

The New Jersey School for Ministry



*We are but clay in the hands of the master potter,
who forms us for ministry and gives us purpose.*

*We are to become vessels dedicated to ministry
for the realization of God's Kingdom.*

The School for Ministry opens the door to a journey.

Those who pass through this door must understand that the destination is not predetermined.

Openness and possibility are the marks of this journey, for the journey belongs to God.

Just what is the School for Ministry?

The NJ School for Ministry is a “school of local formation for ministry.” The School can prepare you either for licensed lay ministries, or for the vocational diaconate, or for ministry as a bi-vocational priest, or as a priest committed to serving under-resourced communities. The lay ministries “licensed under the Canons” include Lay Worship Leader, Lay Pastoral Care Leader, Lay Evangelist, Lay Preacher, Lay Catechist, Lay Eucharistic Visitor, and Lay Eucharistic Minister. In our School for Ministry, those preparing for ordination study side-by-side with those preparing for new or deeper lay ministries. We have discovered that there is an amazing richness in this shared journey of formation.

Formation through the School for Ministry includes academic work (online classes, spiritual formation, Gathering Weekends (in-person 2-day gatherings 3 times each year, and opportunities for practical ministry experiences. There are two tracks for online classes – one with online classes on Saturdays and one with classes on weekdays or evenings. Both tracks are academically, spiritually, and practically rigorous and engaging and can usually be completed in 3 years.

Where to begin?

If you sense God moving you in new directions, you should begin by taking the next Episcopal Servant Ministries seminar. With a cohort of no more than 12 colleagues, you will consider “with new eyes” the mission of the church and how we work together as laity, deacons, priests, and bishops to transform our world by living and loving in the spirit and manner of Jesus. We hope you will also find greater clarity regarding your personal spiritual gifts and the needs of the Church.

Email njschoolforministry@gmail.com for information on coming seminar dates.





What if I am feeling called to something new?

Many leave the ESM seminar feeling called to new/renewed/or more empowered lay ministry, or to ordained ministry as either a priest or deacon. God is definitely working in you! Know that you can be prepared for any of those ministries by enrolling either in the NJ School for Ministry or in a traditional 3-year seminary. Both will be challenging and growth-filled. The NJ School for Ministry will offer you the benefit of a disciplined focus on local ministry in a post-pandemic/post-Christendom world and a Certificate of Formation. The traditional 3-year seminary will offer you a Masters degree.

If you want to speak with a graduate or current student of the School for Ministry to get a clear sense of what is involved in our program, email njschoolforministry@gmail.com and we will connect you with a new friend. In any case, we hope you will explore you sense of a call with your local clergy.

For more information on the structure of the School for Ministry program, see the Frequently Asked Questions found on <https://dioceseofnj.org/school-for-ministry/>