



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Dr. DelMonico Named Assistant Director for Certification of Ecclesial Ministry & Service at USCCB

New Role Draws Upon Theological & Ministerial Expertise for Promotion & Development of Lay Ministers

WASHINGTON, D.C. (July 9, 2018) - Dr. Marc DelMonico recently announced that he has been named [Assistant Director of Certification for Ecclesial Ministry & Service](#) at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). He succeeds Dr. Harry Dudley, who in 2011 established the position within the [Secretariat of Catholic Education](#) to facilitate the work of the Conference's Subcommittee for Certification, coordinating efforts within the Subcommittee and with national lay ministry organizations to adopt [common standards for certification](#).

Marc and Dr. Dudley will be working closely together in the month of July to enable a smooth transition within the office, with Marc formally beginning his tenure as Assistant Director on July 16.

In this national role, Marc is tasked with promoting, encouraging, developing and evaluating new and ongoing processes of certification for lay ecclesial ministry in the U.S. Catholic Church. In doing so, he will be building upon the foundational work of Dr. Dudley and the Subcommittee, who established and fostered strong relationships with several national and regional professional lay ministry formation and advocacy organizations, as well as academic degree and ministerial formation programs in theology and ministry. Together, these entities collaborate in resourcing Catholic lay ministers throughout the U.S. and promote and advocate for these ministers' role in the church.

Marc, a Catholic lay minister himself, looks forward to this new opportunity to be of service in the church. "I am honored and thrilled to be taking on this role of facilitating the important work of the Subcommittee for Certification for Ecclesial Ministry & Service, resourcing the bishops conference, individual dioceses, lay ministry organizations and programs, as well as fellow lay ministers," he said. He views his new role as a unique opportunity to bring together a diverse array of experiences in the church and beyond.



Background

He has served as member of parish pastoral teams, with skills in liturgical consulting and enactment, and he has led faith formation in Confirmation programs as well as the R.C.I.A. process by which adults prepare to enter the Catholic Church. He has served as a chaplain in a long-term psychiatric care hospital and an elder-care assisted living facility. More recently, he has worked with [faith-based justice advocacy organizations](#) in Washington, D.C., including [ecumenical](#) and interfaith organizations. He also worked with an [interfaith nonprofit](#) promoting civility and cooperation on Capitol Hill.

Marc has continued consulting in several areas of parish ministry, especially liturgy, including intercultural consulting with parishes in [Silver Spring, Md.](#), and in his hometown of [Utica, New York](#), and looks forward to continuing this work.

Marc's background in theology will also be significant in the role of Assistant Director. He earned a B.A. in Theology and Philosophy from Saint Bonaventure University in New York State. Marc received an M.A. in Systematic Theology and an M.Div. as a lay student at the Washington Theological Union, a graduate school for theology and ministry, in Washington, D.C. He has also earned a Certificate in Ecumenism from the [Washington Theological Consortium](#).

In 2015, [he earned his Ph.D.](#) in Historic & Systematic Theology with a major focus in the theology of church and a minor in ecumenism from the School of Theology & Religious Studies at The Catholic University of America. ([Read more](#) about Marc's doctoral dissertation.) Marc has been published in several peer-reviewed theological and ministry journals and recently contributed a chapter on soon-to-be St. Oscar Romero in a [publication](#) from Routledge and edited by leaders of the Mid-Atlantic Region chapter of the American Academy of Religion. Marc is also an [adjunct professor](#) in the Department of Theology & Religious Studies at Marymount University in Arlington, Va.

Additionally, Marc brings to his new role a background in business and digital communications, as a founding partner and project manager at [Perisphere Media](#), a digital media studio which serves nearly 40 clients across the country in areas of web design, development and digital communications strategy.

[Read more](#) about Marc's background or download his [C.V.](#) and [resume](#).

About Lay Ministry

"Lay ecclesial ministry," often referred to informally as "lay ministry," is a theological and ministerial term which identifies a recently recognized form of pastoral ministry and leadership in the Catholic Church. Lay ecclesial ministers serve the church in formal leadership roles, such as Director of Worship, Parish Life Coordinator, and Youth



Ministry Leader, but, unlike priest-presbyters or deacons, their ministry is not based on sacramental ordination. Instead, the theological basis for the work of lay ecclesial ministers is baptism, the foundational sacrament of all Christian life, through which believers celebrate the power of God at work in their lives and their incorporation into the life of the community of believers, the church.

Since the Second Vatican Council's *Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People* in 1965, lay ecclesial ministry has grown in importance, with recent estimates of over 40,000 lay ecclesial ministers throughout the United States. Building upon decades of theological reflection on the role of the laity in ministry in the church, in 2005 the USCCB issued a resource statement for guiding the development of lay ecclesial ministry entitled *Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord*. This statement identifies the foundations of lay ecclesial ministry and indicates the development of pastoral practices for the formation, certification and authorization of such ministers for their work in the church. Its title recalls in its title an image from a parable of Jesus in the Gospels reminding people that the "harvest is plentiful" and to ask God to "provide laborers" to gather up the rich harvest (Matt. 9:37; Luke 10:2).

[View a video](#) from the chair of the Subcommittee for Certification, Bishop Gerald Kicanas describing the theological background and the work of the subcommittee.

[Read more](#) about the Subcommittee for Ecclesial Certification & Service.

[Read more](#) about the USCCB and its mission.

Spiritual Tapestry

Reflecting on the circumstances and process which led Marc to apply for and accept the Assistant Director position, he noted that he approached the interview process like he has many other previous opportunities to serve the church, namely, through the lens of spiritual discernment: "I spent time in prayer when preparing for the interviews and again when the job offer came. I believe that God works in all of our lives in many ways all the time, always by way of invitation and calling. Taking the time to listen to the call of God in one's life in large and small things, and being aware of how your own gifts and talents can shape your response to God's call among many possibilities in front of you, is an essential spiritual skill."

Marc's start date for the position - July 16 - highlights for him the way in which God works through the sum total of our experiences: "July 16 ends a four-day period in the annual liturgical calendar which is very important in my spiritual life. July 16 is the memorial of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, which is part of the name of a merged parish where I have consulted in liturgy and music ministry for many years, and which has been a source of spiritual sustenance for me. July 15 is the memorial of St.



Bonaventure, the patron of my *alma mater* and a reminder of the deep spiritual connection I have to St. Francis & St. Clare of Assisi, and to the Franciscan world and Franciscan theology, which has heavily informed my theological method and perspective. July 14 is the memorial of St. Kateri Tekakwitha, the first Native American Catholic saint, who was a member of the Mohawk nation of the Iroquois (Haudenosaunee) Confederacy, founded in what became Central New York, where I was born and raised. The spirituality of the Iroquois, and their history, has always been an interest of mine, as is the life of Kateri, a laywoman. July 14 is special for the Franciscan community in its commemoration of the life of St. Camillus de Lellis, the patron of the parish where I worship in Silver Spring, Md. When I reflected on the fact that this new opportunity to continue my service to the community of the church and to the work of lay ministry coincided with the celebration of this personal 'summer triduum,' I became more aware of the activity of the Holy Spirit weaving together many threads of my spiritual life in this moment, and I am profoundly grateful for this opportunity."

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[View the web version of this release.](#)

[View the text of the internal announcement of Marc's hiring from the USCCB.](#)

Dr. Marc DelMonico is a professional theologian and ministry consultant for Catholic and Christian parishes, communities and organizations, with additional significant capabilities in project management, online media, and organizational communications and visioning. He has an extensive academic background in Catholic theology of liturgy and worship, and over 25 years of experience in ritual planning and enactment, liturgical environment and music, adult catechesis and faith formation, pastoral care and faith-based justice advocacy. For more information, visit his website at <https://churchmd.com>.