III. Requirements for National Certification

The National Certification process consists of three steps: Apply, Prepare, Submit. All three steps can be completed using the tools provided on the National Certification website: [http://www.lemcertification.org/](http://www.lemcertification.org/). These tools can also be found in the appendices of this handbook, particularly sections G, H, I, and J.

1. **Apply:** Submit your application materials and fee to the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM).
   
   - Application Form (Appendix I.a)
   - A signed NFCYM Code of Ethics (Appendix I.b)
   - Colleague Recommendation Form (Appendix I.c)—instructions for its use are found on the Application Form and in the Process and Procedures Document (Appendix H).
   - Pastor Recommendation Form (Appendix I.d)—instructions for its use are found on the Application Form and in the Process and Procedures Document (Appendix H).

2. **Prepare:** After you receive notice that your application has been approved and you have been accepted as a candidate for certification, build your online ministry portfolio, which documents how you meet the national certification standards. You will need to include the following items in your portfolio:
   
   - A cover letter formally requesting certification.
   - Certification portfolio title sheet (Appendix I.e)
   - The portfolio checklist (Appendix I.f)
   - All materials submitted during the application process *(You will already have done this if you’ve been admitted to candidacy.)*
   - A completed self-assessment (Appendix I.g)
   - Testimony/observation assessments completed by a supervisor, a peer or colleague, a subordinate, and a diocesan director. (Appendix I.h)
   - Evidence of theological study, providing transcripts or other documentation for course work or approved equivalencies. See the certification portfolio requirements (in Procedures Appendix H) for theological study required of each ministry specialization.
   - Evidence of specialized study, providing transcripts or other documentation for course work or approved equivalencies. See the certification portfolio
requirements (in Procedures Appendix H) for specialized study required of each ministry specialization.

- Demonstration of competence in one’s specialized ministry. See the certification portfolio requirements (in Procedures Appendix H) for the demonstration required of each ministry specialization.

- Integration paper that applies personal, spiritual, theological, pastoral, and specialized competence to the practice of pastoral ministry. (Guidelines for the Integration Paper in Procedures Appendix H)

When you are accepted as a candidate for the certification process, you will receive information for logging onto a special, secure webpage which will act as a "library/repository" for the items in your portfolio. You will be able to use this library as often as necessary to compile your portfolio by uploading written documents (for example, MS Word or PDF files), presentations (e.g., PowerPoint files), and even audio and video files.

3. **Submit:** When your portfolio is complete, submit your materials for review. If approved by your national ministry organization and the Alliance, you will receive notification that you are certified!

**Initial Applications and Completed Portfolios are ordinarily accepted before the March 1 and October 1 deadlines each year.**