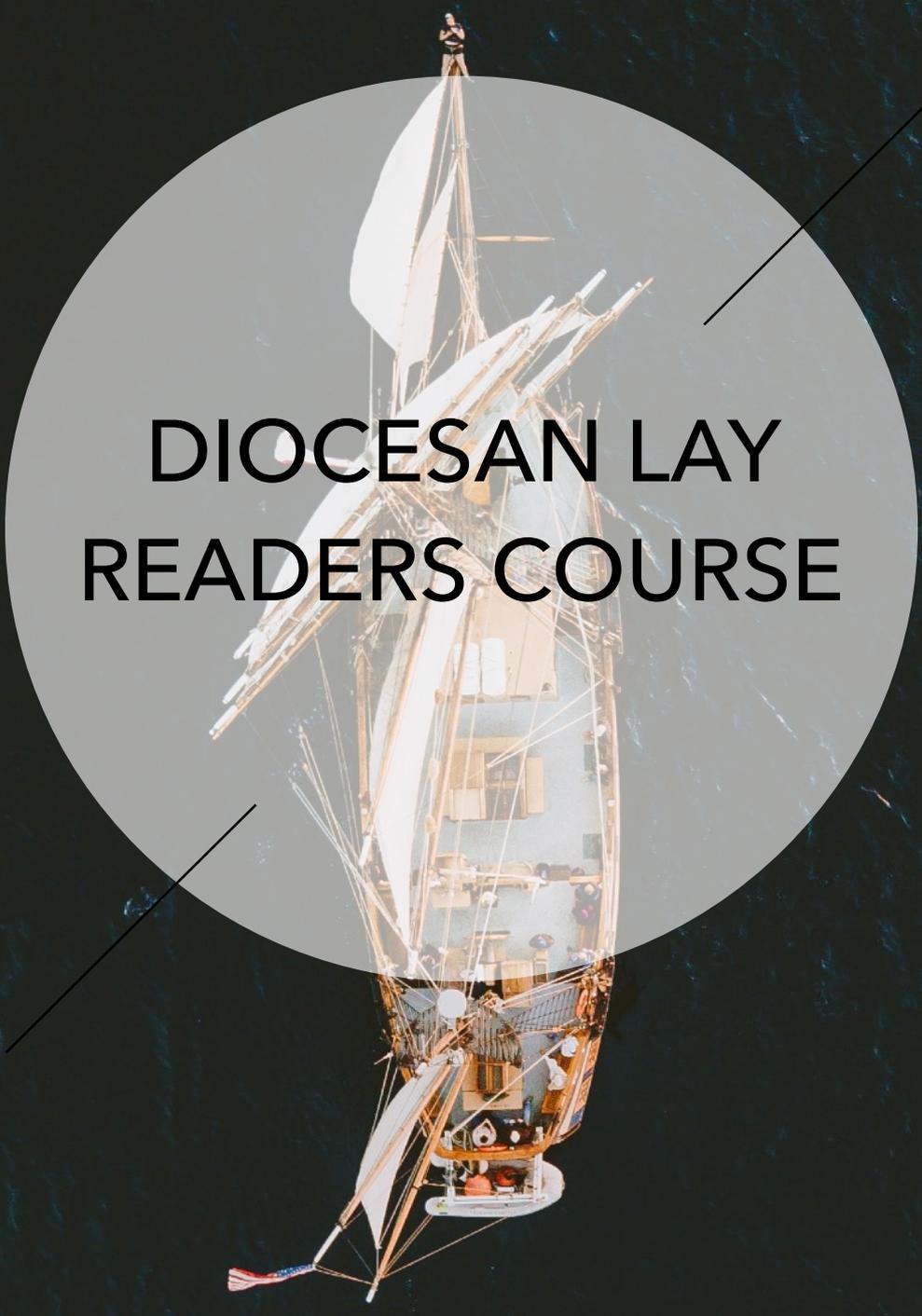


DIOCESE OF
DOWN AND DROMORE



DIOCESAN LAY
READERS COURSE

2019



Diocesan Lay Readers are men or women, old or young, from a wide variety of backgrounds who have a significant voluntary role in assisting the ministry of the church. They are authorised by the Bishop to preach, teach, lead worship and engage in pastoral work. Nearly all Readers minister in their own parishes but they can also assist in other churches when needed.

As the role of a Reader in teaching and leading is significant, potential Readers are given training in Biblical

studies, theology, ministry and preaching over a two year period before they are commissioned.

Readers are a valuable support for parish ministry and we have been blessed with 36 new candidates in recent years. However more are needed!

If you think that God might be placing on you a calling to serve him more fully through a teaching and leadership role within the church, then a Diocesan Lay Reader role may be for you.



DO YOU FEEL A CALLING TO TEACH AND LEAD OTHERS IN CHURCH WORSHIP?

Vocation and Nomination

The vocation or call to become a Reader may be felt by an individual or may come from outside; from their minister, a fellow worshipper, or from someone else entirely. If you think that God might be calling you to Diocesan Lay Reader ministry you should consider if you:

- Have an active faith in prayer, study and ministry to others.
- Have a consistent involvement in ministry in their local church.
- Have a desire to teach, preach and communicate the faith Biblically.
- Are prepared to commit their time and energy to this calling.
- Have the support of others around you in this calling.

As Diocesan Lay Readers minister to the local church it is necessary for all candidates to have the support of their church and a nomination from their Rector in order to proceed. Therefore it is important to talk to your minister who will advise you and prayerfully consider whether to recommend you for the course.



The training for Diocesan Lay Readers begins in February 2019 and finishes in April 2021, with successful candidates being commissioned by the bishop in the summer of 2021.

The training is designed to cover all the key aspects of Reader ministry and to equip you with the knowledge, skills and practical experience to effectively support the church.

The training course has 3 strands:

Graduate Certificate in Theology, Ministry and Mission.

This distance learning certificate is run in partnership with the Church of Ireland Theological Institute (CITI) and St. John's Theological College, Nottingham. It is identical to the Foundation Course used as an access course for ordination training except that it is studied over two years instead of one. The course has three modules on:

1. Biblical Studies. Studied from March-October 2019
2. Christian Doctrine in Focus. Studied from October 2019 -June 2020
3. Theological Perspectives: Christian Ministry. Studied from June 2020-March 2021

These modules are taught through a combination of distance learning and contact time at CITI. Assignments and tutor support for this certificate are accessed and submitted online.

Formation for Ministry

In addition to the 3 modules outlined above there will be 6 Reader study Saturdays at the Church of Ireland Theological Institute on 4 other subjects:

1. Homiletics -how to prepare and deliver sermons.
2. Liturgy -leading worship within the Church of Ireland.
3. Church History -the historical context of the church
4. Spirituality -the beliefs, values and way of life that reflect Biblical teaching

These subjects are looked at concurrently over the study days and are assessed through a combination of assignments and practical work.

Diocesan Training

This takes place in Belfast and involves around 15 evening sessions over the two years focussing on developing the knowledge and skills to deliver Biblical preaching and lead liturgical worship in church. These practical skills will also be assessed via 3 preaching assignments and 2 liturgy assignments.

- 2030 Readers: The diocese is keen to encourage younger Diocesan Lay readers in their 20's and 30's to play a full part in the leadership of the church. Candidates in this age range will, in addition to participating in the rest of the training, be offered further help to develop their leadership skills.
- Training Support: The support of each candidate undertaking this course will be a crucial element in helping their development as Diocesan Lay Readers. Each meeting of diocesan candidates will include some tutor group support as well as one-to-one support from the Diocesan Warden of Readers and Diocesan Development Officer.

SELECTION

Key characteristics that candidates should be developing for Diocesan Lay Reading Ministry include vocation, faith, leadership, relationships and spiritual disciplines.

The selection process is designed to test the vocation of applicants for Reader ministry and to assess, both their potential for serving and developing as a Reader, and their ability to cope with and benefit from training. There are 3 steps:



Step (1) **Vocation**

This involves your prayerful consideration of whether God is calling you to be a Diocesan Lay Reader and a discussion with your local minister. At this point it may be helpful to also meet with the Diocesan Warden of Readers to informally talk about what is involved and get more information.



Step (2) **Nomination**

Should you and your minister both believe that this is a calling you would like to test further your minister will nominate you to the Warden of Readers for the diocese, who is responsible for Lay Reader Training. You will also be asked to fill out a short application form to accompany this nomination.



Step (3) **Interview**

Once nominated, the Warden of Readers will arrange a time for you to be interviewed by a panel of 3-4 people. These interviews are designed to help explore, in a supportive environment, the key characteristics that candidates should have for Diocesan Lay Reading ministry.

Other selection criteria: Previous qualifications or courses regarding Biblical knowledge will help with the application process but are not needed if the applicant can demonstrate adequate Biblical knowledge at interview. Candidates with significant qualifications and experience may be able to omit elements of training previously covered. Candidates should also have been (or willing to be) confirmed in the Church of Ireland.



Cost
 The total cost for the course is £1,650. The diocese pays one third of the amount with the remaining two-thirds shared by agreement between the sending parish and the candidate. This sum can be paid in instalments. Applicants approved to omit elements of the training due to prior learning will have the costs reduced accordingly.

The cost includes all the teaching, materials and any accommodation and food required during study days but does not cover travel expenses.

Key dates:

Selection Process:

- 18th January 2019 Closing date for nomination letters and application form
- 22nd January 2019 Interview evenings for candidates

Belfast

Training Programme:

Dates	Study	Venue
22-24 th February 2019	CITI introductory weekend to the Readers' Course. Introduction to Module (1)	Dublin
Apr-June 2019	Diocesan Preaching Course: Sessions 1-3	Belfast
8 th June 2019	CITI Reader Saturday Study Day	Dublin
Oct-Dec 2019	Diocesan Preaching Course: Sessions 4-6	Belfast
12 th October 2019	CITI Reader Saturday Study Day –introduction to Module (2)	Dublin
October 2019	Certificate in Theology: Module (1) assignments due	Online
Jan-Mar 2020	Diocesan Preaching Course: Sessions 7-9	Belfast
15 th February 2020	CITI Reader Saturday Study Day	Dublin
May-June 2020	Practical Preaching Assessment Groups	Belfast
6 th June 2020	CITI Reader Saturday Study Day –introduction to Module (3)	Dublin
June 2020	Certificate in Theology: Module (2) assignments due	Online
Oct-Dec 2020	Liturgy Training	Belfast
10 th October 2020	CITI Reader Saturday Study Day	Dublin
13 th February 2021	CITI Reader Saturday Study Day	Dublin
April 2021	Certificate in Theology: Module (3) assignments due	Online

For more information:

Contact the Warden of Readers, Rev Willie Nixon on 07764 277771 or cazza_willie@hotmail.com of the Development Officer, Andrew Brannigan on 07950 846621 or andrew@downanddromore.org



Name:

Address:

Contact Phone No:

Contact E-mail:

Parish Church:

D.O.B:

Place of Baptism:

(leave blank if you are not baptised)

Date of Baptism:

Place of Confirmation:

(leave blank if you are not confirmed)

Date of Confirmation:

Occupation:

Academic Achievement:

Please list any academic qualifications of A-level standard and above, including grades attained:

Please note any other relevant academic achievements or courses of study, including module titles if applicable:

Give a brief outline of your faith journey to date:

Give a brief outline of your involvement in your local parish:

Finally, please outline why you wish to pursue Lay Reading within the Diocese of Down and Dromore:



Please return your application and Rector's nomination to Mary Coles at the Diocesan Office, Church House, by 18th January 2019