PASTORAL ASSOCIATE

Position Description and Competencies

Archdiocese of Milwaukee
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INTRODUCTION

The duties of the pastoral associate, like the associate pastor, will be highly diversified from one parish to another dependent upon other staff resources and individual community demands. The following position description may not be appropriate for each parish and it is unlikely one individual will fulfill all aspects of this description. Parishes are encouraged to use this as a guide in delineating their own individual needs. It is important, however, that the title "Pastoral Associate" not be used for jobs differing in scope and responsibility from this Archdiocesan description.

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Primary Function of This Position
A pastoral associate is a generalist serving in an important parish leadership position. He/she assists the pastor or parish director in the daily operation of the parish. This involves collaboration with the pastor/parish director and parish staff in the overall pastoral care of the parish. This may include the direct coordination of one or more specific ministries, e.g. sacramental planning, educational formation, pastoral ministry, and/or parish administration. He/she supports and promotes collaboration among parishes within the cluster and district as well as with the ecumenical community. The pastoral associate is hired directly by the parish and is accountable to the pastor or parish director. Working with the pastor/parish director, the pastoral associate fulfills a critical role in the leadership of the parish.

Major Position Responsibilities and Regular Activities
1. Ministry of Worship
   - Assists in the preparation of parish sacramental celebrations through collaboration with all stakeholders.
   - May lead communal prayer services, including wakes, final commendation and committal services, stations of the cross, and ecumenical celebrations.
   - Preaches when pastorally and canonically appropriate.
   - Assists in the formation and preparation of individuals and families for the sacraments.
   - Assists couples regarding marriage and annulment procedures, as directed by the Archdiocesan Tribunal Office.
   - Is a visible participant in liturgies, prayer services, parish events and programs. May represent the pastor or parish director in their absence.

2. Ministry of Education
   - Assists parish staff, volunteers and parish groups in spiritual development and formation. May develop retreats, in-services and prayers that foster faith in individuals and groups.
   - Assists in the formation of the entire community in the understanding of the parish mission.
   - Collaborates with other parish staff in providing child, youth and adult religious formation, including catechist formation.
   - Serves as a resource to other staff and volunteers in interpretation of Church teaching and canon law.

3. Human Concerns
   - Assists the pastor or parish director in fostering a sense of community within the parish in which new members and established parishioners feel a sense of belonging to each other, the parish, and the larger Church.
   - Directs pastoral services for individuals suffering from illness, grief, spiritual crisis.
   - Assists in responding to the needs of the poor, the uninsured, and the forgotten in the parish and the community.
   - Affirms family life and encourages spouses and parents in their roles.

4. Administration
   - Supervises one or more specific ministries within the parish and oversees budget and financial records for these ministries.
   - Collaborates with the pastor or parish director and other parish staff in the management of the parish. Also understands the roles of the trustees, parish council and other committee responsibilities.
Assists in maintaining parish, civil and canonical records. Together with the pastoral staff, provides for and implements pastoral planning and strategic planning which will include addressing the stewardship needs of the parish.

Skills, Knowledge, and/or Abilities (SKA's)

1. Ministry of Worship
   - Knowledge of Catholic sacramental theology including current Church teaching and issues related to: RCIA, Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Reconciliation, Marriage, Anointing and Funeral Rites.
   - Ability to lead large and small groups in prayer during liturgical celebrations.
   - Ability to preach the Word of God. Knowledge of Church law concerning canonical limitations of this position.
   - Ability to counsel and train individuals in Church sacraments.
   - Knowledge of Church law concerning marriage and annulments.
   - Skills in interpersonal contact with the parish community. Must enjoy people and be comfortable in sharing their lives with them.
   - Knowledge and application of the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

2. Ministry of Education
   - Demonstrates an active faith life and is able to translate this into action for others. Will possess skill in organizing spiritual programming.
   - Knowledge of the mission of the parish and the Church and can enable others to live this mission in their own lives.
   - Must have an understanding of and ability to use collaborative management skills.
   - Strong knowledge of Church teachings, canon law and biblical studies.
   - Awareness of different methodologies - especially for different age groups.

3. Ministry of Human Concerns
   - Knowledge and ability to form group cohesion and consensus, leading to effective empowerment for group action.
   - Knowledge of and integration of Catholic social teachings and world mission awareness.
   - Skill in counseling individuals and groups - especially in times of personal tragedy and pain.
   - Understanding of the needs of the parish and a compassion for the poor and forgotten members of the community.
   - Provides for the special needs of the community in accordance with the Archdiocese Code of Ethics.

4. Ministry of Administration
   - Knowledge and skill in budgeting, finances and overall management operations.
   - Skill in supervision, motivation and evaluation of staff performance.
   - Knowledge of Catholic and parish organizational structure in accordance with Archdiocesan Parish Leadership Manual.
   - Knowledge of distinction between parish governance and parish management.
   - Ability to work cohesively with other staff, volunteers, and parish community.
   - Knowledge of record keeping regulations as pertains to both civil and Church laws.
   - Ability to utilize organizational skills in short and long range planning.

EDUCATION, TRAINING, and/or EXPERIENCE
Masters degree or its equivalent required. Masters of Divinity, Theology, Pastoral Ministry, Religious Studies, or other degree with certified lay ministry training preferred. Parish based ministry experience of at least two years required. Experience in ministry leadership, counseling, public speaking, human resource management and administration required. Is an active participant in the work of the Catholic Church and is able to partake in the full sacramental life of the Church.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR QUANTIFIABLE MEASURES
Responsibility for specific financial areas will vary greatly from parish to parish.

WORKING ENVIRONMENT PARISH SETTING
The nature of this position requires availability for frequent evening and weekend work.

COMPETENCIES
The pastoral associate is a person of faith who embraces the Second Vatican Council's vision of the Church. The pastoral associate demonstrates a healthy spiritual maturity and is committed to his or her own spiritual development. The pastoral associate values various forms of Catholic spirituality and puts high priority on leading through serving. Critical thinking skills which include the ability to apply sound theological, educational and management principles to pastoral situations are vital to this position. The competencies needed for the position also include good communications and interaction skills. The pastoral associate collaborates with the pastor/parish director and pastoral staff to insure that the overall parish environment is accessible and welcoming. The ideal candidate will work out of a global perspective recognizing and promoting solidarity with all humanity.

These competencies describe the "ideal" pastoral associate. No one person will have all of the competencies, but all of the competencies are important.

A. Personal Development
1. Demonstrates a healthy personal maturity.
   - Is aware of one's own feelings and deals with them appropriately, especially feelings of anger, fear, anxiety and depression.
   - Accepts one's own limitations, accepts criticism, admits mistakes.
   - Foresees and accepts consequences of one's own decisions.
   - Recognizes and appreciates one's own talents, weaknesses, etc.
   - Is able to set realistic goals and priorities for oneself.
   - Uses prudence, consistency and common sense in judgments and behaviors.
   - Maintains physical, emotional, spiritual and psychological well-being.
   - Demonstrates the ability to maintain confidentiality.

2. Demonstrates a healthy interpersonal maturity.
   - Relates maturely and openly with authority.
   - Relates readily and comfortably with others, both men and women.
   - Is able to tolerate shortcomings in others.
   - Is able to relate to and work with the Church's diverse population.
   - Is able to work within the appropriate role relationships of ministry.

3. Demonstrates a healthy spiritual maturity and commitment to spiritual growth.
   - Can articulate a baptismal call to service, and understand one's own personal gifts and growth areas for pastoral ministry.
   - Is committed to ongoing spiritual development within a Eucharistic faith community.
   - Knows the Christian spiritual tradition and utilizes its resources.
   - Is able to balance personal vocational commitments with ministry.
   - Demonstrates a developed spirituality for ministry, with its appropriate personal pattern or rhythm of prayer, reflection and discernment, embracing the call to holiness.
   - Is committed to helping others deepen their relationship with God.

B. Valuing
- Understands and appreciates the various forms of Catholic spirituality.
- Demonstrates leadership as service to the community.
- Understands and values diversity within the Catholic tradition and promotes Ecumenical and Interfaith relationships.
- Incorporates multi-cultural awareness in parish life.
- Seeks a variety of approaches to parish life and invites diverse opinions.
- Demonstrates in thought and action an awareness of the Church's mission to society by showing compassion for people who experience homelessness, poverty, grief, abortion, single parenthood, etc.
- Is able to take responsible actions to protect individual rights as well as the integrity of the parish community.
- Demonstrates trustworthiness and dependability.
- Exhibits a mature commitment to the Church.
C. Critical Thinking

- Demonstrates an awareness of and effectively uses Vatican II Catholic theology including, but not limited to the fields of ecclesiology, liturgy, moral theology, scripture, canon law, sacramental theology, evangelization, catechesis, Catholic social teaching, Church history.
- Demonstrates an awareness of psychology, Christian anthropology, sociology, and is able to apply this effectively to pastoral work.
- Understands and demonstrates a high level of competency in specific fields of pastoral ministry which might be required in the individual parish assignment, e.g., religious education, liturgical ministry, ministry to families, the sick, dying, bereaved, youth, elderly, etc.
- Understands and models effective leadership appropriate to the position in a participative manner with individuals and groups.
- Understands, identifies, selects and uses appropriate resources for effective preaching, catechesis, evangelization, communal prayer, human concerns, leadership and other aspects of pastoral practices for individual circumstances and local needs.
- Understands learning as a lifelong process and demonstrates the ability to apply effective learning strategies to appropriate age groups as required in the individual parish setting.
- Has knowledge of Archdiocesan policies and procedures and accesses Diocesan resources in the specific fields of pastoral ministry for which this person is responsible.
- Understands and uses appropriate skills in human resource management.
  - Demonstrates the ability to effectively hire, supervise, evaluate, and terminate employees.
  - Is able to recruit, motivate, train, place, affirm and supervise volunteers.

D. Communication

1. Incorporates an invitational approach to pastoral ministry.
   - Demonstrates effective listening skills as well as direct communication skills.
   - Demonstrates the use of conflict resolution skills.
   - Uses effective public speaking skills.
2. Insures that there is effective inter- and intra-parish communication.
   - Uses meetings, newsletters, electronic communications, technology, bulletins for effective communication.
   - Uses external media when appropriate.
   - Demonstrates that he/she can be a visible leader in designated areas of ministry to district, diocesan, community, civic and religious groups.
3. Animates an enthusiastic response to the Gospel and evangelization.
   - Demonstrates the ability to articulate the parish vision and motivate people to respond to it.
   - Is able to motivate people to respond to the mission of the universal Church.
4. Presides at communal prayer in a manner that invites active participation.
   - Makes effective use of verbal and non-verbal skills in leading communal prayer.
   - Demonstrates effective preaching.

E. Interaction

1. Interacts with others with ease and relates to them as participants in ministry.
   - Understands and adapts to various personality styles, age, gender and cultural differences.
   - Understands and uses appropriate leadership styles.
   - Contributes to a spirit of harmony and teamwork.
2. Understands group development and has the ability to facilitate group dynamics and conflict resolution.
   - Understands the nature of parish councils and committees.
   - Interacts productively with the pastoral staff and other parish leadership groups.
   - Engages people in faith sharing dialogue.
   - Facilitates the formation of small groups such as faith sharing, and support groups, appropriate to ones areas of responsibilities.

F. Problem Solving

1. In the areas of one's specific responsibility, has the ability to foresee potential tensions and take steps to solve them before they become major issues.
Is able to detect and name potential tension areas.
Is able to bring people together to address these issues.
Is flexible and sensitive to the multi-dimensional aspects of parish life.
Demonstrates a positive, healthy approach in working through complex issues and processes.
Has the ability to create trust and cooperation among individuals and groups.
Has the ability to communicate with the pastor or parish director or pastoral staff in problem solving and elicits their support and intervention if and when needed.

2. In the areas of one's specific responsibility, manages problem solving related to developing and implementing pastoral practices including but not limited to the following:
- Is able to use a planning approach to solve complex issues.
- Has the ability and knows the resources to work with others to solve the problem issues.
- Has the knowledge and ability to solve problems arising from inter-parish collaboration.

G. **Global Perspective**
- Understands, appreciates and functions with the knowledge that the parish is part of the universal Church.
- Understands and operates with the vision of the parish’s role in Archdiocese, district and community and promotes inter-parish collaboration as appropriate.
- Understands and has the ability to focus and to motivate people to make decisions related to the good of the global environment as appropriate.
- Recognizes and promotes solidarity with all of humanity.

H. **Aesthetic Responses**
- Is sensitive to the role that the overall environment plays in being a welcoming community and insures the development of such.
- Is aware of and insures that choices are made so that the arts contribute to effective prayer as appropriate.