

AMPJP Formation Framework for Canonical Stewards

21 October 2020



“The fundamental objective of the formation of the lay faithful is an ever-clearer discovery of one’s vocation and the ever-greater willingness to live it so as to fulfil one’s mission.”

(Pope John Paul II, Christifideles Laici #58)

Introduction

The Association of Ministerial Public Juridic Persons Ltd (AMPJP) and its Members recognises the importance of the civil and canonical responsibilities of the Canonical Stewards of Ministerial Public Juridic Persons (MPJP). These responsibilities may include the additional standards that regulatory bodies require of those involved in the governance of certain ministries.

Canonical Stewards are appointed by the Church because they possess the high levels of professional and personal skill/knowledge/competence necessary for their role. Furthermore, a process of formation is needed to assist Canonical Stewards to identify and respond to their development needs at individual and group level, both at the beginning and throughout their term of service.

The importance of formation of Canonical Stewards to assist them to meet these responsibilities was addressed at the AMPJP’s 02-03 November 2019 workshop. One of the workshop resolutions included that a working group develop:

- › Formation and development framework for Canonical Stewards (and possibly Board Directors)
- › Skills matrix for Canonical Stewards

Carmel Ross (MercyCare), Peter Pritchard (Sophia Education Ministries) and Lawrie Hallinan (AMPJP) are the nucleus of this working group. Other members include: Peter Howard (Mary Aikenhead Ministries), Elizabeth McClintock (Sophia Education Ministries), and Eileen Young (Dominican Education Australia).

The working group has drawn on the existing formation frameworks of AMPJP members to develop the following AMPJP Formation Framework for Canonical Stewards. This Framework is intended to stimulate discussion about “*what are the core areas of formation*” and “*what are some proven resources to aid formation*”.

This Framework is offered to AMPJP members as a guide to support the development of their own formation framework. The AMPJP anticipates that most MPJPs will maintain their existing Frameworks as these have arisen from their experience and they find them helpful. The AMPJP values the diverse expressions of MPJP life amongst its membership. This diversity reflects the differences in: heritage, ministries, size, resources and needs. There is potential for rich learning in AMPJP members when they are prompted to reflect on their existing structures and processes in light of differences they see in others. While this framework is directed at Canonical Stewards, it could be extended to Directors on ministry boards by adjusting the areas of formation and the level of competence expected.

You must make every effort to support your faith with goodness, and goodness with knowledge and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with endurance, and endurance with godliness, and godliness with mutual affection, and mutual affection with love. For if these things are yours and are increasing among you, they keep you from being ineffective and unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Peter 1:5-8

Definition of formation

The AMPJP Formation Working Group was impressed by the definitions of formation provided by: Good Samaritan Education, Dominican Education Australia and Mercy Partners. Taking elements of these definitions the working group has developed its own definition to guide this Framework:

Formation occurs when the person cooperates with the Holy Spirit in identifying and developing the values, relationships, skills and knowledge that will enable her/him to more fully become the person that God calls her/him to be. This life-long transformative process incorporates varying elements as the person's mission leads them into new roles. Self-reflection is required for each person to identify the formation activities that will best facilitate their growth. Formation is also communal - both in that it can be seen as happening in groups and also in that the person is drawn closer to God, others and all of creation.

Principles for addressing formation

The working group noted the wisdom in the approach towards formation as articulated by: *Mercy Partners, St John of God Australia, Edmund Rice Education Australia, Good Samaritan Education and Mary Aikenhead Ministries.*

The following principles are offered as an approach to the use of the AMPJP Formation Framework for Canonical Stewards:

- a. Formation is holistic – all areas of a person's life can be touched, leading to integrated human development.
- b. Formation involves discerning the voice of God.
- c. The formation needs of a MPJP and its Council of Canonical Stewards need to be articulated in response to each individual's needs as well as the needs that arise from the specific ministry of the MPJP.
- d. A Council of Canonical Stewards can rely on the diverse expertise of its members to enable the Council to fulfill its many roles (all don't need to be expert in everything).
- e. The starting point for formation is each person's existing skills/knowledge/competence and empowers each person to identify their formation needs and how these can best be addressed.
- f. Formation provided by a MPJP involves tiers of programs, including repetition of introductory programs (for new participants) and deepening programs (for long-term participants and for those with a hunger for more) .
- g. Formation in a MPJP appreciates that Canonical Stewards are lay people who each have their own unique spirituality and charism¹ which can be enriched by the spirituality and charism of the MPJP.
- h. Formation in a MPJP requires the MPJP to offer options that take account of the different learning styles, geographic spread and work/personal commitments of potential participants.
- i. Formation requires the MPJP to dedicate adequate resources (finances, time and people).
- j. Formation in an MPJP must be evaluated to enable the person and MPJP to learn what methods deliver the best benefits.

Lay people are, put simply, the vast majority of the people of God. The minority – ordained ministers – are at their service. There has been a growing awareness of the identity and mission of the laity in the Church. We can count on many lay persons, although still not nearly enough, who have a deeply-rooted sense of community and great fidelity to the tasks of charity, catechesis and the celebration of the faith. At the same time, a clear awareness of this responsibility of the laity, grounded in their baptism and confirmation, does not appear in the same way in all places. In some cases, it is because lay persons have not been given the formation needed to take on important responsibilities. In others, it is because, in their particular Churches, room has not been made for them to speak and to act, due to an excessive clericalism which keeps them away from decision-making.

Pope Francis Evangelii Gaudium #102.

¹ Organisations and individuals are given charisms i.e. spiritual gifts for the good of others (*Christus Vivit #286 and 288*)

“Those who work for the Church’s charitable organisations must be distinguished by the fact that they do not merely meet the needs of the moment, but they dedicate themselves to others with heartfelt concern, enabling them to experience the richness of their humanity. Consequently, in addition to their necessary professional training, these charity workers need a “formation of the heart”: they need to be led to that encounter with God in Christ which awakens their love and opens their spirits to others. As a result, love of neighbour will no longer be for them a commandment imposed, so to speak, from without, but a consequence deriving from their faith, a faith which becomes active through love. (cf. Gal 5:6).”

(Pope Benedict XVI. Deus Caritas Est #31a)



Domains within the AMPJP Formation Framework for Canonical Stewards

The Formation Framework for Canonical Stewards has drawn on domains commonly found in existing MPJP formation frameworks (although these domains are often named differently). The working group has drawn heavily on the frameworks of: Mercy Partners, St John of God Australia, Edmund Rice Education Australia, Good Samaritan Education and Mary Aikenhead Ministries.

The Formation Framework for Canonical Stewards has six domains:

Mission	The individual’s mission and that of the MPJP
Spirituality	Animated by personal and communal prayer
Catholic thought and context	Familiarity with, and appreciation for, their Catholic faith
Leadership and Governance	Competency in leadership and governance roles
Ministry context	Opportunities and demands unique to that industry
Human	Who I am and how I live

The six domains are of equal significance and can be addressed simultaneously or in any sequence. The particular individual or group engaged in formation, must discern which domains and competencies they are called to address, what process they will use and in what time period.

And yet, Lord, you are our Father; we the clay and you our potter, all of us are the work of your hands. ***(Isaiah 64:8)***

Assessing individual/group competency with the AMPJP Formation Framework

Self-assessment
 0 = Unfamiliar;
 1 = Very basic;
 3 = Passable;
 5 = Very familiar

Mission	Can articulate the Vision, Mission and Values of the MPJP and its ministry(s)	
	Can articulate the MPJP's founding/current/developing heritage, traditions and charism	
	Can articulate their own vocation and sense of mission	
	Is recognised by others as a person whose actions demonstrates the Vision, Mission and Values of the MPJP	
Spirituality	Values spirituality and the regular practice of prayer	
	Shares their spirituality with other Canonical Stewards and assists the development of a common spirituality	
	Applies discernment processes in personal, professional and organisational life	
	Values creation as gift from and place for encountering God	
Catholic thought and context	Appreciates the centrality of Christ (Christology)	
	Is familiar with Scripture, especially the Gospels	
	Is familiar with Theology of Church (ecclesiology)	
	Is familiar with the Church's mission (missiology)	
	Is familiar with Catholic Social Teaching	
	Demonstrates a commitment and capacity to develop mature relationships with other Church authorities/ ministries/Catholic communities	
	Is familiar with the structure and history of the Catholic Church in Australia	
	Is familiar with Canon Law as it applies to MPJP	
Leadership and Governance	Can articulate an understanding of leadership based on contemporary theory and good practice	
	Recognises the role of leaders in shaping organisational culture/s appropriate to a Ministerial PJP	
	Demonstrates an understanding of processes for ethical decision-making within a Christian ministry	
	Can articulate the role of governance and administration in serving the mission of a Ministerial PJP	
	Has corporate governance capability and knowledge, including knowledge of the differing roles of Canonical Steward, Board Directors and Executive Leadership	
	Demonstrates an understanding of strategic planning, change management and risk management	
	Demonstrates sufficient understanding of Financial Planning and Management and Business Administration to interrogate Budgets, Reports and Audits of a Ministerial PJP	
	Demonstrates a broad understanding of the domains of Employment Services, Information Technology, Property issues and their relationship to governance in a Ministerial PJP.	
Ministry context	Has knowledge and experience relevant to the context of the MPJP's ministries	
Human	Demonstrates a commitment to the dignity and equality of all persons	
	Demonstrates the importance of stakeholder relations	
	Demonstrates the value of First Nations perspectives	
	Demonstrates maturity in forming and maintaining relationships and in building and nurturing community	
	Practises appropriate self-care	