four formation classes — including two that are new offerings — are set to begin in the late summer to ensure the spiritual and pastoral needs of Catholics throughout the Diocese of Burlington are being addressed: new classes for the Diocesan Lay Formation and Deacon Formation programs and new offerings of a Diocesan Leader of Prayer and a Pastoral Associate for Parish Life training programs.

Burlington Bishop Christopher Coyne “wants to ensure the spiritual and pastoral needs of Catholics throughout the Diocese are being attended to, which is what these programs are designed to inspire and equip men and women to do,” explained Deacon Phil Lawson, executive director of evangelization, catechesis, divine worship, marriage and family and respect life for the Diocese of Burlington.

Applications are being accepted in the spring, with each of the programs set to begin in August/September.

The programs are part of a larger vision to inspire and equip men and women for greater service in the Church, under the umbrella of the Diocesan Institute for Missionary Discipleship. “Having already seen the faith, growth, joy and zeal manifested in the current students; I am eager to see this grow,” Deacon Lawson said. “Ultimately, we will have more and more men and women, filled with the joy of the Gospel and eager to share that passion and their gifts with their parishes as we seek to build vibrant Catholic communities.”

Three of the programs will help to empower the laity to take a greater role in the Church; the fourth is for deacons who are members of the clergy. “The laity, by virtue of their baptism, are called to share their gifts in service to Christ and the Church,” Deacon Lawson said. “This is normally done by living out their faith in the secular world. However, some are called to specific ministerial roles in their parishes, for which the Diocese is called to equip them for that service.”

The new offerings of a diocesan leader of prayer and pastoral associate programs were added as a response to concrete needs in parishes — “individuals to assist in helping facilitate various liturgical ministries in lieu of the priest shortage and individuals who can assist in the pastoral care and evangelizing mission of the parish in lieu of a resident full-time pastor,” he explained.

Each of the programs is a different length: Lay Formation is two years, Deacon Formation is five years, Leader of Prayer is four sessions and Pastoral Associate for Parish Life is one year.

These programs will be done primarily in person once a month; additional classes will be completed online.

The cost varies depending on the program and is generally split between the Diocese, the parish and the participant.

“This is an exciting time for our Diocese as the directives of the Diocesan Synod continue to be implemented with the fruits starting to be experienced,” Deacon Lawson said.

For more information about the programs, email Deacon Lawson at plawson@vermontcatholic.org, or visit vermontcatholic.org/ministries-programs/evangelization-catechesis/adult-formation-programs/.

VTC • Cori Fugere Urban
Upcoming Events

**04|28 WEDNESDAY**
Vermont Catholic Professionals Virtual Event
Zoom • 8 - 9 am
Our April guest speaker is Mary Anne Sheahan, Executive Director — Vermont Talent Pipeline Management Program, Vermont Business Roundtable. Learn more: [www.vermontcatholic.org/event/vermont-catholic-professionals-virtual-event-2/](http://www.vermontcatholic.org/event/vermont-catholic-professionals-virtual-event-2/)

**05|01 SATURDAY**
Our Lady of Fatima Devotions
Holy Family, Essex Junction • 8 am
Rosary, Confessions, Mass at 8:30 am.

**05|08 SATURDAY**
Padre Pio Devotions
Holy Family, Essex Junction • 8 am
Rosary starts at 8 am followed by Mass, Special Intentions for the intercession of Saint Padre Pio and then learning about Padre Pio.

**05|08 SATURDAY**
Food Drive at Cathedral of St. Joseph and St Mark Churches
Burlington • 9 - 11 am
The Knights of Columbus de Goesbriand Council #275 is conducting a food drive at both churches, with drop-off in the parking lot of nonperishable food items to benefit the North End Food Pantry. Please consider making a donation.

---

**Worldpriest Annual Global Rosary Relay**

Friday, June 11, 2021 • 2 p.m.

- Live-streamed from the Cathedral of St. Joseph, Burlington
- Rosary to be led by Bishop Christopher J. Coyne
- Learn more about the Worldpriest Annual Global Rosary Relay at [worldpriest.com/annual-global-rosary-relay/](http://worldpriest.com/annual-global-rosary-relay/)
- Questions? Email Valerie Parzyck at vparzyck@vermontcatholic.org
- How many Vermonters can we get praying the Rosary together? **Join us to find out!**

---

**Love one another**

**APRIL 18–24, 2021**

**CHALLENGES TO GROW YOUR MARRIAGE**

**HAVE A “REMEMBERING NIGHT”**

Reminisce about the first time you saw each other, your first date, when each of you realized he/she might be “the one”, and how you felt the night before your wedding. End with a prayer thanking the Holy Spirit for bringing you together.

[vermontcatholic.org/marriagechallenge](http://vermontcatholic.org/marriagechallenge)

---

**CHRIST OUR HOPE**

BUILDING A VIBRANT CHURCH

To learn more or make a gift visit: [christourhopevt.org](http://christourhopevt.org).

**Goal: $9,582,456**

**46%**

**As of April 7, 2021:**

$4,395,874