

## SUMMARY OF PATHWAYS DIALOGUE AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The symposium opened by exploring the various pathways that had brought participants to lay ecclesial ministry. A pre-symposium exercise invited participants to “map out” their journey with particular focus on three areas:

- Identify significant moments of personal discernment.
- Identify significant moments of discernment through your program of formation.
- Identify significant moments of discernment by an ecclesial body or agent.

Table dialogue in groups of six to eight lay and ordained ministers was animated by stories of vocation and call. Participants demonstrated affection for, perseverance in, and hope for our Catholic faith. Thus, the symposium opened with the morning prayer of the Church as well as the lived faith experiences of participants. Subsequent recommendations on pathways to ministry centered around three themes.

**Practical Resources for Pathways to Ministry:** Creation of programmatic and practical pathways to lay ecclesial ministry should occur, emphasizing ways for Catholic leaders to invite persons to lay ecclesial ministry and for persons to discern God’s call to collaborative ministries. Generated recommendations focused upon the following specific issues and actions:

- Incorporation of resources and tools that effectively advertise and market interpersonal experiences of prayer and mentoring, and multi-ethnic perspectives.
- Adequately funded “programs for collaborative ministries” emphasizing pathways to serve Christ in ways that appeal to both ordained and lay persons.
- Sponsorship of annual diocesan “vocations/ministry summit” for its ordained and lay ministers.

**Theology of Vocation:** Enhanced conversations and education should occur regarding experiences and theologies of vocation. Generated recommendations focused upon the following specific issues and actions:

- Initiatives should occur in families, parishes, and educational organizations.
- Conversations, ideas, and practices should strive to develop the enhanced understandings of vocation that are expected in *Co-Workers* and emphasize the practice of mentoring.
- Coordination, perhaps by USCCB of a National Week of Lay Ministry, incorporating both prayer and vocational storytelling.

**Culturally Diverse Pathways:** Culturally diverse pathways into ministry should be understood and developed. Generated recommendations focused upon the following specific issues and actions:

- Development of culturally appropriate strategies to assist recruitment and discernment into lay ecclesial ministry.
- Intentional incorporation of the unique aspects of language, ethnicity, personal invitation, and life experience.
- Collaboration by perhaps the Instituto Fe y Vida, National Association of Black Catholic Administrators, National Association for Lay Ministry and other national organizations to produce culturally appropriate guidelines for recruitment and discernment into lay ecclesial ministry.



## Themes from Table-Recommendations on Pathways (1 August 2007)

USCCB's *Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord* (2005) states that: "Regardless of how the desire to invest a significant part of one's life in some form of ecclesial ministry develops, that desire deserves the support of the whole Church" (28). The symposium opened its consensus-building dialogues by discussing participants' desires for ministry as defined by "pathways to ministry maps." These maps were developed before the symposium's convocation and were based upon three reflections:

- Identify significant moments of personal discernment.
- Identify significant moments of discernment through your program of formation.
- Identify significant moments of discernment by an ecclesial body or agent.

Table dialogue in groups of six to eight lay and ordained persons was very animated by stories of vocation and call. Participants demonstrated affection for, perseverance in, and hope for our Catholic faith. Thus, the symposium opened with the morning prayer of the Church as well as the lived faith-experiences of participants.

Subsequent recommendations on pathways to ministry centered around three themes.

**1. Creation of programmatic and practical pathways to lay ecclesial ministry should occur, emphasizing ways for Catholic leaders to invite persons to lay ecclesial ministry and for persons to discern God's call to collaborative ministries.**

- Foremost, these resources and tools should incorporate effective advertising and marketing<sup>1</sup>, interpersonal experiences of prayer and mentoring<sup>2</sup>, and multi-ethnic perspectives<sup>3</sup>.
- Importantly, these adequately-funded "programs for collaborative ministries" should emphasize pathways to serve Christ in ways that appeal to both clerical and lay persons<sup>4</sup>.
- Perhaps dioceses might hold an annual "vocations/ministry summit" for its clergy and lay ministers<sup>5</sup>.

**2. Enhanced conversations and education should occur regarding experiences and theologies of vocation.<sup>6</sup>**

- Foremost, these initiatives should occur in families<sup>7</sup>, parishes<sup>8</sup>, and educational organizations<sup>9</sup>.
- Importantly, these conversations, ideas, and practices should a) strive to develop the enhanced understandings of vocation that are expected in *Co-Workers*<sup>10</sup> and b) emphasize the practice of mentoring.
- Perhaps USCCB might coordinate a National Week of Lay Ministry, incorporating both prayer and vocational storytelling<sup>11</sup>.

**3. Culturally diverse pathways into ministry should be understood and developed.**

- Foremost, culturally appropriate strategies should be developed to assist recruitment and discernment into lay ecclesial ministry<sup>12</sup>.
- Importantly, these strategies should intentionally incorporate unique aspects of language, ethnicity, personal invitation, and life experience<sup>13</sup>.
- Perhaps Instituto Fe y Vida, National Association of Black Catholic Administrators, and National Association for Lay Ministry might collaborate to produce culturally appropriate guidelines for recruitment and discernment into lay ecclesial ministry<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> 5-2, 6-1, 13-1, 14-1, 22-2, 25-1a

<sup>2</sup> 1-2, 4-2, 8-1, 10-2, 11-1, 13-2, 15-2, 17-2, 18-1, 18-2, 21-2, 22-1a, 25-1b

<sup>3</sup> 2-2, 11-2, 14-2, 17-1, 19-2, 20-2, 22-1b

<sup>4</sup> 1-1, 2-1, 3-1, 7-2, 8-2, 9-1, 16-2, 23-1, 24-2

<sup>5</sup> 12-1

<sup>6</sup> 3-2, 15-1, 19-1, 23-2

<sup>7</sup> 16-1, 24-1

<sup>8</sup> 7-1, 7-3, 10-1

<sup>9</sup> 9-2, 12-2, 25-2

<sup>10</sup> page 67

<sup>11</sup> 4-1, 20-1

<sup>12</sup> 2-2, 7-2, 11-2, 14-2, 19-2, 20-2

<sup>13</sup> 4-2, 5-2, 17-1, 17-2, 20-2

<sup>14</sup> 2-1, 4-2, 5-1, 8-2, 13-1, 19-2

## PATHWAYS RECOMMENDATIONS BY TABLE: August 1, 2007

<u>Count</u>	<u>Table</u>	<u>Audience</u>	<u>Recommendation</u>
54	Table 5 Pathways 2	Bishops	USCCB Committee on the Laity develop, and make widely available, a pastoral tool kit to broaden the awareness and understanding of lay ecclesial ministry as described in "Coworkers...", including a DVD with study booklet, bulletin inserts, podcasts, etc, in multiple languages. This would including telling the stories of several lay ecclesial ministry representing the growing cultural diversity of the United States.
48	Table 19 Pathways 1	Bishops, Theologians	We recommend that the USCCB Committee for the Laity expand and articulate a theology of vocation, as it relates to the call and response to public ministry by lay ecclesial ministers, in the next iteration of the Co-Workers document.
36	Table 13 Pathways 1	Bishops, Diocesan Offices, and National Lay Ministry Organization s	We recommend that the USCCB, national organizations, and diocese seek funding to plan and execute a campaign; guided by marketing specialists and using all culturally appropriate media, to present lay ecclesial ministry to young people as a present lay ecclesial ministry to young people as a viable, legitimate, and rewarding call to holiness and service in the proclamation of the Gospel.
31	Table 4 Pathways 2	National Lay Ministry Organization s	National Organizations should collaborate together on developing and promolgating a discernment process rooted in prayer that can be implemented at the local level across generations in developmentally and culturally appropriate ways.
30	Table 17 Pathways 2	Diocesan Offices, Parish Leadership	That a diocese or parish develop an effective mentoring program for lay leaders of all ethnic backgrounds that is intentional and addresses that needs of the community.

<b>30</b>	<b>Table 20 Pathways 1</b>	Bishops, especially FLWY & Cultural diversity committees	Creation of a day- or weeklong national celebration of lay ecclesial ministry, including a packet of materials directed to parishes, schools, diocesan offices, etc. This celebration would include the sharing of pathways, appreciation/recommissioning, information on inviting new LEMs, and information on Co-Workers in the Vineyard
<b>28</b>	<b>Table 22 Pathways 1</b>	Dioc. Off and pastoral inst	That diocesan pastoral offices and ministry formation programs institute an intentional program of recruitment and training(including practical strategies, techniques and resources for mentors). These individuals will be encouraged and given the skills to identify, invite and mentor persons from our diverse culture and communities who may have a call to lay ecclesial ministry.
<b>26</b>	<b>Table 2 Pathways 2</b>	National Lay Ministries Organizations	Develop discernment tools attentive to cultural diversity that is based on the pathway section of co-workers of the vineyard and the national certification standards
<b>26</b>	<b>Table 22 Pathways 2</b>	Natl'org, dio.off	To develop vocational strategies and resources (webbased, PSA's print media, small group) that targets all age groups,pre-school-adult in all of our cultures and communities , and advocates the diversity of ecclesial leadership(ordained, religious, LEM) within the Catholic church.
<b>24</b>	<b>Table 12 Pathways 1</b>	Bishops	Bishops should convene, through a diocesan office or task force, at least annually a meeting of all pastoral leadership (lay and ordained; diocesan and parish) for visioning, collaboration, and discussions of common issues.
<b>23</b>	<b>Table 5 Pathways 1</b>	National Lay Ministry Organizations	NALM and Fe y Vida orchestrate dialogues with recent immigrants to articulate standards that give credit for pastoral formation through "life experience." The ultimate audience for these standards would be bishops, diocesan offices, and parish leaders to help them discern the gifts of lay ministers from diverse cultures that do not rely heavily on academic formation. This recognizes that academic formation is only ONE pathway to ministry.

<b>22</b>	<b>Table 13 Pathways 2</b>	Bishops, Diocese, Parish Leadership	We recommend that bishops, diocese and parish leaderships provide current and future lay ecclesial ministers with affordable and accessible spiritual directions, retreats, and other support, that they may more prayerfully discern, in an ongoing way, their vocation, honoring their state in life and their unique gifts and abilities.
<b>22</b>	<b>Table 20 Pathways 2</b>	Parish leadership, diocesan offices, natl lm organizations	That parishes and dioceses be educated to intentionally invite, form, and support lay ecclesial ministers from all ethnic, cultural, social, and racial groups.
<b>21</b>	<b>Table 1 Pathways 2</b>	NACPA	Develop a national skill-based training program to teach diocesan and parish leadership how to invite/recruit for ministry: 1) recognize gifts; 2) recognize fit; and 3) invite to specific ministry.
<b>21</b>	<b>Table 2 Pathways 1</b>	NALM	NALM or other national organizations of lay ecclesial ministries should dialogue with diocesan vocations directors at their national meeting with the goal of determining how the discernments of gifts and callings to lay ecclesial ministry can be integrated into vocations work in their dioceses
<b>21</b>	<b>Table 24 Pathways 2</b>	bishops, diocesan offices, and parish leadership	Bishops and other formators need to provide formative opportunities for those in pastoral positions of leadership to widen their vision of who are potential ministers and to learn effective ways of calling these ministers forth from their communities of origin with special sensitivity to the diversities within the Catholic community.
<b>20</b>	<b>Table 11 Pathways 1</b>	Diocesan Offices	Develop strategies and tools to help parish leaders to learn how to personally invite and recruit young people and adults into Church Ministry - lay and ordained.

<b>20</b>	<b>Table 12 Pathways 2</b>	Diocesan Offices, National Lay Ministry Organizations, and Vocation Associations	We challenge diocesan vocational offices and those national organizations that support them to integrate the call to LEM into their awareness educations and recruiting efforts.
<b>18</b>	<b>Table 9 Pathways 1</b>	Diocesan Offices	Each diocese will form a committee whose mission is to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●develop a process for local parish communal and dialogical discernment to a vocation in lay ecclesial ministry.</li> <li>●develop and coordinate diocesan activities for discerning laity for LEM in the context of diocesan co-responsibility with the ordinary.</li> <li>●design pathways for LEM that take into account their starting point into LEM (volunteer, professional, etc.)</li> </ul>
<b>18</b>	<b>Table 14 Pathways 2</b>	Nat. Org.	We recommend to a national organization alliance (perhaps coordinated by NALM) that they create training for ordained and lay leaders on surfacing gifts and leadership within the faith community with a special emphasis on underserved populations within the community.
<b>17</b>	<b>Table 14 Pathways 1</b>	Bishops	The Bishop's Conference will direct each diocese to establish on their diocesan web sites an interactive site (for discernment, inquiry and competencies) for publicizing and encouraging lay ecclesial ministry opportunities within diverse populations of their diocese.
<b>16</b>	<b>Table 19 Pathways 2</b>	Parish Leadership, National Organizations, Pastoral Institutes	We recommend that strategies be developed and promoted by national organizations and pastoral institutes to assist parish leaders and campus ministries in calling forth people of color to serve as lay ecclesial ministers.

<b>15</b>	<b>Table 16 Pathways 1</b>	All	A task force representing all agents of ministry formation should be formed to urge the inclusion of family systems education in their curriculum. This inclusion highlights the family as the fundamental initial formation for Christian vocational life.
<b>13</b>	<b>Table 3 Pathways 2</b>		Facilitate further conversation on the theology of vocation, including ordained, religious and lay participants.
<b>13</b>	<b>Table 4 Pathways 1</b>	All	The US Bishops with support of individual lay ecclesial ministers and their associations should declare a year of prayer for vocations--to ordained ministry, to religious life, to married life, to lay ecclesial ministry, to family life, to single witness, to social ministry, to faith lived in the workplace.
<b>13</b>	<b>Table 15 Pathways 1</b>	Diocesan Of.	Pilot a program that broadens the understanding of Vocation and the role of the vocation office in the life of the local church. This would broaden the spectrum of the singular interest of clerical vocation to include lay vocations.
<b>12</b>	<b>Table 1 Pathways 1</b>	Diocesan Offices	LEM job descriptions require and budgets fund ongoing education as a pathway to more competent ministry.
<b>12</b>	<b>Table 8 Pathways 2</b>	Other	Within the next three years, each National Co-sponsoring organization of this symposium will prepare programs and materials for vocation discernment.
<b>11</b>	<b>Table 6 Pathways 1</b>	Colleges, NALM	Invest in research initiatives that captures stories of pathways to ministry in order to create or distill common vocational narratives. This information will then serve as tools for those discerning ministry.  We recommend dissemination in a full spectrum of media.
<b>11</b>	<b>Table 8 Pathways 1</b>	Other	Within two years the FDLC will create a personal discernment process to clarify a call to parish liturgical lay ecclesial ministry

<b>10</b>	<b>Table 10 Pathways 1</b>	Bishops, Diocesan Offices, Parish Leadership, and Lay Ecclesial Ministers	In collaboration with the bishop, each parish will create an action plan for inviting a discerning LEM. This action plan and program reports will be submitted to the diocese on an annual basis.
<b>10</b>	<b>Table 17 Pathways 1</b>	Parish Leadership	That parish leadership identify, and invite potential leaders, from each ethnic background represented in their parish into a three session discernment/giftedness program to determine deeper commitment to leadership formation and service in their parish.
<b>10</b>	<b>Table 21 Pathways 1</b>	Colleges	Research and develop models for reviewing life experience to fulfill standards for lay ecclesial ministry.
<b>10</b>	<b>Table 23 Pathways 2</b>	Bishops and Academy	In consultation with lay ecclesial ministers, engage in further reflection and study on the use of the term vocation in relation to lay ecclesial ministry.
<b>10</b>	<b>Table 24 Pathways 1</b>	bishops, diocesan offices, parish leadership	With the coordinated efforts of ministerial offices of the dioceses, parish staff are able to create initiatives that support families in fostering a community in which the call to ministry is fostered at home, in the parish, and in the wider community.
<b>8</b>	<b>Table 9 Pathways 2</b>	Catholic colleges or Graduate Schools	Schools of Theology need to incorporate viable and intentional ongoing discernment for lay ecclesial ministry in order to provide recommendations to dioceses and parishes.
<b>8</b>	<b>Table 11 Pathways 2</b>	All	Create mechanisms, in your area of responsibility, to allow the Church workforce to reflect the diversity of the people in our communities.

<b>8</b>	<b>Table 15 Pathways 2</b>	Diocesan Of.	Develop a discernment process for the development of ecclesial ministers who are called forth and recommended by pastors or ecclesial ministers who identify potential leaders in the Church. Persons who exhibit a capacity to live the Gospel; Community would then support the education of that invitation to ministry.
<b>8</b>	<b>Table 16 Pathways 2</b>	All	A regional task force representing lay ecclesial ministry leadership should develop a systematic program for identifying, supporting, and educating future lay ecclesial ministers.
<b>8</b>	<b>Table 21 Pathways 2</b>	Diocesan Offices	Implement an spiritual mentoring process for participants in lay ecclesial ministry programs.
<b>7</b>	<b>Table 23 Pathways 1</b>	Diocesan leadership	Establish a process to identify, call forth, and support the charisms and sense of call among the baptized to become lay ecclesial ministers.
<b>6</b>	<b>Table 3 Pathways 1</b>	Bishops, Dioc Off, Cath Colleges, Past Inst, Lay minister ord,	Develop a program to raise awareness of the call to ministry and a discernment process helping the baptized to respond to their call.
<b>5</b>	<b>Table 18 Pathways 1</b>		Create a diocesan task force to design and make available to all parishes a prayer discernment experience
<b>5</b>	<b>Table 25 Pathways 1</b>	dioceses	local churches should design programming to create a culture of God's call and our response, including full-featured web access and endless advertising of it as well as a pervase mentoring network that meets persons wherever they are at the beginning of their call
<b>5</b>	<b>Table 25 Pathways 2</b>	educators	diocesan educational offices and Catholic educational institutions should design age-appropriate curricula and student services to emphasize the many pathways to hear God's holy call to to grow an in-world response

<b>3</b>	<b>Table 7 Pathways 2</b>	Pastoral Institutes, Formation Programs, Diocesan Offices	Lay ecclesial formation programs need to recognize that pathways to ministry are always personal, dynamic, diverse and life-long ? always unfolding!
<b>3</b>	<b>Table 18 Pathways 2</b>		As a follow-up to the above recommendation, establish a mentoring system to provide companions on the journey towards God on a parish level.
<b>2</b>	<b>Table 7 Pathways 3</b>	Parish Leadership, Lay Ecclesial Ministers	That lay ecclesial ministers and parish leadership work to create and sustain vital parish life and be a welcoming community for connecting faith and life in diverse environments.
<b>2</b>	<b>Table 10 Pathways 2</b>	Bishops, Diocesan Offices, Parish Leadership	Because the majority of Lay Ecclesial Ministers identify various lay movement as important to their decision to enter ministry, bishops, diocesan offices, and pastors should support, sponsor, and encourage these movements.
<b>1</b>	<b>Table 7 Pathways 1</b>	Parish Leadership, Lay Ecclesial Ministers	Create opportunities for parishioners to experience and develop their spiritual lives.
<b>1</b>	<b>Table 21 Pathways 3</b>	Colleges & Pastoral Institutes	To implement an international certification in order to equip lay ecclesial ministers from other countries in service to the people.