

SEMINARY'S THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION FOR PARISH SERVICES (STEPS)

Q. What is STEPS?

A. STEPS is a graduate level certificate program for adult Catholics who desire a deeper understanding of their faith. STEPS was designed in collaboration with Washington's Education for Parish Services (EPS) and Immaculate Conception Seminary at Seton Hall University. STEPS offers an integrated program of theological coursework, praxis and spiritual formation to enable adult Catholics to better live and share their faith.

Q. Who is eligible to enroll in STEPS?

A. Because STEPS offers graduate level courses, students must have a bachelor's degree to enroll.

Q. How many credits are awarded in the STEPS certificate program?

A. Students completing the certificate program will earn 24 graduate level credits in Theology.

Q. Where are classes offered?

A. Classes are offered at Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Ridgewood, New Jersey.

Q. What subjects are offered in the STEPS certificate program?

A. Students will take a total of eight core courses in Scripture and Theology. These include:
Old Testament
Synoptic Gospels
Theology of Paul and John
Church History
Documents of Vatican II
Sacramental Theology
Systematic Theology
Moral Theology

Q. What is Praxis?

A. Praxis is a complementary part of this program to ensure the practical application of learned material. This is accomplished through various workshops and lectures offered each semester. Most of these days will be offered in conjunction with Immaculate Conception Seminary and the Institute for Christian Spirituality. Areas covered are: Leadership, Parish Ministry, Catechesis, Evangelization and Apologetics. Students will also participate in Theological reflection groups.

Q. What is involved in Spiritual Formation?

A. The spiritual growth of our students is extremely important to us. Each semester, students will have the opportunity to attend a retreat offered at Immaculate Conception Seminary. Also, each student will participate in the Foundational Spiritual Experience before their graduation from the program. Foundational Spiritual Experience is a yearlong program providing students with an intense experience of individual and communal prayer, and private and group reflection on the meaning and importance of lay spirituality.

Q. How long does it take for a student to graduate from the program?

A. This answer entirely depends on the student. Taking one class a semester, it will take 8 semesters to complete the 8 core courses. This will take about 2 1/2 years to finish including participation in summer sessions. Students wishing to complete this program sooner may elect to take additional classes each semester available at Immaculate Conception Seminary School of Theology. Students may also choose to not take summer classes or to take other time off during their course of study, thus extending their time in the program.

Q. What does STEPS cost?

A. The cost for STEPS is the same as in the graduate school of Theology at Seton Hall University. The tuition cost for a three credit course for 2006 is \$2,229. Students employed by the Church or engaged in an active church ministry position are eligible for a 50 percent tuition discount.

Q. What do STEPS students do with their education?

A. STEPS students leave the program with an increased knowledge and enthusiasm for their Catholic faith. Inspired by their experience, they serve as powerful Christian witnesses in their families, workplaces and communities. For some, this new rekindled faith leads them to a deeper commitment to service in their church community as lectors, extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist, RCIA leaders, catechists, Bible study facilitators and in many other ministries. For others, this service extends to their general community in service to the poor, homeless or sick. Students also have the option of continuing their graduate education if they desire to do so. They can apply their 24 credits toward a masters degree in Pastoral Ministry or a masters degree in Theology offered at Immaculate Conception Seminary School of Theology.