

The BMER report: Details

The Baptismal Ministry – Experience and Reflection (BMER) report is introduced with a “Cover Page” that includes the following information:

- BMER Summary: A two or three sentence summary of the BMER that indicates the area of baptismal ministry focused on in the report: personal transformation, community transformation, personal skills development or church systems. (See page 2 below.)
- BMER Resources: Identification of any resources (such as gifts discernment process) contained in the report.
- Map of the diocese/community with some indication of scale. If pertinent, include major cities, diocesan center, bordering states, provinces, dioceses, and subdivisions. Please include important statistical information:
 - Area in square miles/kilometers
 - Number of congregations/administrative units; percentage of those engaged in intentional baptismal ministry development
 - Total population of the diocese/community
 - Number of baptized members; leadership statistics (as you define it)
 - Diocesan/Community expense budget
 - Average Sunday attendance
 - Contact information, including email addresses, of bishop(s), coordinator(s), and other team members

The Baptismal Ministry – Experience and Reflection report itself is divided into three principle sections:

- I. Experience and Reflection
- II. Implications – “So What?”
- III. Questions for Partners

I. Baptismal Ministry – Experience and Reflection (BMER)

Experience and Reflection

When selecting the topic for your BMER report, begin with the question, “In what concrete life experience is God currently inviting/working/challenging us the most?”

The reflections need to clearly tell the story of the concrete experience (issue, situation, or piece of work) you are presenting, giving necessary background and the current situation. Key pieces of your BMER story may include diocesan resolutions or mission statements, organizational structures, etc., which inform your work in baptismal ministry development. The BMER story needs to identify the actual results that have been obtained by the application of ministry of all the baptized. These may include organizational changes, changes in attitude, performance, expectations, etc. It will also be helpful to explain special language your diocese may use (total common ministry, ministry support team, ministry developer, etc.).

II. Implications – “So What?”

In the light of your reflections on the BMER story, what are some of the implications you begin to draw for ministry development? Four interrelated areas of ministry development you might find helpful to consider are these (a graphic presentation of the four areas is attached):

Implications for Personal Transformation – how does the story of your BMER affect the spiritual life of the individuals involved? What might be learnings you could apply to other settings in your diocese/community?

Implications for Skills Development/Competencies – what does the story of your BMER say about the skills/competencies of the individuals involved? What skills were present, and which were lacking? What skills need to be developed further, and what are the strategies? What are the learnings you could apply to other settings in your diocese/community?

Implications for Congregation/Community Formation – how does the story of your BMER reflect the stage and state of formation of the congregation/community in question? How have gifts been discovered, called forth, nurtured? How has

this process been hindered? What does the story say about the stage and state of community liturgy, stewardship, spiritual practices (such as hospitality, healing, and confession) and theological reflection?

Implications for Church Systems – what does the story of your BMER say about the structures in place to support the congregation's/community's life? Who has access to leadership and how is it exercised? Who benefits? Who doesn't? What is the system for reaching decisions? What are the mechanisms in place for exercising power? Who doesn't have access to them? These kinds of questions direct the attention of ministry development to the world of church systems. These systems are the various networks (such as Vestries, Commissions on Ministry, Standing Committees, Church Canons, and Episcopal leadership) which actually support or impede personal transformation, skills development, and community formation.

III. Questions for Cluster Groups

Identify the key questions to which you would like the cluster group participants to respond.

Important Pieces to Bear in Mind

Sample reports on Baptismal Ministry – Experience and Reflection are available upon request.

Presentation Team: Delegations (up to four people) should include the coordinator and bishop plus two others. If the bishop cannot be present, some person sharing in Episcopal oversight should attend. Ideally, the delegation shall be comprised of those persons directly involved with the BMER report (taking particular care to include non-ordained and ordained). Since the case study is a collaborative effort, you might want to plan to have each member of your delegation participate in the BMER presentation.

Confidentiality: See attached guidelines for confidentiality.

Length: The Baptismal Ministry – Experience and Reflection report shall be no longer than the “cover page” plus approximately four (4) pages or one thousand (1000) words.

Submitted by the BMER working group

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