



DIOCESE OF TUCSON
MINISTRY CERTIFICATION PROCESS SUMMARY
Department of Catholic Schools

The expectation for teachers and principals in Catholic schools can be summed up in the following excerpt from the *National Directory for Catechesis*:

The nobility of the task to which teachers are called demands that, in imitation of Christ the only Teacher, they reveal the Christian message not only by word but also by every gesture of their behavior. All teachers in Catholic schools share in the catechetical ministry. All members of the faculty, at least by their example, are an integral part of the process of religious education. A teacher's lifestyle and character are as important as their professional credentials. Their witness to the meaning of mature faith and Christian living has a profound effect on the education and formation of their students.

The purpose of the Diocese of Tucson Ministry Certification Program is two-fold:

- Provide opportunities for ongoing faith formation
- Provide ministry education professional development

Religious formation of principals and teachers is essential to becoming models of spirituality and prayer. **Catholicity is a way of life.** A personal faith life is essential for educators to model and integrate it across the curriculum. To support their school communities in this, principals schedule ministry certification classes and/or provide other opportunities throughout the school year for faculty and staff. If an individual wishes to take a class independently, principal approval is necessary prior to registration.

Some options to achieve Ministry Certification that align with diocesan curriculum requirements are listed on the back page.

CERTIFICATION

1. **Level I – 44 hours required, based on 2-hour sessions per topic:** All teachers, regardless of subject matter taught, are required to achieve and maintain at least Level I of the Diocesan Ministry Certification within three (3) years of their employment. (*Handbook of School Policies and Procedures*, 2.2. PERSONNEL QUALIFICATIONS).
2. **Level II – 78 hours required:**
 - a. *Catholic high school theology teachers and campus ministers* should have at least the equivalent of a bachelor's degree in religious studies, and/or Level II Diocesan Ministry Certification, (*Handbook of School Policies and Procedures*, 2.2. PERSONNEL QUALIFICATIONS).
 - b. *Principals and full-time Assistant Principals* should achieve and maintain at least Level II of the Diocesan Ministry Certification within three (3) years of hiring. (*Handbook of School Policies and Procedures*, 2.2. PERSONNEL QUALIFICATIONS). Principals should also actively participate in all Level I offerings they provide for their faculty/staff.

- c. *Religious Brothers and Sisters* working in schools receive Level II certification.
 - d. Individuals working toward Level II certification do not need to achieve Level I renewal.
3. **Advanced:** Advanced certification is awarded to individuals who have completed graduate level courses/degree plus ministry experience with majors in one of the following areas:
 - Religious Education, Theology/ Religious Studies, Scripture, Pastoral ministry or
 - Completion of the Diocese of Tucson Common Formation Program (Lay Ecclesial Ministry)
 4. **Other Diocese:** If an individual has earned ministry certification from another diocese, documentation will be reviewed and applied to a corresponding Diocese of Tucson leveled ministry certification.

RENEWAL

1. Ministry Certification is valid for three (3) years. The renewal process is **continual** if the individual is employed at one of our Catholic schools or until a decision is made to work toward a higher level of certification.
2. Ministry Renewal Certification must be obtained within three, (3) three years. This is achieved upon completion of 20 hours total in any two certification categories, (e.g. Liturgy, Sacraments, Christian Morality, Social Mission of the Church, Methodology).

RECORDKEEPING: All records for Ministry Certification and Renewal must be kept in the school office. Original copies are kept by each teacher.

Level I or Level II Ministry Certification Process Record Form

1. Each teacher/principal is responsible for keeping a record of completed ministry certification courses.
2. Upon completion of either Level Ministry Certification, the record form with applicant and principal's signatures, is sent to the Dept. of Catholic Schools for processing. The principal's signature verifies that the courses have been completed.

Renewal in Ministry Certification, Level I, II, or Advanced Form

1. Each teacher/principal is responsible for keeping a record of ministry certification renewal courses completed.
2. Upon *completion* of 20 hours in at least two areas of catechesis listed on the form, the record form with applicant and principal's signatures, is sent to the Dept. of Catholic Schools for processing, The principal's signature verifies that the courses have been completed.

FOUR PRIMARY WAYS TO ACHIEVE LEVEL I MINISTRY CERTIFICATION

1. **WORKSHOPS** provided by Jordan Ministry Team, Hispanic Ministry office, other diocesan presenters
2. **VIDEO/DVD** Facilitated Programs:
 - *ECHOES OF FAITH PLUS* video-assisted program
<https://store.rclbenziger.com/program/echoes-faith-plus>

- *Segments of Bishop Robert Barron's Catholicism series*
(<https://store.wordonfire.org/products/catholicism-series>)
3. **QUALIFIED PARISH/SCHOOL INSTRUCTOR** teaches Level I courses following the diocesan COURSE OBJECTIVES (instructors must possess Level II certification or an equivalency to teach theology courses)
4. **ONLINE COURSES APPROVED BY DIOCESE**
- Partnership with **University of Dayton Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation (VLCFF)** to allow online classes as credit toward diocesan certification, at a REDUCED COST of \$50. Per class, with the opportunity of a \$20.00 course reimbursement.
(<https://vlcff.udayton.edu/>).
 - **The University of Notre Dame online STEP**, (<https://mcgrath.nd.edu/online-courses/step/>). Courses have been approved to apply toward diocesan certification
 - Partnership with **Franciscan University at Steubenville's Online Catechetical Institute**, (<https://franciscanathome.com/tucson>). However, a parish and/or school **must** subscribe as an institution for \$300 per year---which then allows anyone associated with that parish/school to take classes at no additional cost. All courses in the Catechist Track will be honored toward Level I Ministry Certification.

Please direct all questions and ministry record forms to:

Barbara Monsegur, Ph.D.
Assistant Superintendent
Office of Catholic Schools
Diocese of Tucson
bmonsegur@diocesetucson.org

