



FAITH

IN OUR FUTURE

HELPING PARISHES DEEPEN FAITH, DISCIPLESHIP AND SERVICE TO THE CHURCH: THE JOHN PAUL II CENTER

Parents and Church leaders, students and business managers, singles and married couples, men and women -- virtually every adult Catholic can benefit from the new John Paul II Center for lay Catholics.

Designed to nurture individual vocations, the center hosts non-degreed lay ministry and diaconate formation through classes, retreats and first-hand experiences, online and in parishes, throughout the archdiocese – north, south, west and central. It provides the resources to help all Catholics recognize and advance their critical roles as models, leaders and members of the Church.

PARTNERING WITH PARISHES

Established in December 2006, the center is a partner for every parish in the archdiocese, easing parish leaders' burdens, while improving the effectiveness of lay ministers and promoting lifelong faith formation. Expanding this program is essential, as the Church faces a pressing need for well-trained lay ministers, especially in the Latino community.

The John Paul II Center is a designated recipient of the \$5 million *Leaders of the Future Endowment Fund* established through the *Faith In Our Future* Campaign. The center will also receive funds from the \$3.5 million *Living Our Faith Fund*, established to put new initiatives on solid footing.

FORMING LAY MINISTERS AND ADULT CATHOLICS

The Center's **Pentecost Mission** is a year-long formation program combining academic courses, days of reflection and vocational discernment. Students gather twice a month for classes such as Scripture, Christology, Catholic Social Teaching, and Catechetical Ministry in the Sacraments.

The program is open to both everyday Catholics seeking to deepen their faith and knowledge, and those active in or preparing for lay ministry. Adults can register for the full program, earning certification in catechetical ministry, or participate only in specific classes such as parenting classes; courses on topics in the news such as stem cell research, abortion and war; or bible reflection topics. Monthly vocational discernment classes support those considering a call to lay ministry or the diaconate.

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More on reverse side.

Jesus Christ: the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

At the program's current site, in Brookfield, enrollment has hit its capacity of 85 students. The center seeks to accommodate more students with new Pentecost Mission sites next year in West Bend and Walworth County. The goal is to continue expanding the program, producing more lay ministers to assist with parish life and meeting the needs of Catholics eager to learn more about their faith.

PREPARING DEACONS AND LAY MINISTERS

The center's **Office for Diaconate Formation** provides preparation for the permanent diaconate, with over 50 men in various stages of formation.

Diaconate formation is shifting to a new model being adopted in U.S. dioceses. The program begins with a year of aspirancy — a spiritual year in which men work with the formation team to prayerfully consider their call. Aspirants involve their wives and families in this exploration and gather pastoral experience as they more closely examine the ministry of permanent service to the Church.

Accepted aspirants selected to continue enter a three-year formation period. Intense spiritual, pastoral, vocational and theological formation prepares candidates to witness to the Word of God, administer the sacraments of the Church, and above all to embody the role of service to others. Men who are ordained as permanent deacons not only perform sacramental duties, such as baptizing and witnessing marriages, but also reach out to serve those who may be poor or marginalized, such as the faithful in nursing homes, within immigrant populations, and among the homeless.

KEEPING MINISTRY LEADERS (ON TOP OF) CURRENT ISSUES

The center's **Emmaus Project** develops, implements and provides affordable classes and conferences for lay leaders in parish and school life. One staff person manages the program, which serves hundreds of people across the archdiocese. The center would like to add a full-time Spanish-speaking administrator to support continued growth. Additional funds would also enable enhanced technology use — for example, producing an online conference on ethics for Catholic hospitals, or online-distant leaning opportunities for catechists and lay leaders in the ten counties of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.

Lay ministry specialization program offers men and women opportunities to obtain training in lay ministry at the certificate level in specific areas such as Christian formation leadership, parish office administration, and liturgy. Funds raised through the *Faith In Our Future* Campaign would enable the center to expand its training in lay ministry to the elderly, urban Catholics; music and liturgy; jail/prison, and other specialty areas.

SUPPORTING ENGAGED AND MARRIED COUPLES

The **Nazareth Project** provides formation and support for adults entering into and living the sacrament of marriage throughout life, as well as for those whose marriages have ended. Last year more than 3,000 people participated in various programs. Additional funding would be used to expand the focus on family life issues.

PROVIDING RESOURCES THROUGH COLLABORATION, TECHNOLOGY

To make the most efficient use of its resources, the John Paul II Center will expand formational opportunities through collaboration with other educational institutions such as Cardinal Stritch University. The center also uses technology to make programs accessible throughout the 10 counties of the archdiocese.

SUPPORTING RESPECT FOR LIFE

The John Paul II Center supports and promotes archdiocesan Respect Life programming, embracing the mission of restoring respect for all human life – from the moment of conception until natural death. Educational programs in this area provide information about Church teachings and encourage leadership in advocacy and service.

SPREADING THE WORD

While the John Paul II Center promotes lifelong faith formation and ministry development, a key goal this year is to promote the center itself. Staff will take a missionary approach in spreading the word about the opportunities the center offers — engaging parish councils, priests, deacons, lay ministers and parishioners in developing and strengthening leaders for our parishes and the community at large.

For more information contact Debra Lethlean, Development Director, 414-769-3322.