



Christ the Teacher Institute

a mission of the Sheil Catholic Center at Northwestern University

2110 Sheridan Road Evanston, IL 60201 847-328-4648

<https://sheilcatholiccenter.org/learn/christ-the-teacher-institute-faith-formation/>

Catholic Fellows in Church Leadership INFORMATION AND APPLICATION 2026-2027

CHRIST THE TEACHER INSTITUTE

The *Christ the Teacher Institute* (CTI) is a mission of the Sheil Catholic Center (Sheil) at Northwestern University. Its purpose is to form Catholic leaders for the Church and the world through the integration of scholarship, prayer, service, and leadership. The Institute oversees the Sheil Seminars, the Catholic Scholars Program, the Catholic Fellowships in Church leadership, the Simpson Essay Prize, and the Sheil Speaker's Series.

CATHOLIC FELLOWS IN CHURCH LEADERSHIP

The Fellowship program is designed for the returning undergraduate or graduate student who demonstrates a passion for and a desire to learn more about a specific aspect of Church Leadership. During the Fellowship year, the student will apprentice themselves to a member of the Sheil staff who will serve as a minister-mentor and take a substantial leadership role in one area of the Sheil Catholic Center ministries (e.g. Worship, Faith Formation, Service, and Community Life) with the specific goal of gaining both a theological foundation and practical experience in leadership in their chosen area. The Fellow may work on already existing ministries or develop new areas of ministry. Catholic Fellows may not participate in the Catholic Scholar's Program in the same year as their fellowship.

Fellowship areas might include, but are not limited to:

- Cantoring and directing music at liturgy
- Learning to facilitate and coordinate retreat teams
- Becoming a senior teacher for religious education
- Learning to be a catechist for RCIA
- Coordinating an aspect of peace and justice ministry
- Advancing communication, philanthropy, and stewardship through a Catholic lens

Being a Catholic Fellow demands a serious commitment of time (at least 10 hours a week on average during the school year) and a desire for the formation necessary to lead others in a specific area of Catholic Church leadership. The Catholic Fellows of CTI learn how to balance work, personal time, and academics. They experience the joys and challenges of working for the Church; and they learn to minister to and lead others with joy, faith, and knowledge. Catholic Fellows are prepared to take on initial positions as cantors, musicians, retreat leaders, catechists, service coordinators, and other leadership in specific areas of Church ministry.

Fellows must speak to the staff member with whom they wish to work prior to applying to become a fellow. If the staff member with whom fellows work supervises other staff members, the fellow will work directly only with the supervising staff member and will not be assigned to work on material with the supervised staff.

FELLOWSHIP

Fellows receive a \$2,000 stipend for their fellowship year. In most cases, the fellowship is paid out at the end of the academic year upon the successful completion of the requirements. Two fellowships may be awarded in a given year. The fellowship given here will not reduce Northwestern University's commitment to meet full demonstrated need. Any part of the fellowship not used for required costs of the program (i.e. transportation for service trips, conference or seminar costs) would be considered an outside stipend and used to reduce the self-help portion of the student's financial aid award. In very rare instances, the fellowship may affect Northwestern scholarship assistance.

PROGRAM DIRECTOR

CTI is directed by Sr. Belinda Monahan, OSB. who holds a PhD in anthropology from Northwestern and a Certificate in Spiritual Direction from St. John's University School of Theology. She recently completed her Master of Theological Studies in Spirituality also at St. John's. She entered the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago in 2007. Sr. Belinda has worked with college and university students since 2000. In her work, she has participated in archaeological excavations in Jordan, Turkey, India, Armenia, Belize, and New Mexico. Sr. Belinda is currently the Director of Transformative Learning for the Sheil Catholic Center at Northwestern. She interacts personally with the students, and teaches some of the Seminars for *Christ the Teacher*, as well as serving as an advisor to all Fellows.

ELIGIBILITY

Any full-time sophomore, junior, senior, or graduate student attending NU, who is a practicing Catholic and is willing and able to meet the requirements, can apply to be a Catholic Fellow in Church Leadership in the Christ the Teacher Institute. You must speak to the staff member with whom you would like to work before applying.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS FOR CATHOLIC FELLOWS (one academic year)

Each fellow must:

1. Provide substantial and visible leadership in a particular area of Church ministry for the entire academic year (10 hours a week on average)
2. Participate in ministerial formation at the beginning of the year as well as throughout the year as necessary
3. Meet with their minister-mentor a minimum of 3 times each quarter
4. Be willing to learn about the area through seminars, workshops, and practical experience
5. Meet with the director of the program at the end of each quarter
6. Participate regularly in Sheil prayer, liturgy, and activities
7. Write a theological reflection on their leadership at the end of the year, including what they have learned and how they will put it into practice
8. Maintain a GPA of 2.8
9. Meet with a spiritual director three times a quarter

SELECTION

Applications for the Catholic Fellows Program will be reviewed by the Director of the Institute and the staff member(s) under whose mentorship the student would work. If it is deemed necessary, the student may be asked to come in for an interview.



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**Catholic Fellows in Church Leadership
APPLICATION FORM 2026-2027**

Applications will be accepted between May 19, 2026 and Aug 27, 2026.

I am applying to be a Catholic Fellow in Church Leadership in the area of:

Name:

Last Name, First Name, Middle Initial

Permanent Address:

City, State / Zip Code:

NU Address:

Please include zip code if you are not living in a NU residence hall.

Cell Phone:

NU Email:

Other Email If You are Using an Alternate:

Cumulative GPA:

Past Leadership Positions you have held:

Past Involvement at Sheil or in another parish or ministerial situation:

The staff member with whom you plan to work for the fellowship:

Name of the person from whom a recommendation has been requested:

The following items must be submitted with this application form:

1. A one to two-page, typed statement indicating the student's reasons for wanting to participate in the program, the area of leadership in which the student is interested, and the possible project(s) in the area chosen.
2. A brief (less than one page) outline of the possible ways in which the student will contribute to the particular area of the ministry, detailing possible ways in which the student would contribute to the particular area of ministry.
3. A letter of recommendation from someone who has experienced the student in a leadership role and can talk about the strengths and challenges of the student's ability to lead. This may be a member of an organization with whom the student has worked, another student who can give an honest assessment, an advisor, or a faculty or staff member. If this person is a Sheil staff member, they must be someone other than the person with whom you plan to work and you may simply submit their name.

I will be a full-time student at Northwestern University in the 2026/2027 academic year. I am a practicing Catholic and I intend to fulfill the program requirements.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Applications and recommendations can be submitted electronically to Belinda Monahan, OSB (belinda.monahan@northwestern.edu)