



Lay Funeral Ministers Leaders Training

Purpose

To have a dedicated, trained team of lay people who will be able to:

- lead families in a time of prayer in the family home or at the funeral home
- lead liturgies at the graveside for bereaved families at the time of committal of the deceased
- lead liturgies at the crematorium for bereaved families at the time of committal

This dedicated team of lay ministers will ensure:

- that families continue to be supported by being led in liturgical prayer during their time of loss.
- that parish clergy, especially those in areas with large funeral pressures, will have access to a team of people to support them in the pastoral care of families at a time of bereavement.
- that families have a wider pool of people to draw on to lead prayer when there are specific time constraints e.g. time pressures at the crematorium.

Role Description

The Lay Leader of Funeral Ministry will be trained to:

- Guide families in their preparations for a funeral e.g. support with choosing a Requiem Mass or Funeral Service, Selection of Readings etc
- Lead prayers at the family home or funeral home prior to the reception of the remains at the Church.
- Lead prayers at the time of committal at the Graveside or Crematorium.
- Lead prayers at the time of interment of ashes.

Candidates are required to:

- Have a minimum availability of one day a fortnight so that they can be called upon for support.
- Provide personal contact details to the administrative team so that funeral arrangements can be confirmed in a timely manner with bereaved families.
- Have access to their own transport or be willing to travel with the funeral directors to ensure that services are delivered without undue delay.
- As this is a public facing role the personal presentation of applicants is to be of a high standard. A dress code will apply.
- Complete, in full, the Diocesan Training programme including mentoring/observation.
- Attend ongoing days of renewal. A minimum of 1 per annum.

Pre-Requisite Skills and Experience

Applicants for this role will be required to complete an application form detailing their skills and relevant experience as follows:

- A practising member of the Catholic Faith in good standing.
- An effective communicator with the ability to speak confidently in public.
- Given the nature of the work it is essential that the candidate is able to establish rapport with ease and empathise with others.
- Previous experience within the life of the Church is desirable e.g. Minister of the Word, Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion, Sacristan, Bethany Bereavement Support Volunteers.

Training Dates:

Session One: Thursday 22nd January 2026: 6.30pm – 8.30pm

Session Two: Saturday 31st January 2026: 10.00am – 4.00pm

Session Three: Thursday 5th February 2026: 6.30pm – 8.30pm

Session Four: Thursday 12th February 2026: 6.30pm – 8.30pm

Session Five: Saturday 21st February: 10.00am – 4.00pm

Training Location:

Diocesan Offices, 120 Cliftonville Road, Belfast BT14 6LA.

