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**CURRICULUM & TEACHING STUDIES | RESEARCH ARTICLE**

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## CURRICULUM & TEACHING STUDIES | RESEARCH ARTICLE

# “Do this in memory of me”: Examining Catholic subjectivity and teacher education

Seungho Moon<sup>1\*</sup>, Ann Marie Ryan<sup>1</sup> and Terri Pigott<sup>2</sup>

**Abstract:** This paper is about Catholic subjectivity and teacher education. We explore multiple notions of Catholic subjectivity drawing from their Korean, Irish American, and Filipino-Polish heritages. Lived religion and memory writing are conceptual and methodological foundations of this paper. We examine multiple meanings of Catholic subjectivity via self-reflexive investigations on self, others, and the community in diverse sociocultural contexts. We argue that attention to teacher subjectivity with spirituality is deeply aligned with promoting the public good, such as advancing diversity and social justice issues in teacher education.

**Subjects:** Education Studies; Teaching & Learning; Curriculum Studies; Citizenship

**Keywords:** spirituality; Catholic subjectivity; social justice in teacher education

Catholic is a complex label. Some people associate negative images with Catholicism concerning an authoritarian approach to religious practices, including the prohibition of female priests. Communion is not open to everyone like other Christian groups permit. Neo-exclusivism is perpetuated by the institutional Roman Catholic Church when people raise questions about the open church in the postmodern era (Mannion, 2004). When abusive behaviours and scandals cover the media like the recent 2018 report detailing sexual abuse by priests in Pennsylvania, some Catholics refuse to go to church finding it difficult to separate the actions of individuals from the larger institution (<https://>



Seungho Moon

### ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Seungho Moon is an associate professor in Curriculum Studies at Loyola University Chicago (LUC). In 2011, he received his Ed.D. in Curriculum Studies from Teachers College, Columbia University. His research and passion center on releasing the social imagination to promote equity and justice in education.

Ann Marie Ryan is an associate professor in the School of Education at Loyola University Chicago. Her teaching and research concentrates on the preparation and the professional development of educators. She also researches the history of 20th century American Catholic schooling focusing on Catholic schools and public education reforms.

Terri Pigott is associate provost for research and professor of research methodology at Loyola University Chicago. She received her Ph.D. in Measurement, Evaluation and Statistical Analysis from the University of Chicago. Her research focuses on methods for systematic review and meta-analysis.

### PUBLIC INTEREST STATEMENT

How does your religious or spiritual identity inform your teaching identity? Rarely do educators pose such a question in public. This paper is about the role of teachers' spirituality in teacher education. Three authors explore multiple meanings of Catholic subjectivity drawing from their Korean, Irish American, and Filipino-Polish heritages. We examine the lived experience of believers in daily interactions with others and critically examine the interwoven relationship among God, community, and self across time and contexts. Through this memory writing, we better understand how the attention to spirituality in teacher education is not separate from the pursuit of social justice. Rather, by studying our Catholic subjectivities, we seek out the possibility of promoting the public good and advancing social justice in education.

[www.cnn.com/2018/08/14/us/pennsylvania-catholic-church-grand-jury/index.html](http://www.cnn.com/2018/08/14/us/pennsylvania-catholic-church-grand-jury/index.html)). Others argue that an individual can practice one's spirituality outside an institution and attempt to remain faithful without being an active member of the Catholic Church. In response to these challenging issues of abuse in the Catholic Church and the struggle for Catholics to remain faithful to the institution, the popular media deals with this issue seriously, through such documentaries as *Spotlight* directed by McCarthy (2015) and *The Keepers* by White (2017). Even more difficult for many is the inaction of the institution in these difficult times in light of what seems to have been long-standing protection of perpetrators over victims. We address this particularly thorny issue within the Catholic Church later in this essay through our common examination of the recent documentary, *The Keepers*, focused on the challenges it raises for Catholics and specifically within Catholic schools.

Catholic is also a provocative label. There is no completely universalized understanding of Catholicism. Catholic subjectivity cannot be essentialized by images of White male priests, St. Mary being used to teach female obedience, or an exclusive version of disciple-like believers. Notably, the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) and the era that followed dramatically changed how people perceived Catholicism and constructed Catholic subjectivity with the spirit of opening its door to the contemporary world (Mannion, 2004). For example, one of the more significant shifts that came with Vatican II was worshipping in the home language, rather than Latin. This greater respect for local culture made being Catholic even more contextual after 1965.

Particularly in education, the meaning of Catholic is varied by its emphasis on community, holistic education, inclusive approaches to worship, and working on gospel values for the poor and the marginalized (Denig & Dosen, 2009). Liberation theology for the oppressed has emerged with multiple versions around the world depending on urgent needs in the local context: Black liberation theology in South Africa (Naidoo, 2016), *Minjung* theology in Korea, and feminist liberation theology in El Salvador (Taylder, 2002). Thus, Catholic may also be hopeful. Eschatology as a theological discipline of study informs a hopeful message of *already and yet to come*, blurring the division of ending-beginning, rather as the continuum of time. This hopeful message is the exploration of in-betweenness within this *ending-beginning*.

In this paper, three teacher educators explore multiple notions of Catholic subjectivity as the starting point of constructing hope and joy in the midst of constant challenges in teacher education. Teachers often become the scapegoats of structural social inequity with the rhetoric of bad teachers (Kumashiro, 2012). Schools of Education are threatened by alternative, market-oriented approaches to teacher education that require short training periods before classroom teaching. The assumption of these market-oriented approaches is that good teaching is only about content knowledge and communication skills. The neoliberal logics of competition and the survival of the fittest ignore the value of pedagogical content knowledge and teacher professionalism (Darling-Hammond, 2000). The school choice movement, while supporting the dream of *equal education for all* and advocates for neighborhood schools, including Catholic schools, simultaneously reproduces social inequity. Among multiple approaches to deal with these challenges, we review and rethink teacher subjectivity and teacher education with the lens of spirituality. Particularly, we reflect on our lived experience related with teacher spirituality using the notion of lived religion (Orsi, 1997, 2003).

Lived religion concentrates on lived experience of believers in daily interactions with others and critically examines the interwoven relationship among God, community, and self. The study of lived experience is not about rituals but about ideas, imagination, and culture combining our daily lives with everyday life religious and spiritual practices (Orsi, 2003). The lived experiences of our Catholic subjectivity and our experiences of Catholic intellectual heritage form the theoretical grounding of this work. In this sense, we examine our understanding of Catholicism and its intellectual life as we encountered it in our everyday lives over time. From this examination, we theorize what that means for us as teacher educators and our students in a Jesuit Catholic institution. We theorize multiple meanings of Catholic cultural heritage via self-reflexive investigations about self, others,

and the community in diverse cultural contexts. We investigate Catholic subjectivity and historicize cultural heritage within a socio-political, cultural context with these overarching questions:

- (1) What are the unique, distinctive, historical, socio-political contexts constructing Catholic subjectivity as interpreted by three teacher educators?
- (2) In what ways are Catholic subjectivity discursively (re)constructed and challenged in teacher education?
- (3) Drawing from memory writing, what conceptual and practical possibilities do we suggest in relation to teacher education?

Among multiple dimensions of teacher subjectivity, much literature highlights the importance of spirituality in examining teacher identity and teacher education. They address teachers' motivation of pursuing teaching as vocation (Marshall, 2009), a calling for change (Wallace, 2000), and teachers' quests for wholeness while teaching with heart and soul (Palmer, 2003; Tucker, 2010). The spiritual dimension of teaching is an important component of good teaching (Palmer, 2003). Cutri (2009), notably, argues that the absence of spirituality in multicultural teacher education should be reconsidered in that a teacher's subjectivity and decision-making process are interwoven and highly influenced by religious beliefs.

Subscribing to the recent literature, we argue that studying teacher educators' spiritual subjectivity is salient in creating multiple approaches to teacher education. Also, it is timely that teacher educators should release their spiritual and educational imagination, particularly when education is commodified by market values and managed by business principles like competition, accountability, and a survival of the fittest approach. Notably, some teacher educators highlight the value of spirituality in their subjectivity constructions and their interactions with the community (Conrad, Conrad, Misra, Pinard, & Youngblood, 2010). Together we reflect on our own spiritual and educational imagination as a means to create a new route disrupting this wave of neoliberalism in teacher education in the U.S.

Highly influenced by Catholicism, we postulate that Catholicism and our teacher subjectivity are interwoven in our lives and embodied as lived religion. We reflect on our own pedagogical approaches towards teacher educators and students by investigating the meaning of Catholic subjectivity as teacher educators. Working in a Jesuit institution and inspired by Ignatian Spirituality, the authors explore the possibility of using memory writing to make explicit connections among the contextual knowledge of text/experience, contemplation, and social actions for advancing personal and social transformation (Duminuco, 1993). Overall, by exploring and complicating our subjectivities, we resist any fixed label of Catholic subjectivity yet pry open a space to construct hope, specifically within the teacher education context.

### **1.1. Lived religion: a conceptual framework**

Lived religion examines the everyday religious and spiritual practices of individuals rather than focusing on the institutionalized application of religious practice conducted by authority or dogma (Ammerman, 2016). Lived religion distinguishes individuals' religious and spiritual experiences within their socio-cultural context from those that are prescribed by organized religious institutions (McGuire, 2008). In Robert Orsi's (2003) work on lived religion, he further notes the intersubjectivity of lived religion on two levels: (a) "the intersubjective nature of the individual, social, cultural and religious identities and indeed of reality itself"; and (b) "the intersubjective nature of research on religion" (p. 174). Orsi contends that, "Our lives and stories are not simply implicated in our work; they are among the media through which we encounter and engage the religious worlds of others" (p. 174).

For our study, lived religion assisted us in examining how all three authors who grew up in Roman Catholic communities and participated in the same rituals had in many ways very different experiences. The first author, Moon, mainly examines Korean Catholicism informed by an anti-colonial analysis of Western imperialism (Patel, 2014). According to Patel (2014), anticolonial refers to rethinking the repeating use of de-colonialism or post-colonialism as if colonialism is gone and a past event. Concurring with Patel, Moon recognizes that Korean Catholicism is still a vestige of colonialism and attempts to retrieve the indigenous voice within the anticolonial movement in Korea. In particular, he recalls family lores and cultural traditions grounded in Catholicism from a very young age. With the heavy burden of being a 4<sup>th</sup> generation Catholic, he has kept asking the question about what Catholicism means to him and his family. Notably, he spent almost seven years in a diocesan seminary in Korea before becoming a teacher educator. He still continues religious and spiritual conversations with his older sister who is a Catholic nun with the Sisters of Our Lady of Perpetual Help—a congregation founded in 1932 by a Maryknoll missionary priest in Korea. She has devoted more than 25 years of her life to her calling. The second author, Ryan, historicizes Irish American Catholicism in the process of her subjectivity construction. She examines her subjectivity of growing up Irish Catholic as a 2nd generation American with a rich sense of Irish history and its colonial past. For her and her extended family, the Catholic Church represented a source of resistance and social justice, but her immediate family and her own studies as a historian allowed her to understand how the Catholic Church also worked in the world as a force of oppression. She shares her memories of growing up in a family that complicated her thinking about Catholicism, but also taught her to respect its deep intellectual heritage. The third author, Pigott, introduces the complexity of Catholic subjectivity drawing from her Filipina-Polish background. Her Catholic subjectivity is shaped from her experiences as bi-racial, with an immigrant Filipino father and great-grandparents from Poland. For her father, the Catholic Church provided a safe space for acceptance into a White culture while at the same time providing a bridge to her Polish family's country of origin. Her own intellectual growth was also shaped by her experiences in the Catholic Church and her attendance in a Catholic high school with Jesuit novices as teachers.

Lived religion offers ways to examine each experience and the web of relationships within it and a way to analyze across them. It helped us to better understand how our socio-cultural contexts accounted for some of the differences in how we became Catholic during similar time periods, but in different geographic and socio-cultural contexts. Lived religion also assisted in our understanding of how we were able to understand one another rather easily on one level because of our shared practices due to our common Catholic culture. Finally, lived religion served as a way to understand how we were examining Catholic subjectivity itself. As we met each time, we needed to revisit and renegotiate our understanding of what it meant to be Catholic, since we had slightly different notions of what that meant. Our idea of becoming and being Catholic seemed to fit with the theory of lived religion. We all practiced Catholicism, but how we practiced it depended on our particular context. Our subjectivity is grounded in this complexity of who/what Catholic is and it is the place where we start our conversation.

### **1.2. Memory writing: a methodology**

We select memory writing as a data gathering process and source (Haug, 1987; Richardson, 2000). In his book, *Hindsight: The Promises and Peril of Looking Backward*, Freeman (2010) provides multiple dimensions of memory writing highlighting the meaning of *hindsight* across literature, life, and psychological disciplines. Notably, he illustrates autobiographical reflection of his lived experience and emphasizes temporal and illogical elements in telling stories. Memory writing is the partial process of self-understanding. Culture is deeply rooted in excavating one's past and social memories about the past.

Although we do not explicitly use this term, hindsight, in our memory writing, we underscore the dynamic, constructive, collective, political, and materialistic aspects of memories. In terms of memory research and writing, historian Richard White problematizes a fixed approach to memory without considering its political and cultural aspect. White (1999) claims that “[h]istory is the enemy of memory” (p. 4). Indeed, White knows all too well that history can call memory into question from his work chronicling his mother’s life history written with her, but he also acknowledges that history too is imperfect and that at times, memory is our only source for the historical record. In these cases, he cautions, “treat [memories] as detectives treat their sources: ... compare them, interrogate them, and match them one against the other. Memory can lead as well as mislead” (p. 4). Yet, White (1999) focuses on the idea that our memories partially constitute who we are and as a result we must question them using historical fact, but we should not allow history to suffocate memory. In the end, history and memory need to be in conversation with one another, each informing the other. White’s theory of memory in history is connected with feminist, post-structuralist approaches to memory and subjectivity. Namely, memory writing is the interpretation and construction of memories, not simply the writing down of something retrievable from isolated memory storage. In this process, memory writing is collectively and contextually constructed (Smith & Watson, 2000). Feminist poststructuralists underscore the politics of memories. The act of remembering is a political interpretation of events. The subject constructs memories in a way that what was remembered, forgotten, or silenced.

Our memory writings are not reconstructing the past as it *really* happened. Rather, they are an endeavor to interpret the discursively constructed historical, political, economic, and cultural meanings of past experiences (Haug, 1987). Researchers simply do not access memory storage to tell a “retrospective narrative of the past and to situate the present within that experiential history” (Smith & Watson, 2000, p. 16). No memories are waiting *out there* to be discovered by an individual’s meditation and remembering (Britzman, 1995). Memories are inherently problematic due to political and contextual interpretation. Drawing from this approach to memory and memory writing, we examined historical artifacts and documents during this project. Such artifacts prompted the researchers to remember, interpret, and write narratives, particularly when we were theorizing the meaning of Catholic intellectual and cultural heritage in our subjectivity constructions. Guided by Haug’s (1987) research on memory writing, we used diverse artifacts and photographs as written and visual texts that we describe, depict, or interpret our Catholic subjectivity constructions. We reviewed personal and family photographs and selected some of them for sharing our subjectivity constructions. Particularly, we shared our memories about first communion, Easter, rosaries and family prayers, religious artifacts and symbols at home. They functioned as crucial artifacts for the memory writing process during the examination of our narratives with first communion and the meaning of Catholicism and spirituality in teacher.

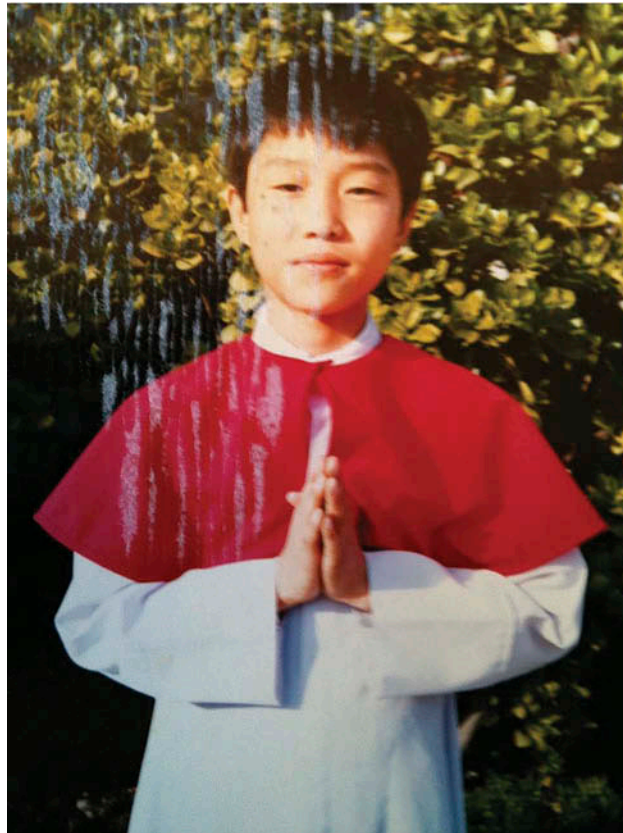
## **2. The body of Christ: lived experience in first communion**

The Eucharist is the center of Catholic subjectivity. Taking a bread consecrated and transformed to the body of Christ is embodied in the community of communion. In the process of deciding the discussion topics among the authors, it became natural to discuss our experience of the sacrament of first communion. The three of us shared cultural and political elements of communion embedded in our lived religion. In remembering the night of the Last Supper, we argue that communion is not a value-neutral act; rather it is a socio-politically embodied act addressing race/ethnicity, class, and gender issues in our lived experience. Communion itself has multiple meanings including a site of resistance, the paradox of inclusion and exclusion at the Catholic Church. During the communion, we share the body of Christ and take it. We describe individual exposure to first communion with three aspects of it.

### **2.1. First communion as a site of discipline: narrative of Moon**

For my upbringing, Catholicism was inevitably associated with a disciplinary component of it. In reflecting on my early experience of being formed as a Catholic, I was reminded that a *good* boy became the norm of my childhood. Being good, in this context, refers to both cultural and

**Figure 1. The First Day as an Altar Boy.**



religious norms that embodied in my early childhood and more. I was a good boy—good boy as in being obedient and causing no fuss during first communion classes and active interactions with nuns and the priest. My version of good-ness within the Catholic Church was constituted from my early years of childhood in the community, starting from first communion classes and becoming an altar boy [See Figure 1]. I was a good boy, like a sponge observing all guidance of the Catholic Church in my body, mind, and spirit. The priest in my parish was a huge figure who became a role model for following Jesus' life and working for the common good. My desires to become a good person as well as to live as a good person were guided by the authorities like priests. The social pressure of being a good boy had been set up. Confession was not enjoyable at all. However, as a good boy, I was supposed to participate in it at least once a month. I began to internalize conflicts or problems within me and believing that I was not good enough yet to obey the authority or to follow the social norms that I should follow. A good boy rhetoric had always been deeply rooted in me.

The formation of Catholic was being and becoming good through discipline, confession, and perseverance. In her book chapter, "Mr. Brooker's Good Girl," Janet Miller (2005) articulates her gender identity construction and the way in which teacher-student interaction is reframed by gender and authority in a patriarchal society. Miller's memories about her 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher, Mr. Brooker, is well depicted and theorized. The message of acceptance or unconditional love was a tough call for a young boy when he should discipline himself through religious practice as an altar boy and later as a seminarian for seven years. Miller illustrates how good-ness or the rhetoric of a good girl is socio-culturally embodied in daily practices and school lives. Similar to Miller's analysis, the notion of a good boy was embodied in my daily life interacting with other people as well as reflecting on my behaviours with the framework of good-ness.



## 2.2. *First communion as a site of defiance: narrative of Ryan*

My memories of my first communion and my mother's narrative of the event are invariably intertwined. My first communion became in fact an act of resistance by my mother to the Catholic Church and at the same time a normal rite of passage for me and my family—one of the seven sacraments. What I remember most about the event was being very excited about getting a new dress for it. I did not pick it out, my mom did, but it was new, and store bought (rather than sewn from a pattern—an unusual occurrence). It is important to note that the dress was not a typical white communion dress with a veil. It was a red velvet dress with white lace accent on the sleeves [See Figure 2]. My mom expressed great joy when we found it. She thought it fit perfectly with her goal of questioning Catholic tradition by using other Catholic traditions or symbols to reinforce what she found to be the essential message of this sacramental event. In this case, my mom questioned having young girls wear white to symbolize purity (Archdiocese of Boston, n.d.). To my mom, that was a symbol of the Catholic Church's patriarchal system. She fully embraced the sacrament of communion but resisted the gendered symbols that had become associated with it over time.

I recall my mom's thoughtful response to my communion. She wanted to have it on a day other than that of my classmates and during the fall on Thanksgiving weekend—giving thanks for our faith and accepting this sacrament. She carefully chose the color of my first communion dress, red, to symbolize the Holy Spirit (Archdiocese of Boston n.d.). Several years later she chose a green velvet dress for my younger sister to represent hope (Archdiocese of Boston n.d.). She understood the symbolism well, since she sewed vestments for our parish priests on a regular basis. At the same time, in the early 1970s, my mom had begun to advocate for women's rights, but mostly at our dinner table. Her campaign for reform was targeted mostly at the Catholic Church—for logical reasons, it served as the center of our lives—but she sought to reform from within. I question: how do women make

Figure 2. First Communion, 1971.



sense out of their sacramental experiences and how do they reshape those for their daughters in a male dominated Catholic Church? In *Remembering Ahanagan*, Richard White (1999) asserted that immigrants' personal stories reflect a struggle over what it means to be an American and "who gets to define it" (p. 6). As I reflect on my memories of making my first communion and the way my mother navigated church conventions, White's argument seemed apropos, if we substitute the Catholic Church for America and who defines what it means to be Catholic.

### 2.3. *First communion as a site of acceptance: narrative of Pigott*

My lived experience of first communion includes a racialized discourse about acceptance in the Catholic Church. Growing up in a biracial household, I recall that first communion centered on racial difference. I was beginning at this time to understand that my father was different from other people in our community and at the church. No one was Asian, or dark-skinned like my father [See Figure 3. Dad is second to the right and I am in front of him]. I did not yet understand that I was also different, though I was beginning to recognize that I was not blonde and fair-skinned like many of my peers. Around this time—I think it was later than first communion—students in my class called me Japanese as an insult or taunt. This was the beginning of my understanding of my different racial heritage and the feeling of being "different" at church. The Catholic Church was in a middle-class suburb of Detroit and where my dad had his medical practice. My childhood Catholicism was shaped by my parents, and my father's immigrant experience.

In terms of religious practice, this was clearly post-Vatican II where the Catholic Church was trying to be more personal. This was also the time that my father was beginning to re-engage with the church. Though my parents were married in a Catholic ceremony, my father had actively left the church after his experiences in the Philippines. (His mother had been excommunicated after sending her children to the nearest school that was Baptist—and his mother had been devastated over her rejection from the church). My father was encouraged to re-engage with the church because of the pastor at the time—Fr. Krawczak—who continued to be close to my family throughout my childhood. Our family stories always have Fr. Krawczak as the one who managed to get my father back into the church.

Figure 3. Bi-racial Family Circa, 1964.



The Catholic Church for my father was one place where he was accepted despite his skin color and accented English. He found a home there as well with a priest who would listen to his doubts and who accepted him. Church itself became both an inclusive and exclusive community—while my father found acceptance, I began to understand how I was different from others in our community. Herberg (1960), in writing on the religious revival of the 1950s, noted that the notable increase in religious membership reflected the social necessity of belonging—and that the context of belonging in that time period was found in religious identity. The reforms introduced by Vatican II increased the ability of the Catholic Church to reach a wider audience and welcome a more diverse set of believers, like my immigrant father. The Catholic Church after Vatican II was more open and accepting than the Catholic Church my father encountered in the Philippines. This more open church allowed my father to belong to a community based on religion regardless of his skin color, whereas in other aspects of his life he was an outsider. As a child, however, I experienced and felt the difference from others in my bi-racial identity even in this more open Catholic Church.

### 3. The blood of Christ: teaching as martyrdom

Over the course of this project, we discussed the meanings of martyrdom in constructing Catholic subjectivity. Being raised Catholic exposed each of us to stories of sacrifice and being praised for *fighting the good fight*. These notions can translate over to professional martyrdom and often apply to the meaning of being a “good” teacher. Teacher Natashia Hill argues, “The notion of the martyr teacher often suggests that great teachers must live a life of imbalance, poverty, and continual self-sacrifice” (<https://www.edweek.org/tm/articles/2018/07/25/teachers-dont-have-to-be-martyrs.html>). This notion often shapes the life of many teacher educators, who themselves were standout P-12 teachers. Similarly, Chang et al. (2016) examine teacher educators’ identities collaboratively working on re-designing a more traditional teacher education model to one that is field-based and apprenticeship-oriented. Although these teacher educators do not mention martyrdom explicitly in this self-study, Chang et al. narrate the challenges and dynamic changes involved in teacher education and illustrate their transformative teacher identity constructions. The pull toward martyrdom is considerable during these challenging times of market-driven decision making about teachers as well as sustaining rigorous teacher education programs in the midst of threats to university-based teacher education.

In Catholic tradition, saints and martyrs are remembered and respected through sacraments and prayers. For example, in Korean Catholic history, major persecutions occurred in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries when French missionaries arrived in Korea and rejected the Confucian-based Rites to remember ancestors. The Chinese Rites Controversy was an issue of how to interpret Korea’s cultural asset as superstition or another version of cultural practice to respect ancestors which is the heart of the Confucian tradition (Phan, 2011). In Korea alone, 103 martyrs were canonized in 1984 and 124 martyrs were beatified in 2014 recognizing their bravery for giving up their lives for their belief of eternal life in heaven. In this section, we posit that teaching is martyrdom and examine our daily practice of martyrdom in teaching and teacher education.

#### 3.1. *The Keepers: Sr. Cathy Cesnik and martyrdom*

In deliberating on Catholicism and teacher subjectivity, we thought about watching a film about our Catholic subjectivity construction. In selecting a film, one of us suggested watching and discussing *The Keepers* (White, 2017). This documentary had just been released, and we thought that *The Keepers* demonstrated a version of martyrdom in the midst of the issue of abuse in the Catholic Church and the subsequent struggle the abuse scandal poses for Catholics.

*The Keepers* is a 7-episode documentary reporting a shocking story of abuse by individuals within the Catholic Church and by the church as an institution in the U.S. in the late 1960s and early 1970s. It delves into a time when the church and its schools had peaked in size and popularity and had begun to lose its hold over American Catholics’ social world. It was during the post-Vatican II era and Catholics raised more questions over remaining loyal to the church and faithful to one’s vows; however, remained silent about abuse by church officials. There were multiple lines of

inquiry explored in the docuseries *The Keepers*. For one of the authors, the most compelling issue was the underlying power of faith as a source of strength. The women who were abused sought out religious women to assist them and found, to some extent, safe harbour. Sister Cathy Cesnik, a central figure in the story, paid for offering a safe place with her life. The silence that ensued for decades was deafening. We know now that during this same era the abuse that happened in Baltimore was happening in so many church organizations. Years later, when two of the women came forward to take the church on, it was clear that at least for one of them, Jean, her faith remained a source of strength. Not only for her, but for Jean's extended family, faith and prayer assisted them in their fight for justice for Jean and the other women abused at Archbishop Keough High School. The women who investigated the death of Sister Cathy, their high school teacher and mentor, had such a fondness for her and their school experiences. While they were critical of the individuals that they believed perpetrated these crimes, they were not critical of their faith. It was an interesting and complicated aspect of this challenging story.

In watching this documentary, many questions emerged for another author. Where was "almighty" God, if any, throughout the abuses, investigations, and the victim survivors? If God still loves human beings, why did God let Maskell—the perpetrator, other priests, collaborators, and the authorities continue and repeat these tragedies and jarring stories? Our anger and anxiety went deeper as we watched all of the episodes, followed by numerous contemplations on the documentary. The main focus was who/what is God and what is the role of humans in response to God's call? While contemplating this horrible story, one author recalls the notion of a weak God theology theorized by a postmodern theologian, John Caputo (2006). God intervenes in the world's affairs only if people interact with the call for peace, justice, and love. God does/cannot promise a good end without humans' active, positive response to the call (Caputo, 2006). A metaphor of a doorknob is relevant to this theology: God is calling you for the good; yet you, as a person with free will, should open the door heading towards justice and love. In the documentary, all actions related to the abuses are heading towards self-interest and greed. Sister Cesnik responded to the call for justice; yet her body was found dead.

### **3.2. Narratives of lived religion in teacher education**

We agree that the spirit of martyrdom appears in Sister Cesnik's commitment to what is right and just. This spirit is connected to teachers' and teacher educators' passion in promoting social justice in education. We examine the professional martyrdom that we as (Catholic) teacher educators embody through the practice of justice and righteousness through education. Nobleness exists in teaching. Promoting social justice through teaching is another version of martyrdom. Educators are responsible to fight against any version of social injustice, just as martyrs are not to fear losing their lives for the sake of their beliefs. As Denig and Dosen (2009) eloquently argue, "there cannot be peace without justice" (p. 153). A school becomes a just place only if teachers commit to social justice in our students. Three narratives make a connection between teacher subjectivity and martyrdom we practice in lived experience and lived religion.

#### **3.2.1. Centering localized discourse in teacher subjectivity: narrative of Moon**

My version of professional martyrdom in daily practice is to challenge any universalized, static notion of Catholics essentialized by religious rituals (e.g., sacramentum) or practices guided by the Catholic Church authorities such as priests. A localized discourse in considering Catholic subjectivity becomes the center of my understanding of what it really means to be a Catholic teacher educator. This emphasis on this localized discourse is part of "countering coloniality," namely resistance to universalized, colonial approach to the gospel or Western-centered understanding of Christianity (Patel, 2014, p. 357). In shaping my teaching philosophy and practice, I regard Catholicism or being a Catholic teacher educator as a place of resistance and liberation: namely, Catholic teaching is gospel of hope and true gospel for the oppressed. I do not support the idea of keeping an institution (like the Catholic Church) as it is or business as usual. An institutionalized or organized church has a tendency of keeping its status and using its institutional structure to sustain its comfort zone. Church becomes a place of extending social networks without embodying

Jesus' gospel in a society. I label it as Jesus-business and Jesus is the best CEO over two millennia. Socially ostracized or oppressed groups in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (e.g., women, LGBTQ+) are more excluded from Jesus' inclusive teaching than what gospel indeed intended via Jesus' incarnation and resurrection. Unlike the gospel, which is the equity-oriented message for all, the haves take more space in church and the have nots become ostracized by the Catholic Church teaching.

In my teaching practice and my role as a teacher educator, I am highly influenced by liberation theology (or *Minjung* theology in Korean tradition). According to Park (1984), *Minjung* theology represents the struggle of the oppressed (a.k.a. *Minjung*) for freedom and justice. The *Minjung*'s lived experience and their stories are crucial in interpreting the bible and gospel. In short, *Minjung* theology is "a socio-political hermeneutics of the Christian gospel from the viewpoint of past and present experience of *Minjung* suffering" (p. 10). I value this core message of *Minjung* theology revisiting gospel from the oppressed (*Minjung*) and I support the idea that text (the Bible) should be interpreted by Jesus' provocative teaching and actions for uprooting the existing system and creating a new rule. The gospel is to *love thy enemies*, not for excluding anyone for the sake of keeping the institutionalized church and fixed and supporting suppressive religious practice.

### 3.2.2. *I teach because it matters: narrative of Ryan*

I was asked early in my career as a teacher educator to write why I became a teacher. I simply wrote, *I teach because it matters*. I chose to become a teacher and a teacher educator because it was a profession that had deep meaning and value for me. I saw it as a job where I could contribute to society and it certainly fit in with my Catholic upbringing, which supported such career choices. In a time when pursuing education was not valued by the broader society—the 1980s—it was refreshing to be part of a subculture that did not dissuade me from doing so. Through the study of our experiences with Catholicism and how that has shaped us, it has become clear to me that I have had a rather unique Catholic life. I believe my immigrant Irish grandparents and Irish American parents have had a great deal to do with that, as has the time that I grew up in the U.S. and in the American Catholic Church. Additionally, issues of race, class and gender have all added to my experiences of becoming/being Catholic. Listening to the stories of my peers who were raised in the Catholic Church here in the U.S. and abroad confirm both the uniqueness of all our stories as well as the more universal elements. Reflecting on our stories, my career choice as a teacher and teacher educator, and how that intersects with my socialization as an Irish American Catholic brings me back to the importance of Orsi's (2003) work on lived religion. His emphasis on the inter-subjectivity of lived religion has important implications for me as a teacher and researcher. Orsi (2003) contends that, "Our lives and stories are not simply implicated in our work; they are among the media through which we encounter and engage the religious worlds of others" (p. 174). As a historian of Catholic education—and as a teacher educator as well—I am mindful that I bring my social worlds into the classroom, as do my students. Understanding the power of lived religion is essential and acknowledging how our religious beliefs, whether we are practicing Catholics (or believers of other faiths) or not, shape our values and actions is critical.

### 3.2.3. *Teaching as a force for equity: narrative of author 3*

Education enabled my father to immigrate from the Philippines to the U.S. He was unflinching in his belief that education was the way to a better life. His own mother sacrificed her membership in the Catholic Church to ensure that her children had access to schooling. The value of education as a force for social justice and increased social equity was reinforced in my high school experience, particularly by the Jesuit novices who taught our religion courses. Schools and the teachers within have the power to transform students' lives. This belief translated into my commitment to a strong teacher preparation program as the core of the school of education when I served as the dean. At a Jesuit university, a core mission must be preparing teachers for urban school settings where children's opportunities could be changed for the better. This vision, however, was not universally shared by the school and was a source of contention. I maintain this belief despite no longer serving as the dean of the school of education.

#### **4. Amen אמן!: so be it for justice-oriented teacher subjectivity and teacher education**

Amen [אמן] in Hebrew means *so be it*. We theorize the meaning of amen drawing from the Catholic tradition of accepting the transformation of bread and wine into Christ's body and blood. This confession of *so be it* is acceptance of the sacrament although no cognitive understanding and acceptance is possible of this mystery. Obedience to Eucharist is a form of amen in Catholicism. On the other hand, amen is praxis of returning to Jesus' gospel of advocating social justice perpetuating in the Catholic Church itself and society. Amen is not a docile, obedient submission to any format of authority within the liberation theology tradition. Amen contains this double-sided aspect in living religion and living through/in/for the gospel in our society.

##### **4.1. Multiple meanings of "Catholic" teacher subjectivity**

From the very beginning of this project, we enjoyed the moment of both agreement and disagreement regarding what Catholicism means to each of us. We shared a similar, universal ritual like first communion or Easter. At the same time, we exchanged diverse lived experience in our daily lives in a different socio-political, cultural context. In teacher education, people are curious about what teacher subjectivity is and should be. At another level, teacher educators in religious sectors examine the meaning of "Catholic" teacher subjectivity in combining their professionalism with spirituality. We argue that no monolithic version of Catholic teacher subjectivity exists as any seamless notion of Catholicism is not possible. Reflecting on our lived experience, we share different understandings of Catholicism embodied in our daily, lived religion. Catholicism operated as a protocol for surveillance and obedience to one author while Catholicism is the foundation of resistance against social injustice, particularly for ethnic/racial minority and women to the other authors.

Pigott, as the eldest child of a Filipino surgeon, articulated that she chose the path of the good girl both at home and at school, a similar stance to Moon. This choice allowed her to keep her environment predictable, as her father worked long hours as a trauma surgeon, and her mother raised four children. Being a good girl was protection against the unknown for how could anything bad happen if she followed all the rules. Her experiences in the Catholic Church reinforced the need for obedience and being "good" as requisite for spiritual rewards. But holding onto the false security of being good also meant that she could not question the authority around her, particularly her father and the church. There was both comfort and a growing sense of unease in failing to question aspects of the church's teaching. Later, as an adult, Pigott sees that her own intellectual life was stunted by the failure to question and to integrate complexity into her understanding of Catholicism.

For another author, Moon, Catholicism is a site of liberation in order to create a new space for social transformation. A Eurocentric, anthropocentric approach to God-human relationship is dismantled with the support of other religious, spiritual traditions. It is notable to recall *Donghak* [Eastern Learning] which was an active response against Catholicism (Moon, 2017). While Korean martyrs were sacrificed during persecutions, Choi Je-u (1824–1864) was questioning the real meaning of life if no joy exists *here and now*. He criticized Catholics who gave up their lives with unseen beliefs in resurrection and after life. Choi believed and proclaimed that creating happiness and social justice here and now is the most urgent and important task. *Donghak* indeed created the spirit and actions for the 1894 Peasant Revolution. He implemented the core message of liberation theology which is grounded in the understanding of the gospel of *hic et nunc* (here and now) grounded upon Minjung's lived experience of suffering (Park, 1984). Choi emphasized the importance of justice in the current life, not deferring it solely to afterlife or resurrection. Similarly, for one of the authors, the gospel in resurrection does not have a full meaning without enjoying real joy right here and right now.

##### **4.2. The practice of lived religion in teacher education**

We discussed martyrdom both as a metaphor and actual practice of teachers' lived experience. Orsi argues that lived religion is not far from our daily experience in personal and professional space. As argued in the section on blood of Christ, our daily practice as teacher educators and administrators is grounded in taking a risk and taking actions to fight against

social injustice and to fight against resistance to social change. We disclaim that the practice of lived religion is legitimizing teacher scapegoating or asking for more sacrifices from teachers in the midst of neoliberal educational reforms. Lived religion is to say NO to socially unjust practices particularly towards marginalized populations. At the same time, lived religion is to embrace *hope* in the midst of tremendous challenges in teacher education, including teacher scapegoating for social ills (Kumashiro, 2012), scant support for teacher professionalism, and sustaining highly-qualified teachers in urban areas. Eschatology guides a hopeful message that the current suffering is not the end yet a place for grace and recovering. During the Easter Vigil, Catholics listen to the *Exultet*—that is the proclamation of Easter (<http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/liturgical-year/easter/easter-proclamation-exsultet.cfm>). Major lines of the *Exultet* regard Adam’s original sin as “truly necessary sin,” completely destroyed by the death and resurrection of Christ. Adam’s and Eve’s original sins become the *blessed* ones owing to God’s grace and ongoing resistance to social injustice. Our intention is not to legitimize any version of suffering of socially oppressed communities. Not knowing the context of a person’s or an oppressed group’s suffering, no one should mention that suffering is a blessing. Rather, we theorize the practice of lived religion as the one in which guided by the message of eschatology—namely, the current challenge is not yet to conclude. There is always *more* for hope and transformation. The bottom line of this eschatology, appearing in Caputo’s (2006) weak God theology, is that hope itself should not be an individual, compartmentalized version of a dream but a communal effort to transform the current situation into one that is more just and more beneficial for all. Overall, we argue for creating communities in teacher education where educators work together for social transformation, practicing this theology of lived religion and hope yet to come.

#### 4.3. The attention to spiritual subjectivity in teacher education

We are privileged to discuss spirituality without the restrictions of separation of church-state rules in our current institution. Throughout the project, we argue for including spirituality as an important discourse in teacher education. Tucker (2010) supports the recognition of the spiritual aspect of teaching and teacher education so that teachers respect their inner lives and embrace wholeness in classrooms. This acknowledgement is open space to honor students’ spirituality. Personal backgrounds, particularly religious influences, are imperative in constructing teacher subjectivity. Candid, open conversation about teacher spirituality and subjectivity is crucial in designing social-justice oriented teacher education. We do not support promoting an institutionalized, religious practice scapegoating a particular cultural group (e.g., LGBTQ+, women, and immigrants). We argue *against* sustaining hatred-oriented educational practices informed and sustained by institutionalized churches and doctrines. Rather, we argue *for* a critical examination of one’s beliefs, particularly religious beliefs, with open-mindedness in teacher education. Open-mindedness is the *Eucharist* for unconditional love [*agape*]. Like communicating and “teaching with heart and soul” (Palmer, 2003, p. 376), it becomes the foundations of interacting with students and teacher candidates for justice, peace, and equity in teacher education.

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#### Cover image

Source: Ann Marie Ryan from Youghal Bay of the coast of the town of Youghal, County Cork, Ireland.

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