

Lay Parish Ministers in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee

**A Study Conducted by the John Paul II Center
Archdiocese of Milwaukee**

Summary

**Randy Nohl, Director
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SUMMARY

The following summarizes key findings of the lay parish ministers survey that was conducted in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee in February 2012. The results are based on the 243 useable responses received.

Survey respondents

- The lay parish ministers survey was carried out during February of 2012. 243 usable responses were received.
- Directors of religious education and directors of administrative services were the largest categories of respondents.

Demographics

- 77% of the respondents were female.
- Almost one-third (30%) of the respondents were 60 years of age or older. With 40% of the respondents 50-59 years of age, 70% of the respondents were 50 years of age or older.
- 99% of the respondents were Roman Catholic.
- 4% of the respondents were religious sisters.
- 7% of the respondents said they were fluent in a language other than English.

Employment

- 75% of the respondents reported being employed by and serving one parish.
- 77% of the respondents reported holding full-time positions (defined as 30 hours or more a week).
- There were multiple respondents from every district in the archdiocese.
- 179 respondents reported 271 memberships in ministerial organizations, with the largest number (56) saying they were members of Mareda.
- 42% of the respondents had been in their current positions 5 years or less.
- 89 of the respondents held no prior parish position; 137 have held positions in multiple parishes.
- 82% of the respondents reported having worked in a field other than parish ministry.

Formation and education

- 37% of respondents reported having a master's degree as their highest level of school completed. This was followed closely by 35% with a bachelor's degree. 19% reported having no post-secondary degree.
- 37% of the post-secondary degrees were in religious studies, theology or ministry.
- The largest percentage of the respondents with bachelor's degrees in theology, ministry or religious studies reported Cardinal Stritch University as the degree-granting institution (26%).
- The largest percentage of the respondents with master's degrees in theology, ministry or religious studies reported St. Francis Seminary as the degree-granting institution (29%).
- About half of the respondents reported having non-degree education or certification. These respondents may or may not have also had a post-secondary degree. The largest number reported religious education certification and lay ministry formation as their non-degree education or certification.
- 18 respondents (7%) reported being currently in school, 6 in a certificate program and 12 in a degree program. 8 of the 18 reported being students at Cardinal Stritch University, 7 in lay ministry or religious studies.
- When asked about the need for additional formation, 60% of the respondents said additional education would be helpful. The three top areas for additional education were liturgy, theology and scripture.
- When asked about barriers to the pursuit of further education 57% of the respondents mentioned a combination of time and money.