

EDUCATION FOR PASTORAL CARE

**A Clinical-Pastoral Care Program
for diaconal and lay students
offered through
The Newark School of Theology
and
supported by The Diocese of Newark**



A SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

Education for Pastoral Education (EPC) is an alternative model of Clinical Pastoral Education, based on the purpose and the essential components of traditional CPE. The EPC program seeks to promote the emotional growth, theological confidence, and clinical competency necessary to function as servant leaders in a hurting world.

WHO IS THE PROGRAM FOR?

The EPC program is designed for students who are preparing for ordination as Episcopal Deacons. Lay persons not on the track to diaconal ordination but who wish to deepen their ministry through a course that has both academic rigor and practical experience, are also invited to enroll in the program.

The EPC program is not being offered as an alternative to traditional CPE for persons who are on the priestly ordination track.

WHY “ALTERNATIVE”?

The traditional CPE program allows students to participate in just one type of experience, that of a hospital setting. In the EPC program, the students will still be required to have a minimum of 100 patient contact hours in a hospital. However, the EPC program also requires students to experience at least one and perhaps two other clinical settings, such as a residential drug rehabilitation center, an out-patient mental health clinic, a shelter for abused women, a respite for parents and young cancer patients, or a county jail.

Also, Northern Jersey now has only one traditional CPE program in operation. While it is an excellent course of study, some students may find participation a hardship either because of finances or because they live a far distance from the site.

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The Education for Pastoral Care (EPC) has been collaboratively designed by two members of the Diocese of Newark, Archdeacon Liz Ostuni and Archdeacon Peter Jackson, and two members of the Newark School of Theology, Rev. Dr. Douglas Bendall, Director of NST, and Chaplain Cynthia Brady, Chaplain at Valley Hospital and Instructor and Student Supervisor at NST, with the full knowledge and support of The Rt. Rev. Mark Beckwith, Bishop of the Diocese of Newark. The EPC was approved Feb. 14th, 2011.

This booklet was completed and published under the able direction of Archdeacon Deborah Rucki Drake and Director of Diocesan Publications, Nina Nicholson.

The Newark School of Theology is an ecumenical and interfaith school of theology for persons who desire to take advanced courses in theology without having first to matriculate at a school whose primary mission is professional education for the ordained ministry. All courses are taught at the upper-division or master's level of university and seminary study by teachers who have earned graduate degrees

A Program Oversight Committee consisting of the Director of NST, Dr. Bendall, Chaplain Brady, the three archdeacons of the Diocese, and the Bishop or a representative appointed by the Bishop has been appointed.

WHAT IF I WANT TO TAKE A TRADITIONAL, HOSPITAL-BASED CPE?

Diaconal students always have the option of choosing a traditional CPE program if they prefer. Either program fulfills the course requirements set out by the Commission on Ministry in the Diocese of Newark.

WHAT ARE THE ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS?

Diaconal students will be admitted after having successfully completed one year (two courses and a summer session) of theological study either at the Newark School of Theology and one year of Saturday Diaconal Formation classes or at another theological institution. If the student has acquired these credits at another accredited school of theology, he or she must first be interviewed by the President of NST or the EPC course instructor.

Lay students must either fulfill the above requirement or have completed at least one year of Education for Ministry (EFM). Additionally, he or she must be actively engaged in lay ministry in his or her parish. An interview by the President of NST or the EPC course instructor is also required.

WHAT IS THE RATIO OF DIACONAL TO LAY STUDENTS?

The EPC program is limited to six students per academic year, and at least two of the students must be on the diaconal ordination track. If there are no qualified diaconal students at the time of admission to the program, the four remaining slots may be filled with lay students. The Diocese of Newark feels that this mix of diaconal and lay students is one of the major strengths of the program, by fostering as it does, a community of shared experience, common prayer, and rigorous study.

HOW ABOUT AN OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAM?

The program runs from September through July of the following year (11 months). Students will meet as a group one night each week during the academic year for instruction. Individual instruction hours with the instructor will also be arranged. The student must also acquire 300 patient hours at a hospital, and also in one or two additional settings that have been approved in advance by the instructor.

Because many diaconal students also struggle to balance family responsibilities, job and studies, the Diocese of Newark's EPC model allows students to complete clinical contact hours during the latter part of May, and throughout June and July. This additional time is another one of the great advantages of this program.

*Sites for patient contact hours may either be recommended by the EPC Instructor, or suggested by a student. All sites however, must be pre-approved by the Instructor/Supervisor. Sites selected for EPC client hours can not serve as substitutes for either the Social Service Internship or for the Parish Internship which diaconal students are required to complete before ordination.

SUPPOSE I TAKE THE DIOCESAN PROGRAM AND THEN WISH TO APPLY FOR FURTHER UNITS IN A TRADITIONAL PROGRAM?

Having completed one unit of EPC, students may wish to apply for additional units of CPE. Although every effort has been made to apply the same rigor to the Diocese of Newark EPC program, a student's first EPC unit may or may not be acceptable to a CPE accrediting board. To advance to the next level of training, the student may be required to "re-take" the first unit within a traditional CPE program.

IS THERE ANY FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE FOR EPC?

Up to three diaconal students may be eligible for financial assistance from the Diocese. There is no financial assistance available at the present time for lay students.

ADVANTAGES OF THE DIOCESAN PROGRAM

- 1. May be more geographically and/or financially viable for students**
- 2. Allows for extended time to acquire clinical contact hours**
- 3. Fosters a "mixed" community of diaconal and lay students in an atmosphere of common prayer, clinical experience and academic study**
- 4. Offers experience in multiple settings with a variety of clients**
- 5. Establishes a direct working relationship between diaconal/lay students and local ministries**
- 6. Includes instructors, classes and site placements that are specific to the needs of the Diocese of Newark**