



**Archdiocese of New York and  
Villanova University Center for Church Management and Business Ethics  
Memorandum of Understanding**

The Archdiocese of New York (ADNY) and Villanova University Center for Church Management and Business Ethics have agreed to a collaborative initiative to offer a unique program of a Master of Science in Church Management (MSCM) for candidates primarily, but not exclusively, from the ADNY.

The ADNY, under the leadership of His Eminence, Timothy Michael Cardinal Dolan, recognizes the importance of best practices in church management. There currently exists a culture of collaboration between the Chancery Office (including the Finance Office) and Parishes (through the leadership of Pastors), which has resulted in ongoing enhancements in financial reporting and transparency.

The ADNY is currently involved in a transformative strategic parish-planning initiative entitled “Making All Things New”, by which it has communicated with key archdiocesan constituents asking for their feedback as to how parishes might best be positioned to serve the faithful. This program will result in the consolidation of some parishes, and will ultimately create a stronger, more enhanced vitality of Catholic life in each parish. This will, in turn, place greater responsibility on the clergy, many of whom will be asked to minister to larger parishes and, in some cases, multiple parishes. In order to mitigate some of this workload, the ADNY will be relying on a group of well-prepared parish business managers to assist the clergy in



carrying out their parish's temporal responsibilities. The ADNY expects to have as many as fifty individuals who will be capable of assuming this role by Spring 2017.

The ADNY values having professionally trained business managers positioned in parishes to ensure that the highest levels of financial management, reporting, and pastoral stewardship are conducted. As such, the ADNY wishes to formally undertake, together with the Villanova Center for Church Management and Business Ethics (CCMBE), an agreement to offer an MSCM degree. The MSCM program will provide church management education to individuals interested in serving as parish business managers.

Villanova's CCMBE offers for-credit and non-credit programs in church management, conducts research, and oversees business ethic activities within the Villanova School of Business (VSB). Under the leadership of Professor Charles Zech, Ph.D., the Center has gained recognition as a leader in best practices in church management.

The VSB is uniquely positioned to provide the education that these ADNY parish business managers require. Through its various certificate programs and innovative MSCM degree program, VSB has been offering church management education since 2006. By its ability to take advantage of technology in delivering its educational content, VSB has been able to offer church management education to students on four continents, and in six United States time zones.



## **The Master of Science in Church Management**

### **Content**

VSB recognizes that the Church is not a business, but it does have a stewardship responsibility to use its resources as effectively as possible. Frequently, this requires the use of sound management techniques.

The appendix provides a description of the courses currently offered in connection with MSCM degree. All of these have been specifically developed for church managers. All include a strong ministerial component, recognizing that managing in a faith-based organization offers significantly different challenges than managing in a proprietary firm.

The cornerstone of the degree is the cutting edge required course “Introduction: Leadership in Religious Organizations/Organizational Ethics/Catholic Social Thought,” a team-taught, 6 credit course that seamlessly combines the study of leadership, ethics, and Catholic social thought.

This course incorporates a residency component, in which students gather in one location for a few days to have an opportunity to meet their fellow students and faculty face-to-face for a combination of academic and social interaction.

Other courses in the program are equally unique in the way they address functional business topics in a faith-based, church management context.

Certain subject matter unique to the ADNY (such as the ADNY’s best practices website and accounting practices) will be customized into the MSCM program.



## **Delivery**

Church workers require special consideration when determining how to deliver educational content to them. They typically cannot take time away from their positions to study full-time on campus. Their work schedules are irregular, with meetings scattered across day and evening hours, and even on weekends. Any educational content must be delivered to them in a flexible, convenient manner.

ADNY/Villanova's MSCM is delivered entirely online (with the exception of the residency period). This allows the flexibility and convenience that church workers need. To make the degree as accessible as possible, it is proposed that, in each course, content will be delivered to ADNY students in three formats:

- Asynchronously through pre-recorded lectures that students can access at times convenient to them, as often as they wish.
- Synchronous tutorial sessions in which the professor is available to any student wishing to log on and participate in discussing the material and/or ask questions.
- Asynchronous discussion boards in which students respond to questions posted by the professor and engage in dialogue with one another over a defined period.

These formats offer maximum flexibility while still maintaining the integrity of content quality.

This is conceived as a part-time program. Ordinarily, students will take two courses per semester. In special cases, students will be allowed to take more than two courses at one time.

Students taking two courses per semester will graduate in two years.



In order to enable the concept of a learning community, students will be assigned to a specific cohort containing up to 25 students. Students will participate in the residency week with other members of their cohort so that they become familiar with one another. Ordinarily, students will complete the program in lockstep with their cohort, with allowances made for personal circumstances that might require a student to take fewer than two courses per semester and fall behind other members of their cohort.

### **Residency**

The residency period for the ADNY/Villanova MSCM program will take place at Saint Joseph Seminary in Yonkers, New York. Please note that students will not sleep at Saint Joseph Seminary, but commute in for a day's worth of lectures.

### **Admission**

The ADNY participants will require the following for admission to the program

- Completed application for admission
- Personal letter of interest explain why s/he selected this program
- Three letters of recommendation from the following individuals:
  - Pastor (students sponsored by their parish will receive priority)
  - Personal
  - Professional (ideally from a member of the business community)



All archdiocesan participants will need to meet the same standards for admission as other MSCM candidates. Admission is based on experience working in the Church (paid or volunteer), letters of recommendation, and an essay. There are no standardized exams required for admission.

### **Grading**

Each professor will set the standard for grading his/her own course, but the expectation is that grades will be based exclusively on projects, written reports, and class participation as demonstrated through asynchronous posts to class discussion boards.

### **Cost**

The regular tuition for the MSCM degree is \$920 per credit hour (\$2,760 per 3 credit course, \$27,600 for the 30 credit degree program). It is proposed that the ADNY initiative be priced at the following sliding scale:

- Fewer than 5 students - \$675 per credit hour (\$2,025 per course, \$20,250 for degree)
- 5 to 14 students - \$450 per credit hour (\$1,350 per course, \$13,500 for degree)
- 15 to 24 students - \$391.66 per credit hour (\$1,175 per course, \$11,750 for degree)
- 25 or more students - \$333.33 per credit hour (\$1,000 per course, \$10,000 for degree)

The deadline for the final number of students for sliding scale pricing will be one week prior to the start of classes.



Books are extra, and typically cost in the area of \$50-\$75 per course.

Residency Fee: Students are required to spend a weekend (Friday, Saturday and Sunday) at St. Joseph's Seminary for an intensive study residency. The residency fee is \$1,000.00 and is the responsibility of the student.

Archdiocesan Scholarship: Students are required to submit a deposit of \$150 and the residency fee to Villanova Business School upon acceptance into the program and continue to fulfill tuition payments on a timely schedule. Upon completion of the degree, the ADNY will return one third of the entire tuition to the student as a scholarship. After hire from an ADNY parish, the parish will return another one third of the tuition to the student.

Additional Requirements:

- A bachelor's degree is required for admission along with official transcripts from each institution of higher learning attended. Transcripts must be sent in a sealed envelope directly from the institution to the Graduate Business Programs Office.
  - If no BA, the potential candidate can apply for a certificate of Church Management, rather than a Masters Degree
- Students are required to be available during the residency weekend, tentatively scheduled in 2015 for May 29-31.



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### **Conclusion**

The proposed ground-breaking collaborative initiative between the ADNY and the Villanova School of Business promises to be mutually beneficial. The ADNY will receive a highly qualified group of prospective parish business managers educated in a convenient and cost-effective format. The VSB will receive a reliable income stream as it continues its growth, with the opportunity to enlist other (arch)dioceses in a similar program. Both organizations will benefit through an enhanced opportunity to carry out their missions.



## Appendix

### ADNY/VSU Course Offerings

2015-2017

#### **Summer 2015**

##### ***MSCM 8510: Introduction: Leadership in Religious Organizations/Organizational Ethics/Catholic Social Thought (6 credits)***

Villanova's Leadership Challenge; behavioral dimension of managerial action and decision making; ethical responsibilities of managers; making the connection between one's faith and one's job; theology of administration; role of the laity; Catholic Social Thought.

#### **Fall 2015**

##### ***MSCM 8630: Information Technology (3 credits)***

Spreadsheets and databases; information ethics and security; managing information technology; information systems development; managing IT-related organizational change; use of local area networks; evaluating computer hardware and software; creating and maintaining web sites.

##### ***MSCM 8635: Church Teaching and Belief (3 credits)***

Ecclesiology; Scripture; Church documents; liturgy and sacraments; Christology; ecumenism/inter-faith relations.



### **Spring 2016**

#### ***MSCM 8610: Stewardship and Development (3 credits)***

Presenting the stewardship message; factors affecting individuals' decisions to contribute time or money to their church; volunteer recruitment, training, performance appraisal, and retention.

#### ***MSCM 8625: Organizational Management (3 credits)***

Parish as a system; group processes; organizational processes; shared problem solving and decision-making; change management; team building; conflict management; utilizing advisory councils; roles of communication and social skills; conducting meetings; communication networks.

### **Fall 2016**

#### ***MSCM 8615: Financial Reporting and Controls (3 credits)***

Financial and managerial accounting; understanding financial statements; controls over accounting and financial reporting processes; budgeting, performance measurement, and relevant costs analysis.

#### ***MSCM 8620: Human Resource Management in a Ministry Setting (3 credits)***

Roles and functions within the structure of the organization; employee compensation and benefits; developing job descriptions; establishing performance goals; evaluating and rewarding performance; employee recruitment and training; background checks; human resource policies regarding grievances and appeals.



**Spring 2017**

***MSCM 8520: Civil Law and Church Law for Church Administrators (3 credits)***

Civil law issues (e.g., labor law, liability law, contract law); Church law, including Catholic Church canon law and a variety of other denominational legal documents.

***MSCM 8650: Pastoral Strategic Planning (3 credits)***

Identifying complex problems; organizing, structuring, analyzing pertinent information; formulating and evaluating alternative actions and prescribing specific programs; vision and mission statements; goals and objectives.