: alumni, and current participants in *Formation for Servant Leadership*; Office for Parish Life team members; the pastor and/or person(s) in leadership at the parish where the practicum occurred; the practicum mentor
- The candidate will explain --as opposed to reading his/her paper verbatim-- the following:
 - ***What was the origin of your practicum—how did you decide on this project?***
 - ***Tell us about the doing of your project.***
 - ***What were 1-2 significant learnings as a result of doing your practicum?***
 - ***How has your practicum work impacted your parish community?***
 - ***What is next for you and your ministry?***
- Candidate may include PowerPoint, video of feedback from participants, artifacts or tangible items resulting from the project.
- There will time for questions and conversation about the experience



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