



Certificate in Lifelong Christian Formation

DIOCESAN MODEL INFORMATION

Invest in the leaders who shape faith formation across your diocese. Host a year-long certificate cohort for your own directors of Christian education, youth ministers, and adult formation leaders — resourced by Forma and Virginia Theological Seminary, delivered in your own context.

What Your Diocese Gets

- **Turnkey curriculum:** a full academic-year program — asynchronous modules, monthly cohort meetings, and residency framework — built and maintained by Forma and VTS faculty.
- **A dedicated online classroom:** access to the VTS+ learning platform, pre-loaded and configured for your cohort.
- **End-to-end administrative support:** facilitator onboarding, ongoing consultation, participant assessment, and certificate issuance — all handled by Forma.
- **A year of Forma membership** for every participant, connecting your leaders to the wider network of Christian formation professionals.
- **Flexibility to fit your diocese:** choose a four-day residency, two weekend retreats, or three day-long retreats — whatever suits your geography and people.

Diocesan Administrative Requirements to Implement

- Designate a Diocesan Coordinator as the primary liaison with Forma
- Identify two co-facilitators to lead the cohort
- Recruit participants from within diocesan congregations and ministries
- Recruit a pool of mentors and spiritual directors (Forma can assist on request)
- Choose and confirm a residency format, venue, and dates
- Budget separately for facilitator stipends/travel, mentor and spiritual director honoraria, and residency costs (lodging, meals, supplies) — not covered by the licensing fee
- Implement the program per the Diocesan Model Guide
- Engage in good faith with Forma's admin team and respond to check-ins throughout the year
- Share aggregate end-of-year program evaluation data with Forma

Why Your Formation Leaders Will Thank You

Participants graduate with a Certificate in Lifelong Christian Formation from Forma and VTS, five sessions each of mentoring and spiritual direction, a Ministry Context Project and Capstone Project rooted in their real congregational work, and a cohort of peers built through in-person residency and monthly gathering — all without leaving their calls or their dioceses.

The Investment

Licensing fee (flat, per program year)	\$5,000 — covers curriculum, platform, and Forma admin support
Cost a barrier?	Forma works with dioceses case-by-case to make participation possible

*Plan roughly a year ahead of launch (most dioceses begin in late winter/spring for an August start).
Forma has the capacity to take on up to three new participating dioceses per program year.*

Ready to explore a cohort for your diocese? Contact sclare@vts.edu



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CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

A year-long, academically rigorous and immediately applicable curriculum that equips formation leaders to understand and support Christian formation across the entire lifespan. Every module is grounded in the participant's own ministry context, blending synchronous gatherings, self-paced coursework, and an in-person residency into a sustainable rhythm of study.

Monthly Synchronous online gatherings	Adaptable In-person residency	2 hrs/wk Asynchronous coursework	5 + 5 Mentor & spiritual direction meetings	8 + 4 Foundational + elective modules
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Program Elements

- **Synchronous Gatherings:** monthly online sessions for orientation, sharing context and learning, and capstone presentations.
- **Residency:** a multi-day, in-person intensive for community-building and deep engagement with foundational material.
- **Asynchronous Learning:** self-directed modules on a tailored learning plan — foundational courses build shared language, then participants choose electives for individual growth.
- **Ministry Context Project:** a foundational reflective assignment examining the participant's setting, role, structures, challenges, successes, and where God is at work.
- **Capstone Project:** participants identify a real, present challenge in their ministry and implement a project in real time, integrating learning from at least three modules.
- **Mentorship:** five meetings with a formation mentor to develop vocational goals and address growth areas.
- **Spiritual Direction:** five meetings (one group, four individual) accompanying participants through the program year.

Curriculum Topics

Foundational (required)

Understanding Your Context	Foundations of Pastoral Care
Foundations of Ministry	Foundations of Liturgy
Foundations of Formation	An Introduction to Spiritual Direction
Foundations of Scripture	An Introduction to Mentorship
Foundations of Theology	

Practicum Electives (choose at least 4)

Intercultural Competency	Developing a Ministry Vision
LGBTQ+ 101 for Ministry	Liturgy & Music as an Opportunity for Formation
Disability 101 for Ministry	Communications & Marketing for Ministry
Group Facilitation	Recruiting a Ministry Team
Strategic Planning, Structures, and Strategy	Best Practices for Ministry
Lifelong Formation	Outreach as an Opportunity for Formation
Finance for Ministry	Vocational Development
Immersive Experiences as an Opportunity for Formation	Responding to Trauma, Tragedy, Crisis, and Disaster