

# Religious Education for Our Catholic Family Fund

## What is the Religious Education for Our Catholic Family Fund?

The Religious Education for Our Catholic Family Fund (REOCFF) is a \$4 million fund for the professional advancement of those persons entrusted with the religious formation of youth, made possible through the sacrificial gifts of donors to *Our Campaign for The Church Alive!*. This fund provides monies for: Master's degrees in Theology, Religious Education or related fields, Catechesis of the Good Shepherd training, ministry-specific training conducted in the Diocese of Pittsburgh, and professional development for ministry from sources outside the Diocese. The REOCFF is an expansion of the former Fathers Farina Fund which provided funds for higher education to Catechetical Administrators.

## Who is eligible?

All programs and scholarships may be applied for or participated in by those leaders who directly serve the religious formation of youth, ages preschool-21 including: **Catechetical Administrators, Youth Ministers, College Campus Ministers, Catholic School Principals, Catholic School Religion Teachers and Educational Chaplains**. Scholarships for training in Catechesis of the Good Shepherd are available to any registered parishioner in the Diocese of Pittsburgh.

## What scholarships are available?

While the REOCFF has significantly increased the numbers and types of scholarships formerly available through the Fathers Farina Fund, monies for REOCFF are limited. Therefore, the following scholarships are available for the 2018-2019 fiscal year.

### ***Master's Degrees***

*These scholarships cover tuition for 2 courses/year, completed in any semester/s for degrees in theology or religious education fields. (Broader categories of Master's programs are permissible for the three scholarships dedicated to the service of under-represented communities with the approval of the REOCFF Review Board.) Fees, book expenses and other costs are the responsibility of the recipient.*

- 12 Catechetical Administrator scholarships
- 10 Youth Minister scholarships
- 3 Campus Minister scholarships
- 6 scholarships for those in Catholic School Ministries (principals and high school/elementary school religion teachers)
- 1 scholarship for an individual serving children/youth in the African American community through religious education
- 1 scholarship for an individual serving children/youth in the Latino community through religious education
- 1 scholarship for an individual serving children/youth with special needs through religious education

### ***Catechesis of the Good Shepherd***

- 40 scholarships awarding \$600/recipient for level 1, 2 or 3 training
- 3 annual scholarships awarding maximum \$2000/recipient for formator training

**Professional Development**

*This scholarship assists in defraying costs for various non-higher education/non-diocesan enrichment Catholic programs such as seminars, conferences and workshops, which are geared to assist leaders and educators in the religious formation of children.*

- 30 scholarships/year awarding maximum \$1000/recipient

In addition to the scholarships listed above, various ministry-specific training opportunities will be made available through the Diocese of Pittsburgh for all leaders in religious education/youth/campus ministry.

**What are the criteria for scholarships and programs?****Master's Degree Scholarships**

Candidates for the Master's Degree Scholarships must:

- Either be employed in a parish or school of the Diocese of Pittsburgh, serving as a Catechetical Administrator, Youth Minister, Campus Minister, Principal, Catholic School Religion Teacher, Educational Chaplain—or—currently volunteer as leader of a ministry (two years of ministry leadership experience minimum).
- Be an active and faithful Catholic, attested to by a letter from the candidate's pastor/religious superior.
- Demonstrate financial need and ministry-potential.
- Hold a bachelor's degree in any field, with a 3.0 average or higher. (Exceptions may be considered some cases with proof of academic potential.) Transcripts must be submitted by all candidates (unless already on file in Diocesan offices).
- Provide two references (should be from academic instructors, employers, colleagues or constituents).
- Complete the application form from [www.diopitt.org](http://www.diopitt.org) including a personal essay.
- Complete a personal interview if requested.
- Complete their file at the Diocese (if a LEM). Monies will not be awarded without a completed file.
- Agree to enroll in LEM certification either during or at the completion of studies, if not already enrolled.

**Qualifications**

- All Masters programs are subject to the approval of the Secretariat for Catholic Education and Evangelization.
- Those persons awarded Masters scholarships are asked in good faith to utilize their degrees in service of the Church as ministers within the Diocese of Pittsburgh following graduation, giving one year of service for every year in which the recipient received the scholarship.
- Tuition will be covered up to a maximum of \$2500/course.
- Because scholarship availability is limited and the demand is great, awardees are expected to utilize their scholarship responsibly. Therefore, scholarships will be forfeited should a recipient: fail to enroll in a program within six months of the award acknowledgement; lapse in taking classes for more than one year; fail to complete the entire program in seven years. (Appeals may be considered for special circumstances.)

### ***Catechesis of the Good Shepherd***

- Applicants must be an employee of a school or parish in the Diocese of Pittsburgh, or a registered parishioner of a parish in the Diocese of Pittsburgh.
- Scholarships will be awarded on a need and ministry-potential basis. Applicants are to fill out the application form available at [www.diopitt.org](http://www.diopitt.org)

### ***Professional Development Scholarships***

- Applicants must serve the Diocese of Pittsburgh as Catechetical Administrators, Youth Ministers, Campus Ministers, Principals, Catholic School Religion Teachers or Educational Chaplains. Applicants are to fill out the application form on [www.diopitt.org](http://www.diopitt.org)
- Professional Development Scholarships are awarded on a need and ministry-potential basis.

### ***Ministry-specific training***

- Attendees must be employed in the Diocese of Pittsburgh in service to religious formation of children and youth.
- There is no application process to attend these events.
- While most costs for the training and materials will be paid for through the REOCFF, attendees or their employers may be asked to pay or have their employer pay for minimal fees for each event. Dates, speakers, location, etc. of these events are announced periodically through the Secretariat for Catholic Education and Evangelization.