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**AN INVESTIGATION  
OF STRONG RELIGIOUS CULTURES  
IN SELECTED CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

by  
**John Philip Pejza**

**A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of**

**Doctor of Education**

**University of San Diego**

**1987**

**Dissertation Committee**

**Joseph C. Rost, Ph. D.  
Edward Kujawa, Ph. D.  
William E. Elliott, Ph. D.**

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## ABSTRACT

### AN INVESTIGATION OF STRONG RELIGIOUS CULTURES IN SELECTED CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS

PEJZA, JOHN P., O.S.A., Ed. D. University of San Diego, 1987.  
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The culture of a school includes the values, symbols, beliefs, and shared meanings of members of the school community. Catholic high schools have features which are distinctly Catholic, such as programs, personnel, and religious activities. As a result, religious cultures quite distinct from those of public schools exist in Catholic schools.

This study investigated strong religious cultures in six selected west coast Catholic secondary schools selected through a reputational analysis survey. Schools were selected to include representation from six major groupings using the criteria of (a) type of school (diocesan and private), (b) student body (coeducational and single sex), and (c) status of the principal (diocesan priest, religious, and lay). Ethnographic methods including interviews, behavior observation, and evaluation of school documents were used to determine distinctive characteristics of the religious cultures, the administrative structures, practices and procedures used to develop and foster the religious



cultures, and whether the status of the principal and size and type of the school made a difference in the strength of the religious culture.

The study concluded that Catholic high schools with strong religious cultures have certain common characteristics including strong religious values such as faith development and a sense of community, programs which provide knowledge and experience to students, people who are deeply concerned about the total wellbeing of students, and a climate which establishes norms for behavior and a structured environment. Cultural elements are similar to those previously identified in schools with strong cultures, but have a religious emphasis. Administrators enhance the religious culture through programs, curricula, hiring practices, and opportunities for the spiritual development of faculty. The leadership ability and charisma of the principal influence the strength of the culture more than does the clerical or religious status of the principal. Boys' schools emphasize peer bonding; girls' schools stress the role of women in the world and church. The presence and sponsorship of a religious community strongly influences the religious culture, but size of the school does not.

**DEDICATED TO MY PARENTS  
WHOSE CAREERS IN EDUCATION INSPIRED ME  
TO BECOME A TEACHER**

## PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Before beginning work on this dissertation, I felt that I knew the field of Catholic education quite well, since I had spent over twenty years as student, teacher, and administrator in five different schools. My work on this study has helped me to realize that there were many aspects of Catholic education which I really didn't know as well as I thought. From a personal standpoint, the knowledge I gained is probably the greatest benefit of this study.

There are many people who must be thanked for their cooperation in making this dissertation possible. The administrators, teachers, and students of Northside Catholic, Annunciation, The Abbey School, Cardinal Gibbons, Maryhaven, and St. Michael's High Schools, as well as those of the school used for the pilot study, made this study possible. Their cooperation in this project, candor about their schools, and interest in Catholic education gave me new hope about the future of American Catholic high school education.

I want to thank my brother Augustinians for their moral and financial support of my doctoral work. In particular, Very Reverends Patrick J. Keane, O.S.A. and John F. Keller, O.S.A., Priors Provincial during the course of my doctoral studies, encouraged me to pursue the dream of a doctorate in education.

Jean Shaw, my indefatigable secretary, deserves a special thank you for the endless hours she spent

transcribing the tapes from interviews into 537 pages of transcripts. Her work made this project much easier.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### THE PROBLEM

#### Introduction

Every school is unique because of its location, history, philosophy, student population, administration, faculty, and traditions. The attitudes and expectations of members of the school community, their perceptions of the educational process, and the degree to which they show commitment to central values and behavior all contribute to the nature and strength of the culture of the school.

Despite the obvious differences among schools, certain commonalities do exist. All schools are involved in the educational process; all have similar structures and organization. Some recent studies have pointed out that academically effective schools have certain common characteristics (Ascher, 1982; Edmonds, 1979, 1981; Levine, 1985; Murphy & Hallinger, 1984). Some schools have been identified as having strong positive cultures (Grant, 1982a, 1982b, 1985; Lightfoot, 1983; Rutter, Mortimore, Ouston, & Smith, 1979). Their cultures involve values, symbols, beliefs, and meanings shared by members of the school

community.

In common with all other schools, Catholic high schools have cultures. Over the course of the past twenty years those cultures have changed. Unlike the large amount of research on strong public school cultures done by such scholars as Grant (1982a, 1982b, 1985) and Lightfoot (1983), there has been very little research done on Catholic school cultures (Doyle, 1985; Greenfield, 1982).

Effective Catholic high schools with strong cultures have certain common characteristics. Some of these are similar to those of other schools with strong cultures; some are different. Differences include programs designed to meet academic, religious, and community goals. The school climates include dimensions of a shared mission and values, norms for behavior in terms of control and freedom, sense of community, a high degree of structure, and high morale among students and faculty (Bryk, Holland, Lee, & Carriedo, 1984; Coleman, Hoffer, & Kilgore, 1981; Muckerman, 1981; Yeager, Benson, Guerra, & Manno, 1984).

#### Statement of the problem

The Catholic high school of today is not the same as the Catholic school of the 1950s. In the days before the Second Vatican Council, Catholic schools existed primarily to preserve the faith of students and to integrate the

children of immigrants into American society (Fitzgerald 1984). Such schools were established because of misgivings about the proselytizing and sectarian slant which marked public schools in the 19th century (Lines, 1986). Today, the foci of Catholic education are the deepening of faith, having students come to a realization that they are members of a faith community, and having them become aware of the need to externalize their faith through social action (National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1973).

The culture of the Catholic school plays a vital role in the process of integrating young persons into adult Catholic living (Fee, Greeley, & McCready, 1981). Through exposure to traditions, values, shared meanings, and the example of committed adult Catholics, young persons can come to a realization of what it means to be an active Catholic in today's world. As a result, they are able to make conscious decisions to participate fully in the life of the Church as adults.

The culture of the effective Catholic school has certain elements specifically related to the religious aspects of the school. The organizational structures, practices, and procedures necessary to develop and enhance a strong religious culture are different from those needed to promote a strictly academic culture. Such elements of religious culture are the subjects of this study.

Precisely because the Catholic school is a

value-oriented institution and community, the Catholic school principal is expected to be a religious leader in addition to being an educational leader. The Catholic school principal is expected to lead the school in religious as well as academic areas by providing structures, practices and procedures to develop the religious culture. This study will examine the administrative structures, practices, and procedures which Catholic school principals use in schools with effective religious cultures.

Lay persons play a much more integral role in Catholic schools today than they previously did. The number of lay teachers and principals in Catholic high schools has increased steadily over the past twenty years. It is predicted that by the turn of the century, 75% of the administrators in Catholic schools will be lay persons (O'Laughlin, 1982). Some persons have openly questioned whether a school can truly be "Catholic" if the administration and faculty are largely composed of lay persons (Delahanty, 1981b). This study will investigate differences in religious culture shaped by principals of different status.

#### Purpose of the Study

The major purpose of this study is to investigate strong religious cultures in selected Catholic secondary

schools. The schools which have been chosen for this study are ones with reputations for having strong religious cultures. Even though each of the schools is unique, one aim of this study is to search for commonalities, elements which form a metaculture of effective Catholic schools. The researcher also investigated the role of principals and other key individuals in developing these effective religious cultures.

Rather than examine all Catholic schools, this study concentrates on Catholic secondary schools. The conclusions of previous research suggest that there are sufficient difference among elementary, middle, and high schools to warrant a separate study of secondary schools (Firestone & Herriott, 1982). Thus the researcher decided to examine Catholic secondary schools only and see what conclusions could be developed from such a specialized study.

#### Concept of Culture

According to Anderson (1982), various dimensions must be considered when one studies the environment of an organization: its ecology including the material and physical aspects; its milieu including the social dimension concerned with the presence of persons and groups; its social system concerned with the patterned relationships of persons and groups; and its culture.

The term culture is a very general term which involves

many aspects of an organization: its history, purposes and structure, the scope of its moral and cultural integration, and the extent to which commitment to core values and exemplary behavior is required or enforced (Taylor, 1984). Pettigrew (1979) defined culture as the system of publicly and collectively accepted meanings operating for a given group at a given time.

Only in recent years have the cultures of organizations begun to be studied (Deal & Kennedy, 1982; Deal, 1987; Frost et al., 1985). The culture of a group can be characterized in the following way:

A set of understandings or meanings shared by a group of people. These meanings are largely tacit among members, are clearly relevant to the particular group, and are distinctive to the group. Meanings are passed on to new group members. (Louis, 1985, p. 74)

Culture is the source of a family of concepts including symbol, language, ideology, belief, ritual, and myth, according to Pettigrew (1979). Viewed in this fashion, culture conveys a sense of identity to organization members. It facilitates the generation of commitment to something larger than the self. It enhances social system stability, and it serves as a sense-making device that can guide and shape behavior (Smircich, 1983).

The culture of an organization is closely associated with the sense of belonging, of ownership. The culture of a

group binds members together in sharing a special sense of personal importance and significance.

School culture includes values, symbols, beliefs, and shared meanings of parents, students, teachers, and others belonging to that community. Research has indicated that schools with strong cultures or ethos are particularly effective in carrying out their goals (Grant, 1982a, 1982b, 1985; Lightfoot, 1983; Rutter et al., 1979). The amount of research into school culture, however, is slight and "cultural analysis cries out for an analysis of the public schools as well as the private schools and how, if at all, those cultures can be influenced" (Petrie, 1984, p. 321).

#### Historical Background

In the period prior to the Vatican II Council, American Catholic schools were highly permeated with a culture characteristically belonging to the United States Catholic Church (O'Neill, 1979). That culture was highly structured and closed to change on any level. The mission of the Church was clear. Its pastoral methods were considered to be valid in whatever cultural context it found itself (Arbuckle, 1985).

Catholic schools had been established partly to help immigrants overcome nativist and Americanization movements which resurfaced during World War I. Catholic educational leaders insisted on the need to maintain a Catholic sense of



identity. Separate Catholic schools stressed the unity of religion, and education emphasized the American identity of the schools together with their commitment to Americanization and civic education (Veverka, 1984).

Most Catholic high schools prior to the Vatican Council II had goals typified by the following list.

1. Religious literacy -- a knowledge of the tenets of the Catholic faith.

2. Apologetics -- the ability to defend the Catholic faith with rational arguments.

3. A sense of the church's apostolic mission, its role in history, its exemplary holiness, its contribution to culture, art, and science, and its patriotic role in the history of the United States.

4. A sense of the individual Catholic's apostolic mission.

5. The knowledge, skills and habits of mind, will and body which would enable graduates to make contributions to society and thus earn their place in the economic life of society (Murdick, 1977).

Almost all principals of Catholic schools were priests or members of religious congregations. They were assumed to be religious leaders because of the spiritual formation which they had received. They and their faculties had committed themselves to the religious and educational values of Catholic education and to the traditions of their

particular religious congregation. As a result they worked to achieve goals associated with those values (O'Neill, 1979).

Religious congregations brought strength to the Catholic school by providing priests, brothers and sisters with a spiritual outlook and sensitivity and with a deepened religious spirit. The academic preparation that religious congregations provided their members was thoroughly Catholic. Members of the community absorbed a Catholic philosophy of education through spiritual and intellectual formation and through daily living in a community of religious educators (Fanelli, 1981). They therefore gave witness to the concept of Christian community.

Hater has aptly summed up the culture of the Catholic school prior to the 1960s.

When I went to Catholic schools, the Church had no identity crisis. Neither did the school. We learned to be good Catholics in an atmosphere of faith and prayer, with daily Mass, catechism lessons, and "good morning, Father or Sister" as integral to our lives. Secular agencies had little, if any, influence on Catholic schools. The Church controlled the school's financing, curriculum, and teacher preparation. Sisters and priests taught. The school integrated the sacred and secular, emphasizing faith. Textbooks were Catholic, geared to teach students to think and live as

members of the one, true Church. Students also learned to be patriotic, pledging allegiance to the flag, while seeing pictures of Washington and Lincoln in the classrooms (1979a, p. 14).

In the 1960s a number of forces from without and within the Church began to affect the religious cultures of the schools. Several such forces can be mentioned as most significant.

1. Much criticism of Catholic schools arose within the American Catholic community. Some religious educators such as Moran began to emphasize adult religious education instead of education of the young (Delahanty, 1981b). Ryan (1964) elaborated on this position, labelling the Catholic school's traditional role as anachronistic. Other religious educators stressed a "theology of freedom," citing passages in the documents of Vatican Council II to push for the elimination of mandated school practices such as liturgies, retreats and religion classes (Delahanty, 1981b). Schools went through a period of experimentation in which theological ambiguity clouded religion teaching and in which the concept of change was canonized (Hater, 1979a). Catholic schools were scored by critics as not being effective in changing the attitudes of students in the area of social justice (Reedy & Andrews, 1966).

2. Following the Vatican Council II, a large number of priests, brothers, and sisters left the field of education

to move into ministries which they considered more relevant or to leave the religious life. Many of those remaining altered their customary ways of behaving, becoming "professional" in their approach to Catholic education. They no longer taught, coached, or moderated school activities simply out of obedience, but instead insisted on working in their areas of academic competence (Delahanty, 1981b).

The religious who left the field of teaching were replaced by lay people as teachers and administrators. Many of these did not have the philosophical or theological training and orientation to Catholic education of their predecessors. They had not had regular opportunities for spiritual guidance and formation nor for formal study of Scripture or theology (Fanelli, 1981). As a result, their commitment to the traditional values of the Catholic school sometimes deviated considerably from that of their religious predecessors. Some religious resented and mistrusted them as lacking a sense of the religious culture (Delahanty, 1981b).

3. The influx of lay persons in Catholic schools led to increased costs through higher salaries. Lay teachers could not live on nor support families on the low salaries accepted by religious. Disagreements between teachers and administrators on practical areas of security, status, and salaries caused the creation of teachers unions in some

areas. Traditional values were threatened by such moves according to Delahanty (1981b).

4. In concert with the general population, Catholics shared in the prosperity of the times, moving in large numbers from decaying cities to the suburbs in the 1950s and 1960s. Church funds were redirected from school operations to the construction of new parishes without schools in the suburbs.

5. The election of John F. Kennedy as president of the United States in 1960 changed the focus of attention for many Catholics from the Catholic community to the wider civic society. Previously the church and the ancillary services it provided had been critical in providing avenues for self-esteem, dignity and even economic success. Pressure to attend Catholic schools was lessened since people began to consider themselves as Americans first and Catholics second (Doyle, 1985).

6. Enrollment in Catholic schools declined not only because of the forces already mentioned but also because of a decline in the birth rate among Catholics (Doyle 1985). According to Greeley (1976), American Catholics in large numbers ignored Humani Vitae, the encyclical of Pope Paul VI on birth control, and instead followed their own consciences rather than official Church policy.

7. The traditional base of support of inner city schools began to disappear because of the accumulated weight

of the aforementioned forces. In order to survive many such schools began to accept an increasingly greater number of non-Catholic students until some schools were composed almost entirely of non-Catholics. In some cases, the schools dropped their religious orientation to change from parish schools to privately funded, community schools (Delahanty, 1981b).

8. To compensate for higher lay teacher salaries and the lower income from the smaller base of students, Catholics began to work for public funding for their schools. In the process, the secular educational role of the Catholic school and the right of parents to freedom of choice were stressed over the religious nature of the school. A greater emphasis was placed on increased teacher proficiency in secular subjects and on certification for state credentials than on religious orientation to prepare for the possible reception of public funds (Hater, 1979a).

All these forces combined to change the culture of Catholic schools considerably. Consequently, serious questions about the worth of Catholic education were raised. Hesitancy in answering some of the challenges arose because of an early lack of clear direction from the American hierarchy. High schools were not built in suburbs, for instance, in proportion to the number of Catholics who had moved to these areas, even though research indicated that continued support of Catholic education existed

(Greeley, McCready, & McCourt, 1976). The espoused values of Catholic schools became somewhat blurred or at least were asserted somewhat less forcefully than in an earlier era (Delahanty, 1981a).

Large numbers of Catholic schools closed under the weight of these various forces. In the years between 1965 and 1976, Catholic school enrollment decreased by 2.1 million students. In 1980 there were 3.1 million students in Catholic elementary and secondary schools as compared with an enrollment of almost 5.5 million in 1965 (Oates, 1981). It appeared to many that in a few years the Catholic school system would largely disappear except in affluent areas or where schools were subsidized by religious congregations.

In the late 1960s, there were attempts by individuals such as Lee (1968) to focus attention once again on the values of Catholic education. However, the pastoral letter of the American bishops, To Teach as Jesus Did, was the spark needed to revitalize Catholic schools (National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1973). This revitalization with its stress on basic religious values brought about changes in the cultures of Catholic schools. Traditional emphases were no longer present, but new priorities were established.

Some of the cultural elements which today are characteristic of Catholic high schools are a strong

emphasis on discipline, an orderly environment (absence of behavior problems), shared commitment to academics, structure, a sense of community, and high teacher and student morale (Bryk et al., 1984; Coleman et al., 1981; Reck, 1979). These elements, however, do not distinguish Catholic high schools from other schools having strong academic achievement. Characteristics specifically related to the religious culture of the Catholic high school must be identified over and above the above traits.

Catholic schools have features which are distinctly Catholic, such as the programs offered by the schools, the personnel staffing them, and religious activities. They also have a shared set of values and a focus on personal development. Their broad goals, shared by faculty, parents and students, differ from the values and goals shared by members of a public school community.

To date there has been some research on effective Catholic schools, based on Coleman's studies (1981). However, there has been little research specifically on the elements of religious culture of Catholic high schools or on the role of the principal in developing a religious culture in a Catholic high school. This study investigates aspects of these areas.



### Research Questions

The main research question examined in this study deals with the identification of distinctly religious elements of strong Catholic high school culture. In Catholic high schools identified as having particularly strong religious cultures, what common elements can be identified as characteristic of those religious cultures? In what ways do these elements differ from those of the cultures of public or other private schools identified as having strong cultures?

Other research questions deal with associated topics. The second research question looks into the administrative structures, practices, and procedures used by Catholic high school principals and other key individuals to develop and enhance the religious culture. In Catholic high schools with strong religious cultures, what structures, practices, and procedures do administrators use to develop and enhance such a strong religious culture?

The third research question studies the administrative personnel of the school. Is the nature and effectiveness of the religious culture of a Catholic high school related to the fact that the principal and other key personnel are clerics, religious, or laypersons? Is the culture of a school different if the principal is a layperson than if the principal is a priest, brother, or sister? Does a priest,

sister, or brother use different types of administrative structures, practices, and procedures than a lay principal to develop an strong religious culture?

The fourth research question deals with the type and size of the Catholic high school. Is the culture different in schools of various types and sizes? Is there a difference in the strong religious culture in coeducational schools and single-sex schools? Do diocesan schools have a different culture than schools administered by religious congregations?

#### Significance of the study

Catholic high schools educate approximately ten percent of the teenage youth of the United States. Yet such schools have largely been neglected in research on American education (Doyle, 1985). It is important to study the issue of religious culture in the Catholic high school for several reasons.

1. To carry out their religious mission effectively, Catholic high schools must have a clear sense of their own identities. They must be aware of the characteristics which distinguish them from other schools. It is important to determine the elements which constitute an strong religious culture and promote its development in order to assist Catholic schools in carrying out their religious mission.

2. As private schools charging tuition and serving

clients in individual marketplaces, Catholic schools must maintain distinctive cultures in order to attract students. Parents send children to Catholic schools for religious, academic, and other reasons. It is important to distinguish those elements of the strong religious culture which effectively enhance the development of students. In this way such schools can be strengthened by enhancing those elements, thus improving the future of these schools.

3. The types of administrative structures, practices, and procedures of principals and other key personnel must be examined in order to determine whether there are significant methods that enhance the religious culture of the Catholic high school. The knowledge and practice of such structures, practices, and procedures can help an administrator demonstrate religious leadership.

4. It is important to determine if the religious state and experience of the principal and other key administrators make a difference in effectively developing and promoting a Catholic culture within the school. Even though priests and religious presently comprise 90% of the principals in Catholic schools, O'Laughlin (1982) and others predicts that by the year 2000, 75% of the administrators will be lay persons. Faculties will be almost entirely composed of lay persons. As a member of the Order of St. Augustine, the researcher realizes that within the Order there are a limited number of potential candidates for administrative

roles in Augustinian high schools. A distinct possibility exists that lay persons will become principals in the Order's schools in the future. Therefore, it is important to determine whether a lay administrator makes a substantial difference in the nature of the culture within the school. Based on this information, religious orders and dioceses can make plans for the development of future principals.

5. Rogus (1982) has pointed out that schools promote scholarly inquiry on the part of students as a primary purpose, but very often teachers and administrators themselves engage in little search behavior and dialogue on professional questions. The researcher hopes that this study will provide some basis for a continuing dialogue on the role of administrators in Catholic secondary schools regarding the culture of the school, particularly the religious culture of these schools.

6. Greeley (1982) has indicated the need for additional research on the influence of religious orders on students. He feels that each religious order influences a school in a different manner. It is difficult to say with any degree of confidence whether this influence derives from administrators and faculty members who are members of those religious orders or from lay faculty members in the school environment influenced by the religious in the school. This study will perhaps shed some light on the effect that the presence of a religious order has on the religious culture

of the school.

#### Limiting and Delimiting Factors

As a descriptive study, this study attempts to portray some of the characteristics of the cultures of six selected Catholic high schools with no specific hypotheses about the nature of these characteristics being previously established.

This research is not a study of the academic achievements of the schools being studied. It is not a longitudinal study; therefore the religious cultures of these schools have been examined in light of limited exposure to the school environments.

This study is limited in that it examines only six Catholic high schools in metropolitan areas in the western United States. These schools were selected because they have reputations for having outstanding religious cultures. There is no guarantee that schools in other sections of the United States, or even schools in other areas of the Western United States enjoy the same characteristics which are found in these schools.

As with any qualitative study, the possibility of researcher bias must be considered. However, the researcher must constantly confront his opinions and prejudices with the mass of data collected. The researcher's goal is to add to the store of knowledge, not to pass judgment on the

settings visited.

#### Definition of terms

Brother is a male member of a religious order or congregation who is not a priest.

Catechesis is an element of evangelization. It can be described as those "efforts which help individuals and communities acquire and deepen Christian faith and identity through initiation rites, instruction, and formation of conscience" (National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1979, p.3).

Community of faith refers to a group of believers who share the same religious faith or a common relationship with Jesus.

Culture has been defined as "the system of terms, forms, categories and images that interprets a people's own situation to themselves" (Doyle 1985, p. 134).

Diocesan school refers to a school, generally on the secondary level, established by and operated under the jurisdiction of a Catholic diocese and usually under the direct supervision of the diocesan superintendent of schools.

Evangelization is an ongoing process within the Christian community by which the Church seeks to convert the personal and collective consciences of people solely through the divine power of the Gospel message which she proclaims,

in order to convert their activities, their lives, and the milieu in which they live (Paul VI, 1975).

Parish school refers to a school established by and under the direct control of a local parish. Most such Catholic schools are on the elementary level, but approximately 20% of all Catholic high schools throughout the United States are parish or interparochial high schools. Such schools will not be included in this study.

Priest refers to a male who has received the second sacramental Order in the Catholic Church. A priest can either be under the direct authority of the local bishop or can belong to a religious order or congregation.

Private school in the broad sense refers to any school not under the auspices of the state. In this study, the term will refer to a secondary school operated by a particular religious teaching congregation, e.g., the Augustinians or Jesuits.

Religious refers to individuals who belong to a religious order or congregation and who have bound themselves to the spirit and rules of that organization through religious vows or promises.

Religious culture refers to the whole complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual, and emotional features that characterize a religious society or societal group.

Religious formation program refers to the opportunities

which the program in a Catholic secondary school affords a faculty member or student to grow in the appreciation of the Christian faith and to express that faith through social action.

Religious Order/Congregation refers to an organization of men or women officially recognized by the Catholic Church as a way of life. Such organizations generally have for their purposes various charitable causes, such as education, care of the sick, service to the poor, and so on.

Sister refers to a female member of a religious order or congregation.

#### Organization of this study

The study is reported in ten chapters. Chapter One includes the statement of the problem, definition of terms, significance of the study, limitations of the study, and organization of the study. Chapter Two presents a review of research and literature related to this study. The subjects, the materials, the procedures, and the qualitative techniques employed in this investigation are described in Chapter Three. Chapters Four through Nine contain thick descriptions of each of the schools studied. Data concerning each of the religious cultures are summarized and analyzed, and the school cultures are compared and contrasted when appropriate. The summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study comprise Chapter Ten.



## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF RELATED RESEARCH AND LITERATURE

#### Introduction

This review of research and literature will begin with an outline of official Catholic church teaching on religious education, Christian leadership, and the roles of the Catholic school, teachers, and principals. Secondly, research and literature dealing with school culture and the role of the principal in culture building will be reviewed. Thirdly, documents relating to Catholic school culture will be reviewed. Lastly, research and literature which deal with the religious cultural leadership of the Catholic school principal will be discussed.

#### Catholic Church Documents

##### Purpose of Religious Education

Official statements of the Catholic Church in recent years indicate various facets of religious education. The Vatican II Council, held from 1963-1966, provided new standards for Catholic schools (Leubking, 1981) and

significantly influenced their religious instructional programs (Mayock, 1980). Even though many Catholics felt a conflict between positive forces stemming from the Council and negative forces related to Humanae Vitae (the encyclical of Pope Paul VI on the relationship of sexual activity and reproduction), support for parochial schools seems to be strong (Greeley et al., 1976).

The Declaration on Christian Education (Gravissimum Educationis) of the Second Vatican Council established the goal of religious education by indicating

that as the baptized person is gradually introduced into a knowledge of the mystery of salvation, he may daily grow more conscious of the gift of faith which he has received; that he may learn to adore God the Father in spirit and in truth (cf. John 4:23), especially through liturgical worship; that he may be trained to conduct his personal life in righteousness and in the sanctity of truth, according to his new standard of manhood (Eph. 4:22-24). (Abbott, 1966, p. 640)

The process of initiating an individual into the knowledge of the truths revealed by God is known as evangelization.

Pope Paul VI indicated that evangelization occurs when the Church "seeks to convert, solely through the divine power of the message she proclaims, both the personal and collective consciences of people, the activities in which they engage, and the lives and concrete milieux which are

theirs" (1975, p. 16). The Catholic School, written by the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education (1977), described evangelization as "the proclamation of the Good News of salvation to all, the generation of new creatures in Christ through Baptism, and their training to live knowingly as children of God" (p. 4).

Evangelization is carried out in the Church through catechesis

the teaching and maturation stage, that is to say, the period in which the Christian, having accepted by faith the person of Jesus Christ as the one Lord and having given him complete adherence by sincere conversion of heart, endeavors to know better this Jesus to whom he has entrusted himself: to know his "mystery," the Kingdom of God proclaimed by him, the requirements and promises contained in his Gospel message, and the paths that he has laid down for any one who wishes to follow him (John Paul II, 1979, p. 29).

Catechesis prepares a young person for the important Christian commitments of adult life since it deals with the great questions of adolescence--self-giving, belief, and love and the means of expressing it through sexuality. (John Paul II, 1979)

The American Catholic bishops further defined catechesis as "efforts which help individuals and communities acquire and deepen Christian faith and identity

through initiation rites, instruction, and formation of conscience" (National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1979, p. 3).

### Catholic Schools

The responsibility of educating belongs to parents, to society as a whole, and to the Church. Pastors within the Church have a "acutely serious duty" to see that all the faithful enjoy a Christian education. Vatican Council II indicated that Catholic schools were to: (a) create an atmosphere enlivened by the gospel spirit of freedom and charity; (b) provide the help adolescents need so that the development of their personalities will be matched by their spiritual growth; and (c) relate all human culture eventually to the Gospel message of salvation (Abbott, 1966).

The purpose of Catholic education is to "prepare its members to proclaim the Good News and to translate this proclamation into action." The educational mission of the Church is an integrated ministry embracing three interlocking dimensions: "the message revealed by God (didache) which the Church proclaims; fellowship in the life of the Holy Spirit (koinonia); service to the Christian community and the entire human community (diakonia) (National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1973, pp. 3, 4).

Of all the educational programs available to the

Catholic community, Catholic schools provide the "fullest and best opportunity to realize the threefold purpose of Christian education among children and young people." The school is the unique setting in which the ideal of making faith living, conscious, and active, can be accomplished through the light of instruction. Integration of religious truths and values with the rest of life is brought about through the unique curriculum and "the presence of teachers who express an integrated approach to learning and living in their private and professional lives" (National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1973, pp. 28, 29).

Schools are established as "a priveleged means of promoting the formation of the whole man, since the school is a center in which a specific concept of the world, of man, and of history is developed and conveyed" (Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977, p. 4). Catholic schools are "unique expressions of the Church's effort to achieve the purposes of Catholic education among the young" (National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1979, p. 143).

The purpose of Catholic schools is to cultivate in students the intellectual, creative, and aesthetic faculties of the human person; to develop in them the ability to make correct use of their judgment, will and affectivity; to promote in them a sense of values; to

encourage just attitudes and prudent behavior; to introduce them to the cultural patrimony handed down from previous generations; to prepare them for professional life; and to encourage the friendly interchange among students of diverse cultures and backgrounds that will lead to mutual understanding. (Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1982, p. 10)

To ensure the continuance and improvement of Catholic schools, the bishops urged the schools to state "clearly and compellingly the distinctive goals of the Catholic schools" and to renew their purpose (National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1973, p. 33-34). Each member of the school community must adopt a common vision or outlook on life, based on adherence to a scale of values in which he believes. Because this is a time "when Christianity demands to be clothed in fresh garments, when all manners of changes have been introduced in the Church and in secular life, and particularly, when a pluralist mentality dominates and the Christian Gospel is increasingly pushed to the sidelines," (Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977, pp. 10, 12, 19). Since the school must be a community "whose aim is the transmission of values for living" (p. 12), the job of the Catholic school has become infinitely more difficult and complex today.

### The Catholic Teacher

If the threefold purpose of Catholic education is to be realized, it will occur because of the commitment of educators "to give instruction to their students, to build community among them, and to serve them" (National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1973, p. 39).

Teachers have an especially solemn vocation requiring extraordinary qualities of mind and heart, extremely careful preparation, and a constant readiness to begin anew and to adapt. Particularly through the "living witness of those who teach and direct" students, the Church provides affection and helpfulness to young people. Teachers should "realize that to the greatest possible extent they determine whether the Catholic school can bring its goals and undertakings to fruition." Vatican Council II encouraged teachers to "carry on magnanimously in their chosen task and to strive to excel in penetrating their students with the spirit of Christ, in the art of teaching, and in the advancement of knowledge (Abbott, 1966, pp. 645, 646, 651).

The American bishops acknowledged the apostolic service rendered to the Church by thousands of Catholic school teachers, religious and lay. They quoted Gravissimum Educationis to emphasize that teachers give "witness to Christ, the unique Teacher, by their lives as well as by their teaching" (National Conference of Catholic Bishops,

1967, p. 4).

Religious men and women were praised for continuing to provide witness to Gospel values, particularly in regard to the concept of community. At the same time, lay teachers will have to play a larger role than in the past, not merely as a stopgap measure, but as "full partners in the Catholic educational enterprise" (National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1973, pp. 39-40). Their increased participation in planning and decision making was welcomed, as was their continued emergence in leadership roles.

While the responsibility of providing a distinctive Christian education belongs primarily to parents, teachers safeguard and develop "the distinctive mission of the Catholic school, particularly with regard to the Christian atmosphere which should characterize its life and teaching." The continuing formation of teachers must take place through some form of suitable pastoral provision, in order to "animate them as witnesses of Christ in the classroom" and to tackle the problems of their particular apostolate (Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977, pp. 22-23).

Teacher make a great act of faith in the necessity and influence of this apostolate by committing themselves to work in accord with the aims of a Catholic school. "Only one who has this conviction and accepts Christ's message, who has a love for and understands today's young people, who



appreciates what people's real problems and difficulties are, will be led to contribute with courage and even audacity to the progress of this apostolate in building up a Catholic school" (Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977, p. 25).

Catholic bishops expect teachers to accept and to live the Christian message and to strive to instill a Christian spirit in their students. Responsibility for stressing the importance of religion and for helping to foster community among themselves and the students rests with the principal and faculty. The entire school community should be involved in the development of the school's goals, philosophy and programs (National Conference of Catholic bishops, 1979, p. 143).

The Catholic educator "must be committed to the task of forming men and women who will make the 'civilization of love' a reality" (Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1982, p. 13).

### Christian Leadership

According to St. Paul, administration is one of the gifts given to the Christian community. The pattern for any valid leadership in the Church was set by Jesus, who came into this world to serve. "Because of this service, He was made Lord. The ground of his leadership was his emptying Himself in obedience to the Father." Leadership is as much a

function of the community as of its leader, since it varies in its expectations and forms as communities take on different goals (Bishops' Committee on Priestly Life and Ministry, 1977, p. 31).

A church leader must be willing to enter into the lives of others, to understand their wants, sense their loneliness, share their hopes, feel their fears, be aware of their loves, and know their oppressions. Risk is involved, since the leader is called to leave the comfort of established patterns to enter into the life of his neighbor (Bishops' Committee on Priestly Life and Ministry, 1977).

"To lead means to exercise a decisive influence on the thought and actions of others," the bishops wrote in 1977.

It is influence which no longer flows automatically from the office or position. Rather, a leader in our day appeals to his own personal experience which, presented as a model, becomes normative to the extent that it helps others understand their own experience. The leader does not impose norms beyond experience, but uses his own experience as a principle of discernment for the service of others. . . . The truly effective leader in our midst is one who has a zest for life, who can inspire others, who can stir their minds and hearts, who can dream, and who can encourage people to believe in themselves. (Bishops' Committee on Priestly Life and Ministry, 1977, pp. 31-32)

Leadership in a Catholic ministry requires dedication. It is not easily accomplished, but involves much sacrifice. The example and help of Jesus inspires the Christian leader to carry out the tasks required.

#### The Catholic School Administrator

Various Church documents, particularly Sharing the Light of Faith, the National Catechetical Directory issued by the Catholic bishops (National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1979), outline the responsibilities of school administrators toward religious education.

The principal of the Catholic school plays a critical role in realizing the goals of Catholic education. (National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1979). Administration is a ministry which can and in some cases should be shared with competent laity (Bishops Committee on Priestly Life and Ministry, 1977, p. 49).

1. The principal is responsible for recruiting faculty who support the religious goals of the school (United States Catholic Conference, 1977; National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1979). This aspect of leadership is, in a general way, not unique to the Catholic school. Finn compared assembling a good teaching staff to "organizing a symphony orchestra: every part must blend with every other. A single lapse can damage the educational ethos of a school, just as it can ruin the tone of an orchestra" (1984, p. 522).

However, the Catholic school possesses religious goals which differ from the goals of the public school. Thus, the thrust of the leadership of Catholic school principals must vary from those of public school administrators.

2. The Catholic principal must provide ongoing opportunities for catechesis (knowledge and appreciation of the truths of the Catholic faith) to faculty members (National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1979). One of the major problems facing Catholic schools are teachers with limited religious backgrounds.

They come to Catholic schools with a variety of teacher preparation backgrounds, motivations, and perspectives. Usually this formation is achieved at secular universities where the prospective teacher is exposed either to a theological pluralism or receives no special training at all in this field. This is in stark contrast to those who previously were formed in a specifically Catholic environment and emerged certain and secure in their understanding of Catholic tradition and practice. (United States Catholic Conference, 1980, p. 6)

In addition, "rapid, radical changes in contemporary society" demand "well planned, continuing efforts to assimilate new data, new insights, new modes of thinking and acting" into a teacher's perspective (National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1973, p. 12).

To some, such as Fanelli, this need for catechesis presents the greatest challenge to Catholic schools today because "if Catholic schools are to be fully Catholic, if they are to achieve their goals, it will be because they have teachers who are thoroughly Catholic in mind and spirit--men and women of informed faith, adults who are spiritually mature, and fully grounded in the Catholic philosophy of education" (1981, p. 82).

3. Sharing the Light of Faith instructed Catholic school principals to work with faculty to see that the curriculum contained the four-fold dimensions of Catholic education--message, community, worship, and service (National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1979, p. 131). Without those elements it would be difficult to consider a school Catholic. The curriculum includes many aspects of the school such as campus ministry, classroom instruction, and liturgical practices.

4. The principal is to foster a community of faith among students and faculty (National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1979). As Reichert (1974) indicated, the concept of community of faith implies that all members consciously accept Jesus as Lord and believe in His Good News that the Father has established a new and eternal covenant with humanity through Jesus. From mutual faith flows a shared vision which in turn leads to a common mission. The task of the principal is to build and strengthen the interactions

and cooperation needed to live out this common faith and to fulfill the mission it demands.

Finn (1984) saw that the goal of building community is a necessary element of leadership in any school. In his view, a public school community is the secular counterpart of a religious community. "Members of the school community share a belief system, a value system, a consensual rather than hierarchical governance system, and a set of common goals that blur the boundaries between their private and organizational lives" (p. 520). If a public school is expected to have such a community, then the Catholic school as a religious community must excel in the promotion of these elements to be effective.

5. The Catholic principal is expected to plan and implement programs for a total, integrated approach to catechesis in collaboration with parish, area, and diocesan personnel (National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1979). Too often the school is seen as an independent entity rather than as part of a larger community of faith. As part of a parish or diocese, a school must coordinate its catechetical efforts with other units in order properly to fulfill its place in the total scheme of religious education.

6. Lastly, the principal is charged with evaluation of the programs within the school and in relationship to larger religious and secular communities (National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1979). Evaluation should always be an

integral part of any program. Without it, there can be no sense of accomplishment of the goals established at the beginning of the process. Principals should "exercise their gifts of educational leadership by promoting structures and cooperative procedures" which would promote accountability to the Catholic community (United States Catholic Conference, 1976, p. 8). In this way, evaluation becomes meaningful to all in the Catholic community.

To summarize, official Catholic documents indicate the importance of religious education to ensure a healthy spiritual life for its members. The gospel message must be proclaimed in ways which are understandable and acceptable to young people. Catholic schools are the best method for providing such education to the young. Teachers have a serious obligation to provide a living example of Christian living in addition to teaching doctrine. Administrators in Catholic schools have responsibilities to ensure that students receive sound teaching from a faculty imbued with a true Christian spirit.

### School Culture

#### Effective Schools

A great deal has been written in recent years about effective schools. Brookover and Lezotte define such schools as those "characterized by high evaluations of

students, high expectations, high norms of achievement and instruction" in which students "acquire a sense of control over their environment and overcome the feelings of futility which . . . characterize the students in many schools" (1979, p. 243).

Common characteristics of effective schools, according to D'Amico (1982), Edmonds (1979), and Purkey & Smith (1982), are: (a) high staff expectations and morale; (b) a considerable degree of control by the staff over instructional training decisions in the school; (c) strong administrative leadership; (d) clear goals for the school; and (e) a sense of order in the school. Schools with positive climates "are places where people respect, trust and help each other; and where the school projects a 'feeling' that fosters both caring and learning. In the best of these schools, people exhibit a strong sense of pride, ownership, and personal productivity that comes from helping to make the school a better place" (Keefe et al., 1985, p. 70).

Muro (1985) cynically pointed out that the public perception of the effectiveness of a school is more important than actuality. Since much of the routine, every day activity of a school is not understood by the public, school administrators must symbolically communicate the kinds of messages the school wants to send forth. The parts of the school program which are vague and unclear can be



communicated through myths, rituals, and ceremonies.

### Problems With Effective School Studies

Some analysts have certain problems with effective schools studies. There has been no systematic sampling of different types of schools or longitudinal studies. The implicit assumption seems to be that a school can simply adopt a set of key features and become effective (Purkey and Smith, 1982). D'Amico has suggested that each school's effectiveness "seems to represent an intrinsic, perhaps idiosyncratic, phenomenon that, in turn, is probably the result of intricate, perhaps idiosyncratic, processes" (1982, p. 62).

The sole criterion for measuring school effectiveness in most studies has been student academic achievement. Some researchers have felt that it is important to use a broader set of cultural criteria to determine the effectiveness of a school, such as organizational, social and emotional objectives (Bryk et al., 1984) or attitudes, values, and beliefs (Rossman, 1985). Purkey & Smith stated that the school's culture, "a distinct climate composed of attitudes, behaviors, organizational structure, and so on," is what determines a school's effectiveness (1982, p. 67-68).

In a similar fashion, Ascher (1982) pointed out that beyond the production of academic achievement, secondary schools are expected to socialize students, "to give them social values, morality, and norms; to work with their

developmental potential in leading students away from an egocentric view of the world and in teaching them the capacity to differentiate and integrate a wide variety of experiences and to impart vocational proficiencies and values, including discipline, perseverance, punctuality, and pride in work" (p. 1).

According to Firestone and Herriott (1982), there are significant differences between elementary and secondary schools. Elementary schools have a greater shared sense of purpose with a greater emphasis on basic skills instruction. Secondary schools, however, being larger and departmentalized, isolate teachers from administrators and each other. The high school is loosely coupled, to use Weick's (1982) phrase. The elements of a tightly coupled system are: rules, agreement on what the rules are, a system of inspection to ensure compliance with the rules, and feedback to improve compliance. Weick feels that either consensus on policies and procedures or frequent inspections is typically missing in high schools.

Murphy and Hallinger (1985) argued, however, that the suggested differences between elementary and secondary schools may be more apparent than real. Purkey and Smith (1982) believe that a cultural approach to school improvement has the advantage of being equally applicable to both levels since such an approach is neither grade level or curriculum specific.

### Studies of School Cultures

Studies of school culture began with the research of Michael Rutter and his colleagues (1979) presented in Fifteen Thousand Hours, a longitudinal study of 2700 pupils in 12 different high schools in South London. Some schools were much more effective in achieving successful outcomes in social and cognitive terms than others, even though they had types of students similar to those in less successful schools. Their conclusion was that the school climate was instrumental in producing real effects on student success. With a solid core of able students around which a good climate or ethos could be formed, the school could then absorb many academically poor and difficult students while achieving successful outcomes in social and cognitive terms. In discussing the findings of this study, Grant compared the school climate to a tide which "lifts the success and standards of behavior of all students within a school, although it does not reduce the variations among pupils in the same school" (1982, p. 136).

According to Rossman (1985), Rutter's work suggests a way to synthesize the findings of effective school studies about distinct practices and the broader cultural values involved.

[Rutter] found that none of the specific practices identified in effective schools contributed to student achievement so much as the whole set combined. The

specific practices themselves were not as important as the way they came together to form a school ethos or culture that coalesced practices, beliefs, values and norms into a caring community that fostered positive development and growth in the adolescents who passed through the school's doors (pp. 4-5).

### Elements of School Culture

Grant defined ethos or culture as what people in a community share to make them a community rather than just a group of disparate individuals. It is "the configuration of attitudes, values, and beliefs that members of the community share" (1985, p. 133).

Studies dealing specifically with school cultures are few in number. Those which have considered the topic have outlined certain elements which seem to be characteristic of schools with strong positive cultures. These are indicated in Table 1 which gives cultural elements from four different researchers. Such characteristics, according to Rossman (1985), can be generally divided into two categories: (a) how individuals define their work, and (b) how people in the organization relate to other people.

### How Individuals Define Their Work

The following elements can be placed in the category of how individuals define their work:

Consensus on clear goals. Schools with strong positive

Table 1

Elements of School Culture

Grant (1985)	Saphier & King (1985)	Anderson 1982)	Lightfoot (1983)
1. Leader stressing a character ideal	1. Collegiality	1. Teacher commitment	1. Strong leader
2. Stress on intellectual and moral virtues	2. Experimentation	2. Peer norms	2. Staged quality of goodness
3. References to the spirit of the place	3. Traditions	3. Cooperative emphasis	3. Consciousness of imperfection
4. High expectations	4. High expectations	4. Expectations	4. High expectations
5. Action as well as word	5. Honest open communication	5. Emphasis on academics	5. Clear rules
6. Kinds of judgments	6. Tangible support	6. Reward and praise	6. Autonomy of teachers
7. Relationship of trust	7. Trust and confidence	7. Consistency	
	8. Reaching out to the knowledge base	8. Consensus	
	9. Involvement in decision-making	9. Clear goals	
	10. Caring, celebration, humor		
	11. Appreciation, recognition		
	12. Protection of what's important		

cultures have goals which are widely accepted by the members of the school community. Much of the effort of the school community is spent "in communicating the ideals for which the school stands and in encouraging a dialogue with the public about these ideas" (Grant, 1985, p. 133). Rutter et al. (1979) indicated that there is a high degree of correlation between high achievement and agreement on curriculum and discipline by teachers and administrators. The clearly identified mission of the school is shared by all associated with the school (California State Department of Education, 1985). Anderson (1982) pointed out, however, that this consensus must be shared by students lest their peer group culture reject the school culture.

A specialness or exceptionality is sensed about a good school. The mission, the distinctiveness of the school, and the sense of purpose which permeate the school day are felt by those connected with the school (Muckerman, 1981).

Traditions. References to the spirit of the place are frequently made in schools with strong positive cultures. Students recognize that the school has made a strong impact on them (Grant, 1982b). Teachers and students alike look forward to recurrent events within the life of the school. Teachers and administrators carefully protect what was important in the school (Saphier & King, 1985).

Standards and Values. The values of the school are known to all within the school. Members of the school

community are able to articulate the values of the school (California State Department of Education, 1985). Teachers and administrators are not satisfied with the status quo but are very conscious of the unevenness and weaknesses of their schools (Lightfoot, 1983; Strommen, 1980). There is a concern for rigorous academic education; however, qualities such as endurance, resilience, responsibility, resourcefulness, and social concerns are also desired. Much of the effort of the school is spent in "communicating the ideals for which the school stands and in encouraging a dialogue with the public about these ideals" (Grant, 1985, p. 133).

Teachers and students see intellectual and moral virtues as inseparable. "There is a deeply embedded belief that education is inseparable from a concept of what constitutes a good life and a good community" (Grant, 1985, p. 133).

Good schools have what Lightfoot (1983) called a "staged quality of goodness." Standards are established and students strive to reach them. For instance, in one school the art of criticism, the skills of analysis, and the aesthetics of writing were stressed; in another school steady attendance rates, fewer disciplinary problems, a decline in acts of vandalism to property, and more jobs filled after graduation were set up as standards.

Values determine the areas which will receive the most

attention. They help people decide on what to work and with what vigor. Values establish what the outside world should expect of a school (Johnston, 1987).

Community. A sense of community is highlighted in schools with strong cultures. Cohen (1983) emphasized that a school community depends on more than shared instrumental goals. It requires the creation of a moral order entailing: (a) respect for authority, (b) genuine and pervasive caring about individuals, (c) respect for their feelings and attitudes, (d) mutual trust, and (e) the consistent enforcement of norms which define and delimit acceptable behavior.

Firestone and Wilson (1984) indicated that two characteristics of schools make it difficult to form strong school communities. First,

schools have basic purposes that are ambiguous and poorly specified. They also suffer from an overload of purposes that are difficult to prioritize so it is difficult to develop a culture with strong beliefs about what should be accomplished in schools. Secondly, teachers are isolated, not only from administrators, but also from each other. They get most of their work satisfaction from students rather than peers" (p. 6).

A strong sense of community, however, does exist in schools with strong positive cultures. Students show a



sense of belonging as reflected by the conversations they initiate with teachers and administrators about broad institutional issues. "They yearn to belong to something that will take hold of them and demand their loyalty and affiliation" (Lightfoot, 1983, p. 349).

Teacher commitment. Community implies a sense of commitment to the values of the group, "the willingness of participants to give energy and loyalty to an organization, to be effectively attached to its goals and values and thereby to the organization for its own sake" (Pettigrew, 1979, p. 577). Commitment includes "a willingness to keep working in the school (continuance commitment), emotional bonds to the school (cohesion commitment), and a willingness to follow the rules and norms governing behavior (control commitment)" (Firestone & Wilson, 1984, p. 9).

Commitment by an new member to the organization requires that that person be socialized into that group. According to Augenstein (1986), key components of socialization involve significant others, identity, and internalization. Significant others define and interpret the organization to the newcomer. One "learns the ropes." Identity is gained as a person is recognized as holding a particular role and as having the necessary knowledge and ability for that role. Internalization means that a person makes their own the roles and attitudes of the significant others.

However, once individuals become socialized and commit themselves to the organization, the culture of that group will persist by being continually recreated "through the interactions of organization members, their shared interpretations, and the significance they attach to what occurs" (Jelinek et al., 1983, p. 336).

Teacher commitment to improve students' academic performance has been seen as a significant factor in school climate (Anderson, 1982). Teachers feel responsible for shaping and maintaining the ethos and for seeing that it makes a difference in the lives of those in the school. They are reluctant to expel or give up on a difficult student because they believe that the school community can "save" students (Grant, 1985). There is a concern for the weakest members of the school and those who are most vulnerable (Lightfoot, 1983).

High Expectations. Rutter et al. (1979) found greater achievement in schools where teachers clearly indicated their expectations for students. There was a reluctance to accept excuses and an expectation that students would get down to work (Grant, 1985). Pressure was also put on teachers to achieve higher performance (Saphier & King, 1985). The high achieving school is one in which the staff manifests attitudes of confidence that students will be able to succeed (Anderson, 1982). Expectations are not only of higher academic achievement, but also of improved student

behavior (California State Department of Education, 1985).

High expectations are an important aspect of culture even though there is no definite evidence that high expectations are responsible for higher achievement (Anderson, 1982). In some schools, however, there are some indications that deals have been struck between teachers and students, trading off lower expectations for docile behavior (Sizer, 1984). "Order has become the ultimate goal with academic learning as the trade-off" (Rossman, 1985, p. 24).

Consistency. Schools with strong positive cultures emphasize schoolwide rules of behavior and standards of conduct. Excuses are not accepted for missed homework or for sloppiness (Grant, 1985). "Good schools are like good families: specific forms of punishment matter less than that the parents--or teachers--are generally fair and consistent about the standards they expect and the penalties for transgressing them" (Grant, 1982b, p. 137).

Types of judgments and evaluations. The faculties in schools with strong positive cultures spent a great deal of time discussing individual students. Teachers pay equal attention to the average student and the exceptional ones. "If one's aim is to save a soul or imprint a character ideal, then every soul is equally worth saving and each imprint deserved close inspection" (Grant, 1985, p. 136).

#### How People Relate to One Another

The ways that people relate to others in the

institution are also important aspects of a school culture. A number of characteristics relating to human relationships are typical of schools with strong positive cultures.

Collegiality and Cooperation. The professional staff help one another in good schools. Teachers are not afraid to ask for assistance from others. They are willing to learn from one another. "We resist the notion that teaching is our 'second most private activity'" (Saphier & King, 1985, p. 68).

Collegiality is the sharing of work-related issues among professional staff. It implies joint decision making about the work to be done and shared responsibility for its outcomes (Rossman, 1985). In strong schools, teachers see themselves as members of a team rather than as individuals. Indicators of collegiality include frequent interactions about instruction among teachers, mutual observation and critique among teachers, shared responsibility for planning instructional activities, and joint preparation for teaching.

Collegiality implies that all are involved in decision making. Input from teachers is taken seriously (Saphier & King, 1985). The circles of power broaden out through encouragement of collective authority, group decision making, and the dispersion of power and responsibility. However, the decisionmaking system becomes perhaps less efficient and less clearly defined in such schools, since

the authority structure becomes less visible as a result of increased shared decisionmaking (Lightfoot, 1983).

Among students, an emphasis on group progress rather than individual competition provides a significant contribution to the school climate. An emphasis on students helping one another and outsiders becomes a significant factor in building character. Encouragement of cooperative behaviors enhances the environmental conditions for learning (Anderson, 1982).

Trust Relationship. Schools with strong positive cultures treat teachers as "the critical educational authorities; the ones who will guide the learning, growth, and development of students most closely" (Lightfoot, 1983, p. 333). The school culture forms the ground on which all stand in a relationship of trust. "[Teachers] must be able to evoke commitments and to guide others to a fuller realization of the valued goods of the community" (Grant, 1985, p. 138).

Schools improve by allowing teachers to experiment with new ideas and techniques (Saphier & King, 1985). Schools with strong cultures encourage the critical self-renewal process in the development of a deeper culture. Teachers experiment because "a climate of innovation and experimentation allows faculty members the professional freedom within the culture to fulfill the school's mission with greater accomplishments. The teachers feel this sense

of efficacy, and they believe in their own ability to attain high levels of student learning" (California State Department of Education, 1985, p. 29).

Administrators provide tangible support to teachers to help them improve their instruction. The professional development of staff becomes a high priority in such schools. "People believe the professional knowledge and skills of teachers are so important to good schooling that developing human resources is a high and continued commitment" (Saphier & King, 1985, p. 68).

Appreciation and Recognition. Rewards and praise of both students and teachers become important means of enhancing the school culture. Anderson (1982) indicated that student achievement and character development improved as a result of increased recognition. Likewise, staff morale improved when appreciation was shown for their increased efforts. The nurturing of teachers leads to greater encouragement for students. "Each school interprets teacher rewards differently, but all search for a balance between the expression of teacher autonomy, initiative, and adulthood on the one hand, and the requirements of conformity, discipline, and commitments to school life on the other" (Lightfoot, 1983, p. 341).

Modeling. In good schools, the culture is reflected as much by what people do as by what they say. Teachers and administrators convey their expectations by their behavior.

In schools in which teachers were punctual, started classes on time, and taught a full period, students achieved more and exhibited better behavior (Rutter et al., 1979).

Gemeinschaft. Muckerman (1981) approached the question of the essential character of a school in terms of the theory of Gemeinschaft, the assumption that unity is a special force which keeps people together as members of a close-knit community. Elements of that unity are commitment (dedication, involvement), community (social cohesion), consensus (goal agreement), and exceptionality (unique character, special mission). Schools with a high degree of Gemeinschaft enjoy the characteristics Grant (1985) listed for schools with positive cultures.

#### Leadership of the Principal

Leadership is a key element in the development of strong school cultures. The vision and purposeful action of the principal define the culture and tone of a school. The principal is "the person who must inspire the commitment and energies of his faculty; the respect, if not the admiration of his students, and the trust of the parents" (Lightfoot, 1983, p. 323). One of the main tasks of the principal is to "create coherence between the organization's basic purposes and its culture" (Firestone and Wilson, 1984, p. 5).

The concept of leadership has been discussed

extensively in recent years by individuals such as Sheets (1972), Burns (1978), Bennis & Nanus (1985), and Arbuckle (1984). Although numerous studies of the leadership of the school principal exist, mostly in relation to educational excellence, (e.g., DeBevoise, 1984; Greenfield, 1982; McCleary, 1979; Persell et al., 1982), such school studies make little direct connection between educational leadership and school culture and therefore will not be considered in this review.

Sheets (1972) suggested that leadership has three components: ethos, pneuma, and logos. All three elements are always present, but the type of leadership demonstrated by a person depends on the dominant characteristic.

### Ethos

Ethos is that aspect of leadership dealing with values, particularly moral choices. "Where ethos is the dominant note, the group, goal, leader, and means are all linked together in a vital network of common values" (Sheets, 1972, pg. 56). Arbuckle (1984) agreed on the importance of values in leadership: "Leadership aims to motivate people freely to change by accepting new values, new attitudes. The new values and attitudes, together with the consequent alteration in behavior patterns, affect cultural changes" (p. 828).

Exemplary schools have central zones composed of beliefs and values that take on sacred or cultural



characteristics. These central zones give additional meaning to students and teachers since they become sources of identity. "The focus of leadership is on developing and nurturing these central zone patterns so that they provide a normative basis for action within the school" (Sergiovanni, 1984, p. 10). Leaders play key roles in building the constructed reality of cultural life in schools.

The leader must simultaneously focus on the present and the future in the view of Cunningham (1985). The increasing rate of change and diversity makes it necessary for the principal to be able to distinguish between long, medium, and short term needs. The leader must be able to focus the attention of followers on his or her vision of the future long enough to arrive at a shared sense of what it holds, before allowing them to retreat to the comfortable present. Finn (1984) echoed this sentiment when he indicated that a principal must work to build "teamwork" among the staff by paying attention to schoolwide goals. Selznick (1957) put it this way:

The art of the creative leader is the art of institution building, the reworking of human and technological materials to fashion an organism that embodies new and enduring values. . . . To institutionalize is to infuse with value beyond the technical requirements of the task at hand. . . . The institutional leader, then is primarily an expert in

the promotion and protection of values (1957, pp. 17, 28).

### Pneuma

Sheets (1972) described pneuma as the power transmitted by the leader and aroused in the group. It is characterized by inspiration, enthusiasm, energy, movement, and momentum. For many writers, pneuma is the essence of leadership. Greenleaf (1977) indicated that the sign of a good leader is the growth of followers:

Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become leaders? And what is the effect on the least privileged in society; will they benefit, or at least not be further deprived? (pp. 13-14)

Burns (1978) believed that transformational leadership occurred "when one or more persons engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality" (p. 20). In the same vein, Bennis and Nanus (1985) indicated that a leader "is one who commits people to action, who converts followers into leaders, and who may convert leaders into agents of change" (p. 3). For them, leadership is the wise use of the "basic energy needed to initiate and sustain action or, to put it in another way, the capacity to translate intention into reality and sustain it" (p. 17).

### Logos

Sheets (1972) proposed that logos is the aspect of leadership related to judgment. The power of the leader appears in the strength of his/her judgment in giving constant and consistent shape to the aspirations of the group. Individuals commit themselves to the organization partly because of "the language, the performance and observation of everyday tasks, the regular contact, and the group rituals" used by the leader to communicate his [or her] vision (Pettigrew, 1979, p. 579). Both the formal publication of statements of aims and informal tales about beloved teachers communicate ideals to members of the school community (Grant, 1985). For example, leaders in an Eskimo boarding school continually stressed schoolwide ideals of responsibility to others and the development of character and intellect to strengthen students' acceptance of such concepts (Kleinfeld, 1979). Control of icons (physical manifestations such as logos, mottoes, or trophies) and rituals (ceremonial activities) also provide the administrator with ways of shaping the school vision (Firestone & Wilson, 1985b; Owens, 1987).

### Leadership Forces

Five leadership forces are available to administrators as means of strengthening schoolwide goals: technical (using sound management techniques), human (using skills such as human relations and interpersonal competence), educational

(bringing professional knowledge to bear to improve education), symbolic (modeling important goals and behaviors), and cultural (defining, strengthening and articulating enduring values, beliefs and cultural strands which give a school its unique identity) (Sergiovanni, 1984, 1987). Culture building occurs through the way effective leaders use their educational, human and technical skills in applying these leadership forces to daily events or regular practices. To strengthen various norms of school culture (see Table 1), "depends equally on teachers' will and commitment since good leadership alone cannot make them strong; but without such leadership, culture cannot begin to grow or be expected to endure" (Saphier & King, 1985, pp. 67-68).

Since most high school principals are male, Lightfoot (1983) evoked three masculine images of typical school leadership styles: the principal as military leader, as coach, and as father figure. She argued that an infusion of traditionally female qualities transformed these caricatures and redefined leadership. Her redefinition included "softer images that are based on nurturance given and received by the leader; based on relationships and affiliations as central dimensions of the exercise of power; and based on a subtle integration of personal qualities traditionally attached to male and female images" (p. 333).

To summarize, the principal is an extremely important

figure in the development of a school culture. The leadership provided by the administrator turns a vision of the school into reality by kindling the spark of enthusiasm in followers. "If the leadership of a school is weak, if its teachers work in virtual isolation from one another, if there is fundamental disagreement among staff members over educational goals and expectations, and if teachers and students tumble over each other dashing for the door at 2:45 p. m. every day, then that school is not going to become significantly more effective merely because the school board dictates what should be taught at each grade level" (Finn, 1984, p. 520). Leadership in a school requires that the principal have a vision of a better school, the ability to enthuse faculty and students to seek that vision, and the judgment to direct members of the school community in ways which will lead to the fulfillment of the vision.

#### Catholic School Culture

Studies of Catholic schools reveal certain characteristics which distinguish them from other schools. Even though perceived as a monolithic system by outsiders (Wolsonovich, 1981), Catholic schools, like other private schools,

tend to be different, both among themselves and as compared with public schools, because they start with their own goals and purposes and carry them out by

relying on their own traditions, best thinking, resources, staff, and boards of directors. (Smith, 1985, p. 38)

Pilarczyk (1982) described a Catholic school as a community of persons gathered for the purpose of learning secular and religious matters, which learning is directed toward a deeper acceptance of holiness from God, all in affiliation with the sacraments, the doctrines, and structures of the Catholic church (p. 19).

Despite the differences between schools, common elements identified as typical of Catholic secondary schools fall into four major categories: values, programs, people, and climate (Nunes, 1980; Reck, 1979; Yeager et al., 1985). Each of these categories includes elements which bear upon the culture of the school.

### Values

The values of academic excellence, faith development and sense of community permeate the shared life of most Catholic high schools (Yeager et al., 1985). Schools have pedagogical structures which allow for the meaningful presentation of formal catechesis, thus assisting young people to develop academically, socially and religiously (Nunes 1980). Because their goals are clearer, Catholic schools are better able than public schools to "demonstrate a coherence between their processes and their goals and can

more clearly articulate a coherent educational perspective" (Cusick, 1983, p. 128). A higher degree of satisfaction occurs when religious values permeate the school curriculum and daily activities, where agreement has been reached on school philosophy, goals and policies, and where group support, responsibility, and mutual respect based on family unity exists (Muckerman, 1981).

Like other private schools educators, Catholic educators state that their goals are intellectual and moral excellence and the training of mind and of character. Frascadore (1982) commented on the purpose of Catholic schools in the 1980s and 1990s:

We must educate students not to fit the system, but to live the Gospel. The school may not proclaim only what is acceptable to its constituencies; it may not perpetuate oppressive structures, or styles of thinking that ignore the real issues. The duty of the Catholic school is rather to help students analyze global reality and their own life style in the light of God's word; to adopt a critical attitude toward consumerism, racism, sexism and all the other "isms" that threaten our world; and to take on the "mind of Christ" in working for the creation of a new person and a new humanity in justice and peace. (p. 11)

Catholic schools "are endlessly concerned about how well they are both teaching values and reflecting these values in

the life, rules, and processes" of the school (Smith, 1985, p. 39).

Since education is by its very nature a "voluntary, value-related process which cannot take place without a shared commitment to learning among the participants," the selection of the school by parents and choice of students by the school play important roles in the culture of the school (Elford, 1981, p. 9). When parents must pay tuition, they might be expected to affiliate more deliberately and with greater commitment. The act of choosing a school may sensitize parents to special school benefits which might otherwise go unnoticed (Erickson, 1979).

The edge that private schools appear to have in creating appropriate climates may result in part from their greater control over accepting new members. More important . . . is the fact that parents exercise greater choice over the selection of a school. The exercise of choice is likely to facilitate the exercise of legitimate authority by the school staff, and the self-selection process should facilitate the maintenance of shared educational values within the school. (Cohen, 1983, p. 40)

In contrast to public schools generally, private schools have cultural homogeneity (Forrest, 1985), and "come through as places where people band together in committed fashion to achieve special, agreed-upon goals" (Erickson, 1979, p.



16).

Since parents have chosen Catholic schools for their stated values, Christian values can be proposed in a straightforward and aboveboard manner (McDermott, 1985). School do not have to be neutral on critical issues nor to steer clear of moral topics. "Teachers in Catholic schools are privileged to be able to help students recognize what are true values in their lives, what are hidden values that are subtly propelling them into actions, and what values are not worthy of those who have been redeemed in Christ" (McDermott, 1985, p. 30). Christian concepts and values permeate the entire school through content (the curricula, instructional objectives, books), through methodology (the system of teaching methods, disciplinary methods, administrative styles and decision making processes), and most importantly, through intentionality (intentions and interpersonal relationships) (O'Neill, 1979).

[The Catholic school] is unabashedly value-oriented, grounded in a set of beliefs about the worth of each individual and a world view that proclaims the meaning of life encompasses more than self interest in a material world as we know it here and now. It is the orientation toward personal goodness that binds together the culture of the Catholic school and ultimately makes it work as a social institution. (Bryk et al., p. 102)

Counter-Culture. The contemporary theory in religious education indicates that Catholic high schools must attend to both the socialization and education of students (Malone, 1981). Schools do not simply train young people to know and fulfill ritual and churchly obligations (Hellwig, 1984), but "continuously explore ways to help them appreciate that God is the Source of all life and riches, and that all of us are to be responsible stewards" (McCarthy, 1981, p. 79). High schools shift the focus of religious education from a paradigm which is primarily instructional (characteristic of elementary schools) to one centered primarily on faith community (Malone, 1981). "The schools must attend to deliberate critical-reflective educative activity, they must become centers for reflection upon, interpretation of and intervention in both individual and corporate experiences, so that these experiences can be both understood and opened to individual and social conversion" (Malone, 1981, p. 2595).

Faith Community. The Catholic school is unique because it is a religious community within an academic community (McDermott, 1985). A faith community is a group "in which all the members consciously accept Jesus as Lord and believe in his Good News that the Father has established a new and eternal covenant with mankind through Jesus" (Reichert, 1974, p. 79). The high school is "both a symbolic and actual representation of a valued moral and intellectual

commitment" to communicate its message to young people (Bauch, 1986, p. 76).

Sometimes it is difficult for outsiders to discern what individuals in a Catholic school mean a community to be (Cusick, 1983). However, a strong sense of community appears in Catholic schools in the social interactions of students and teachers (Bauch, 1986), in the significant affirmation given to each individual students (Roach & Sullivan, 1984), and in the friendships which are developed (Pennock, 1980). McArdle (1985) suggested that community is not contingent upon student characteristics such as ability, socio-economic status, and locus of control, but rather upon factors which the school controls. A spirit of community within the school is one of the most important educational goals of Catholic school principals (Yeager et al., 1985).

In a model developed by Pearson (1980), Catholic schools demonstrate three characteristics of communities: (1) stability provided through the shared experience of Jesus Christ and the Trinity as the community seeks to carry out its mission; (2) a sense of story as truths are conveyed and perceptions deepened; and (3) sharing which provides mutual support, forgiveness, trust, given and receiving. Catholic high schools respond to basic adolescent developmental needs by providing community experiences of belonging and interaction with peers and adults. They aid cognitive development through instruction and guided

reflection which is oriented toward clarification and interpretation of life experiences in light of the Christian message. In addition they provide opportunities for active participation in adult roles of leadership and service (Malone, 1981).

Catholic schools are successful, Coleman and Hoffer (1987) argue, because they are regarded as agents of the religious community, not as agents of society or the state. As a result, they are better able to support and sustain the family in its task of raising children. They are able to maintain higher academic and disciplinary demands on students because they have the support of parents.

Identity Concerns. Catholic schools run the risk of losing their sense of identity because of financial problems, the loss of religious order sponsorship, and rapid turnover of faculty. Because parents and students equate the Catholic school with the Church particularly if the principal is a religious who had identified his or her life with service to the Church, an increase in lay participation in Catholic schools could lead to a weakening in the faith community. Many American private colleges have already ceased to describe the institution in terms of its founding religious denomination and have changed to more secular or nondenominational relationships (Newton, 1981a). It would be easy for high schools to lose their traditions and religious identity in a similar fashion, if their faculties do not

have a majority of religious men or women as living symbols of commitment to Catholic ideals (Muccigrosso, 1985).

Some educators have strongly denied that major Catholic universities have lost their Catholic identity (Hesburgh, 1986). Others feel that high schools have already "faced more sharply than the college and university what it means to be Catholic and worthwhile at a given time and in a given set of circumstances, precisely because their existence has been and is so precarious" (Cummins, 1986, p. 31). Lay teachers and administrators do have a very strong commitment to Catholic education (Cusack, 1983; Perhla, 1986). At least on the elementary level, parents and clergy feel that lay teachers and administrators do maintain the quality of Catholic education, although they do feel that one sister, brother, or priest on the faculty provides symbolic commitment (John, 1984). The concern about loss of identity appears to be a productive sign of institutional vitality "in which committed individuals seek to preserve what is of worth from the past while recognizing the need to reinterpret tradition in bringing meaning to contemporary problems" (Bryk et al., 1984, p. 102).

A tension noted in Catholic schools rises from different perceptions of the religious character of the school. Parents tend to hold a more traditional approach emphasizing the vertical dimension of faith, that is, religion primarily as "a relationship between themselves and

God that provides the strength to succeed, offers solace in times of trial, and sets limits on personal behavior" (Bryk et al., p. 11). Teachers are more likely to stress the horizontal aspect of religion, that is, a concern for social justice and caring for others. Many students appear to have a broad knowledge of Catholicism in both its dimensions, but have not yet internalized either aspect.

Academic Expectations. There is ample evidence of higher academic achievement in basic cognitive skills in Catholic schools than in public schools for students from comparable family backgrounds (Coleman et al., 1981; Hoffer et al., 1984, Coleman & Hoffer, 1987). Catholic students have greater aspirations to higher education, more than comparable students in public schools. Typical Catholic schools appear to be characterized by higher quality and equality than public schools, despite the greater financial support of public schools and their avowed purpose of equality of opportunity. The effectiveness of Catholic schools appears to stem from greater demands placed on students since those public schools which make the same demands as the average Catholic school produce comparable achievement (Hoffer et al., 1984).

It is difficult to assess the factors that promote student growth and learning. Some school effects can be attributed to student backgrounds and characteristics (Louguit, 1986). For instance, students attending Catholic

schools are more likely to be confident of college graduation because they come from families in which educational expectations were strong. However, background factors cannot fully explain either the disciplinary or instructional excellence which appears to be characteristic of Catholic secondary schools. Religious order ownership of the school, quality of discipline, and quality of teaching all play roles in Catholic school outcomes such as a greater amount of time spent on homework and higher academic test performance (Greeley, 1982). The importance of academic achievement is evident in course offerings and requirements of Catholic high schools. Seriousness about academic work is a widely-shared value. Teachers in Catholic high schools tend to accompany their high expectations with willingness to give individual attention (Yeager et al., 1985).

Catholic high school educators assist poor and minority students more than public schools do. Internally, less racial and minority segregation exists in Catholic schools (Hoffer et al., 1984). The least advantaged students (those minority students whose parents did not attend college and who were not qualified for entrance into college) benefit most from the greater academic demands, since the lack of structure, demands, and expectations found in many public schools are especially detrimental (Hoffer et al., 1984). Low income Catholic high schools are nearly equivalent to other Catholic high schools on four school climate

dimensions: faith community, morale, academic emphasis, and discipline. On nine out of ten outcome measures, low income students appear to gain as much as non-poor students. Catholic high schools provide low income students the opportunity to learn in a positive climate (Benson et al., 1986).

Some schools with strong academic reputations occasionally experience a conflict between the academic expectations of students and parents and the religious expectations of teachers and administrators. By equating schooling with education (Nunes, 1980), some individuals begrudge the loss of classtime for religious activities such as retreats and apostolic involvement (Bryk et al., 1984).

### Programs

Curriculum. The religious curriculum is among the most obvious ways of manifesting the Catholic character of the school. The sequence of religious courses taught assumes that faith is a developmental process. Courses stress social justice, racial harmony (Bryk et al., 1984) and gospel values of peace, hope, love and forgiveness (Reck, 1979).

Religious Activities. Most schools provide a variety of religious services in the course of the school year, ranging from weekly Mass to pastoral counseling, shared prayer, scripture study, paraliturgies, and the sacrament of reconciliation. Such rituals capture the soul, spirit, and



mission of a school (McLaughlin, 1985). Many schools have a chapel in which the Eucharist is reserved to show its central place in the life of the Church (Pennock, 1980). Relatively recent additions to the religious activities in Catholic schools include retreats and apostolic service programs. Through these, Catholic schools not only attempt to provide instruction on the content of faith (doctrines and traditions), but also on the process of faith. (Yeager et al., 1985).

Christian Service. Community service is an integral part of nearly all Catholic high school programs. Not only are students involved in service projects, but schools make a serious attempt to make a lifelong difference in sensitizing students to injustice and in deepening their commitment to improvement of the welfare of others (Yeager et al., 1985).

### People

Students, parents and staff members perceive that Catholic schools have certain characteristics determined by the types of interactions between teachers and students. Teachers know their students by name and have substantial contact with them both in and out of the classroom (Yeager et al., 1985). Their concern centers on the type of persons their students become, not just on what they learn (Bauch, 1986). Teachers are hired not just to fill a slot on the teaching staff, but for the contributions they can make to

the entire school. Some become heroes or heroines to the school community because they personify the values espoused by the school (McLaughlin, 1985). Teachers see their work as a ministry. They value students both as learners in the classroom and in the larger school and civic communities (Yeager et al., 1985).

Most teachers teach in Catholic high schools because they seek the special kinds of religious and educational environments found in these schools. Most affirm the basic doctrinal tenets of the Catholic faith, have a compassion for people, believe that the mission of Catholic schools includes the promotion of religious formation, accept a personal responsibility to contribute to the religious formation of their students, and engage in some religious formation activities (Benson & Guerra, 1985; Carriedo, 1986). The experience, beliefs, and skills of teachers and students engaged in a continuous process of discovering and interpreting their world play a much larger role than any calculated adherence to official guidelines (Lehane, 1977).

Teachers in Catholic schools appear to have a common value system, even though lay and religious personnel place greater importance upon particular values (Waters, 1982). Lay teachers define their role in religious formation somewhat narrowly with emphasis placed on nurturing compassion and tolerance. Lay faculty differ considerably from religious faculty in their commitment and level of

activity in the institutional church (Benson & Guerra, 1985). Lay personnel value interdependence of people, respect for life, justice, family security, and a comfortable life more than religious personnel do. On the other hand, religious educators value personal relationships with the Lord, participation in the mission of Jesus, salvation, and forgiveness more than the laity (Waters, 1982). Both lay and religious teachers generally provide strong support on most indices of Catholic doctrine, moral values, and commitment to a specifically Catholic form of religious formation. A strong potential for constructive change exists in the Catholic high school since teachers are ready to find constructive ways to strengthen religious and value formation activities (Benson & Guerra, 1985).

Chaplains. Not all Catholic high schools have priests on their faculties. Greco (1983) saw the role of the priest-chaplain to be that of a witness to the faith, a teacher, a celebrant of liturgies, and a hospitaller, responsible for building up the Christian community. Without a priest chaplain the Catholic character of the school is substantially weakened (Bryk et al., 1984). Teachers, however, provide a strong supplement to the chaplain's role in the school, serving as role models for the personal behavior of students.

### Climate

Even though it is an elusive construct, climate is a

definable characteristic visible to all within a school (Benson & Guerra, 1986). Described as the atmosphere of a school, its character or ambience, it includes the dimensions of shared values, norms for behavior, control and freedom, community degree of structure, and morale (Yeager et al., 1985). Such dimensions are similar to the characteristics of schools with positive cultures as outlined by Grant (1985) and others.

Related to the climate of a Catholic school is its religious life, particularly in the aspect of faith community (Yeager et al., 1984). A significant relationship exists between student perceptions of the religious atmosphere and the total religiosity of both students and faculty (Bamonte, 1983). When students sense that importance is given to the religious goals of the school, the sense of community tends to be stronger (Fahy, 1980). Because of this, the concept of climate is not totally identical in public and Catholic schools (Benson et al., 1986).

Commitment. The commitment experienced by teachers, parents and students in Catholic schools is one of the classical outcomes of shared ordeal according to Erickson (1979).

Teachers, viewing the financial sacrifices of parents and the conscientiousness of students, redouble their efforts. Students, knowing that their parents are doing without things to send them to school, and

witnessing their teachers working extra hard for ridiculously low pay, feel obliged to apply themselves to their work. Parents, seeing that teachers do so much for so little, and observing that their children apply themselves, are reinforced in their commitment. (p. 16)

Norms for Behavior. There is strong evidence, according to Yeager et al. (1985), that in addition to establishing and communicating disciplinary rules, Catholic high schools tend to enforce them. Student discipline generally is a relatively minor problem. Catholic high schools generally maintain orderly environments with little student absenteeism, cutting of classes, vandalism, or verbal abuse of teachers. Cusick (1983) attributed this orderliness to a wariness on the part of students.

Decisions [of principals] were not wildly capricious, but they were sufficiently irregular as to make it difficult to pinpoint just what the rules were. The effect of such authority seemed to be that students were careful about what they did and said, more careful than were students in the public schools. (p. 127)

In McArdle's (1985) view, strong internal discipline brings with it a strong sense of community.

Parents and students felt that the Catholic schools are safer than the public schools, partly because of the principal's power to intervene directly and personally

anytime he/she wanted in any type of behavior problem. The possibility of whimsical exercise of authority did not seem, however, to bother parents (Cusick, 1983).

Structure. Catholic schools lean heavily toward structure. Such schools would be cold and unappealing because of clear and enforced rules, order, academic expectations and structure. Such is not the case. Shared perspectives about the religious and academic mission of the schools, their relatively small sizes, the purposeful effort to create community, the general homogeneity of student and staff religious backgrounds, the teachers' commitment to paying attention to individual student needs, and the self-selection by students all influence the increased sense of community in Catholic schools (Yeager et al., 1985).

Morale. Morale is high among faculties and students in Catholic high schools. A sense of community and morale are higher when the school gives more emphasis to the religious dimension and prominence to global issues such as ecology, justice, or awareness of minorities (Yeager et al., 1985). Morale is high "because control is combined with a caring community and the knowledge that one is receiving a good education" (Yeager et al., p. 79).

Outcomes. The effectiveness of Catholic schools in bonding young people to the Church (Mahony, 1986) is not solely a function of the religiousness of the family of the student or of the family which the graduate eventually

forms. Catholic high schools have their own statistically significant, independent effect. The "secret of the schools" is that they integrate young people more closely into the Catholic institutional community (Fee et al., 1980).

Although students do not demonstrate significant growth in faith commitment, church commitment or social compassion between 9th and 12th grades (Benson et al., 1985), "Catholic schools seem to be especially important at the decisive religious . . . and marital turning point that takes place at the end of the decade of the 20s" (Fee et al., 1980, p. 126). Religious behavior and attitudes as an adult can be predicted by attendance in a Catholic school (Greeley et al., 1976). Those who have had more than eight years of Catholic education are much more likely to return to the practice of their faith in early adulthood than those with lesser exposure to Catholic schooling (Fee et al., 1980).

Those who attend Catholic schools are more likely to support changes stemming from Vatican Council II than those who did not. Because Catholic schools develop strong moral leaders with positive adult attitudes toward the Church and society (Mahony, 1986), they are more important for the continued life of the Church than they were a decade ago. Their importance in training people who will eventually provide support for institutional rejuvenation and resurgence cannot be denied (Greeley et al., 1976).

In summary, Catholic secondary schools generally have strong values which are reinforced by academic and religious programs. As religious communities within academic settings, Catholic schools act as agencies of the Church. Students' religious experiences gained from a variety of religious services are supplemented by Christian service opportunities. Faculty members are generally attuned to their role as examples of adult Christian living. Catholic schools have climates characterized by commitment on the part of teachers, parents and students; explicit norms for behavior; a high degree of structure; excellent morale; and foreseeable religious outcomes.

#### Catholic Secondary School Leadership

A primary function of private schools is to draw together publics who share similar preferences. The primary role of leadership in such a setting is to

bring persons into communication about ways of inculcating and sustaining those values. The leaders of such schools are chosen because they exemplify those values; they are "the best of us," persons capable of symbolizing the tradition and drawing others into it.

(Grant, 1985, p. 144)

There are differences between public and private school administrators. Chief among these are a contractual relationship rather than constitutional relationship with



the clientele of the school; financial responsibilities related to tuition, fundraising and development rather than tax levies and bond issues; more direct budgeting, accounting and money management responsibilities; the need to competitively and aggressively market their schools; and possible responsibility to several overlapping layers of authority. In addition, principals of religious schools have an explicit spiritual mission which public school principals are forbidden to approach (Staff, 1987).

There has not been a comparable amount of research on the Catholic school principal to match that done on the public school principal (Greenfield, 1982). Only a few doctoral dissertations have dealt with the leadership of the Catholic principal (National Catholic Educational Association, 1975).

Most studies of Catholic school principals concentrated on areas similar to those studied in public school principals, and thus have not singled out religious leadership as an particular area of study. For instance, the study of the high school principal conducted by McCleary and Thomson (1979) for the National Association of Secondary School Principal compared private school principals with public school principals on the basis of school characteristics, the job, the principal's characteristics, and the principals' perceptions of educational tasks, issues and practices, and the future, but did not discuss any

differences on the basis of the nature of the school or religious leadership. Similarly, a study by Abramovitz and Stackhouse (1980) of private schools made general reference to the different perceptions of principals of religious schools but did not elaborate on any differences based on religious leadership.

Role Perceptions. Various studies of the role expectations of Catholic school principals have been done without any indication that religious leadership was involved. McIlmurray (1980), for instance, examined ideal role expectations for Catholic high school principals in the New York Archdiocese to conclude that no significant differences in perceptions of the principal's role existed on the part of either the principals themselves or the faculty members. In a like fashion, Fleming (1973) noted that differences in teacher perceptions of desired and perceived outputs were related to administrative behavior in Catholic schools. Ubokudom (1981) found significant differences between Catholic and public school secondary principals in self-perceived consideration behavior but not in initiating behavior.

Laria (1974) found that members of school communities perceived lay principals in the diocese of Brooklyn to have certain common characteristics but what individuals expected of lay principals was more closely related to the principals' personalities than to the type of the school.

He found that it was vital for lay principals to be involved in those activities which provide for the development of both religious and secular values which have been integral aspects of Catholic high schools.

Donovan (1982) reported that significant differences were found between the expectations of principals and staff and those of parents and students concerning participatory decision making. She found no differences in what was expected of lay and religious principals regarding the hiring and utilization of faculty or the financial responsibilities. In contrast, Hartson (1978) found that the religious or lay status of the teacher affected perceptions of leadership behavior. Lay teachers perceived principals as being more considerate and more task-oriented than religious teachers did. Hartson concluded that the perceptions which teachers have of their principal's leadership behavior do influence their morale and the extent to which they see their schools as meeting institutional objectives. Bamonte (1983) also found a significant relationship between the religious atmosphere of a Catholic high school and faculty perceptions of the leadership of the principal.

Hiring Practices. The hiring of the proper persons is the one of the most important aspects of the principal's job (Newton, 1979a, 1979b, 1979c, 1981b, 1983).

It is not enough to hire the best math teacher in the

country. That teacher must be imbued with a deep faith in God, know how to identify the needs of students, teach them how to "reach" by using the most effective content and methodology, and care about being a learner himself/herself. (Kielocker, 1978, p. 39)

The teachers hired by a principal have an important impact on the culture of the school. Care must be taken by the administrator to select persons who agree with the philosophy and goals of the school.

To summarize, Catholic high school culture is dependent on the prevalent values, programs, the people within the school, and the climate of the school. Typical predominant values are academic achievement, faith community, and Christian values. There is a high degree of cultural homogeneity brought about in part by the voluntary affiliation of parents and students. Programs include a religious curriculum and activities designed to deepen the faith life of students. Teachers are deeply committed to providing quality education and a religious environment. That climate arises from the shared commitment, strongly held norms of behavior, and well defined structure within the school community. The results are excellent teacher and student morale and lasting outcomes. Studies of Catholic school leadership have concentrated primarily on perceptions of the roles which the principal should fill.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### Introduction

An ethnographic study investigates and interprets an existing culture. It examines the environment which exists, the feelings and opinions of individuals, ongoing processes, evident effects and developing trends (Muckerman, 1981). One advantage ethnography enjoys is the ability to discover new dimensions of existing variables and to suggest modifications to existing models. Studies done by Angus (1984), Cusick (1973), Hansell (1982), and Kleinfeld (1979) provide insights into what actually transpires in schools, thus giving present researchers greater ability to accurately describe other school settings.

Methodologies characteristic of the naturalistic approach include participant and behavior observation, questionnaires, interviews, and evaluation of archival data. Goldberg (1984) pointed out that cultural analysis involves the discovery and delineation of patterns of meaning which shape and give expression to social forms. To Goldberg,

It is precisely the ephemerality of cultural "substance"--the difficulty of "putting one's finger on it"--that makes thorough ethnographical detail necessary. The only possible way of illuminating a world of meaning that makes sense of the diverse situations in which people find themselves is to carefully make a record of those situations and of what is said and done in regard to them. The elusive concept of culture can only be justified through "thick description," the term borrowed from Geertz to characterize the anthropologist's craft, and it is through this that behavioral reality takes on significance in terms of a theory emphasizing the importance of symbolic (meaningful) forms. (p. 159)

The role of the ethnographer, according to Bogdan and Biklen (1982), is "to share in the meanings that the cultural participants take for granted and then to depict the new understanding for the reader and for outsiders" (p. 36).

According to Lutz (1984), ethnography is "a holistic, thick description of the interactive processes involving the discovery of important and recurring conditions, and as they affect or produce certain results and outcomes in the society" (p. 52). Ethnography is not a case study narrowly focusing in on a single issue, nor is it a field survey which seeks previously specified data, or a brief encounter with a group. Ethnography is the "best research method to

study . . . important schooling phenomena" (p. 54).

An ethnographic study differs from a case study, according to Lutz, because it has a cross-cultural perspective. A single educational phenomenon, such as the religious culture of a Catholic high school, "is observed, described, and explained in more than one culture" (pp. 59-60). As a result, a metaculture can be described for a number of different individual cultures.

Ethnography is, however, more than just a thick description to Lutz. While it is useful in that sense, it is useless to help others explain or predict complex human behavior in organizations. Because qualitative research is based on data collected in the form of words or pictures rather than numbers, it is descriptive and is concerned with process rather than simply with outcomes or products. Theory which develops from this method emerges inductively, from many disparate bits of collected evidence which are interconnected (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982).

### The Research Design

This study describes behaviors and practices within selected Catholic secondary schools which are characteristic of effective religious cultures. The study also examines the role of the principal in promoting and developing these practices through the administrative structures, practices, and procedures within the school. This study of effective

behaviors and practices within Catholic high schools incorporates the research design and procedures characteristic of ethnographic/naturalistic inquiry. The researcher believes that qualitative data-gathering methods are appropriate to achieve the research objectives of this study.

This study was designed and executed within a two year period. A preliminary study was made in the spring of 1985 of a suitable geographical area in which to do the research. The research proposal was developed in the fall of 1985 and accepted in October, 1985. The schools were selected and the researcher obtained an agreement from each of the principals in the winter of 1985 to be part of this study. The researcher visited five of the six schools between February and May, 1986. The sixth school was visited in November, 1986. Data analysis began in the fall of 1986 and continued into 1987. The researcher wrote most of the document in the winter of 1986-87.

#### Selection of the Sample

A selection was made of Catholic high schools which appeared to demonstrate effectiveness in the development and promotion of a Catholic school culture. On the advice of the Executive Director of the Secondary Department of the National Catholic Educational Association, only schools in metropolitan areas on the West Coast were chosen. These



schools appeared to be more representative of Catholic high schools nationwide than were those in smaller outlying communities or in Rocky Mountain states, where there was less contact with the national Catholic educational community.

Consequently, only Catholic high schools in metropolitan areas in the dioceses of Los Angeles, Orange, San Francisco, San Jose, Oakland, Seattle, and Portland were considered for this study. Schools in the Northwest were included in the study to prevent any possibility of effects common only to California schools. The researcher drew up a list of possible schools from the schools listed in the 1985 volume of the National Catholic Directory. Catholic high schools in the San Diego metropolitan area were excluded from this study because of the great familiarity of the researcher with these schools and the ensuing possibility of researcher bias.

This list revealed that there were 102 schools in the four metropolitan areas of Los Angeles, San Francisco (including San Jose and Oakland), Portland, and Seattle. The schools in these areas are shown in Table 2.

Schools fell basically into two groups: diocesan and private. For purposes of this study, schools owned by a diocese but administered by a religious priest, brother, or sister, were grouped with private schools (those owned and administered by religious orders or congregations).

Table 2

**Catholic High Schools in Metropolitan Areas  
of the West Coast**

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Number and Type of School			
Principal	Coeducational	All-Boys	All-Girls
Diocesan Priest	8 Diocesan	1 Diocesan	1 Diocesan 1 Private
Religious Priest, Brother or Sister	2 Diocesan 9 Private 4 Parish	12 Diocesan 13 Private	8 Diocesan 21 Private 4 Parish
Layperson	7 Diocesan 2 Private	1 Diocesan 0 Private	2 Diocesan 6 Private

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Data as of September 1, 1985.

The reason for this classification is the assumption that such diocesan schools are administered in a manner similar to other private schools conducted by the same religious groups.

Schools conducted by parishes were not be considered in this study. Although such schools comprise approximately 20% of Catholic high schools nationwide, there were only eight such schools in the metropolitan areas on the west coast. Since they appeared to be atypical of Catholic high schools on the west coast, the researcher decided not to include them in this study.

The schools under the direct administration of a diocese fell into five categories: (a) co-educational schools with diocesan priest principals; (b) co-educational schools with a religious priest, sister, or brother as principal; (c) co-educational schools with a lay principal; (d) boys' schools with a religious priest or brother principal; and (e) girls' schools with a sister principal.

Private schools owned and administered by a religious order or congregation fell into four groups: (a) co-educational schools with a priest, sister, or brother principal; (b) boys' schools with a priest or brother principal; (c) girls' school with a sister principal; and (d) girls' schools with a lay principal.

A reputational analysis survey of diocesan superintendents of schools, Catholic high school principals,

and Catholic elementary principals in the four metropolitan areas was conducted by mail to identify schools viewed as having strong religious cultures. In addition, some principals identified their schools as having some of the characteristics associated with religious culture in the national portrait of Catholic high schools (Yeager et al., 1984). Other schools were considered or selected by the Council for American Private Education for recognition as exemplary schools (1984). Once a preliminary list of potential schools was formed, the researcher contacted the superintendents of schools in the various dioceses by telephone to verify that the schools selected possessed strong religious cultures.

Schools were chosen only if the principal had been in the school for at least three years. This ensured that there had been sufficient time for the school to be influenced by his/her leadership.

The six schools included in the study are representative of Catholic high schools using several criteria. There are two diocesan schools and four private schools. Three schools are co-educational and three have all male or female enrollments. Five of the schools have male principals; one has a female. One school has a diocesan priest as principal, three have religious principals, and two have lay principals.

One of the schools is small (150-250), three are medium

size (600-900), and two are large (1,100-1,500). Two schools are in the greater Los Angeles area, two in the greater San Francisco area (including Oakland and San Jose), one in Portland, and one in Seattle.

After selecting the schools, the researcher contacted the principals to obtain their agreement to carry out the research in each school. One principal refused to allow the research to take place, primarily because the school was in the process of doing a self-study prior to its Western Association of Schools and Colleges visitation and evaluation. As a result, the researcher selected an alternate school and the principal of that school agreed to the study.

Table 3 summarizes information on the schools selected. Fictitious names are given to the schools and individuals to protect their identities.

### Interview Data Collection

Data collected through individual interviews provided the major source of information for this study. A structured format governed all interviews with administrators, teachers, staff members, and students, although many questions were open-ended and allowed respondents the opportunity to answer in a variety of ways.

Table 3

**Schools Selected for This Study**

<b>School Name</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Principal</b>	<b>Size</b>	<b>Sex of students</b>
<b>Northside</b>	<b>Diocesan</b>	<b>Diocesan priest</b>	<b>1,500</b>	<b>Coeducational</b>
<b>St. Michael</b>	<b>Diocesan</b>	<b>Layman</b>	<b>700</b>	<b>Coeducational</b>
<b>Cardinal Gibbons</b>	<b>Private</b>	<b>Religious priest</b>	<b>900</b>	<b>Coeducational</b>
<b>Maryhaven</b>	<b>Private</b>	<b>Layman</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>All girls</b>
<b>Annunciation</b>	<b>Private</b>	<b>Sister</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>All girls</b>
<b>The Abbey School</b>	<b>Private</b>	<b>Religious priest</b>	<b>1,100</b>	<b>All boys</b>

In each school, the principal and chairperson of the religion or theology department were interviewed. The campus ministers in the five schools which had such a position were interviewed. In four schools, at least one student counselor was interviewed. In addition, four to eleven teachers and four to nine students were interviewed in each school. Selection of teachers and students was made either by the principal or by an administrator delegated by the principal. The researcher asked that in general teachers be selected who had been at the school for several years. Juniors and seniors were generally requested by the researcher on the assumption that they would be more familiar with the school culture because of their longer exposure to it.

For instance, at Northside Catholic, seven teachers and five students were selected by either the principal or campus minister to be interviewed. The teachers had been at the school from two to 21 years. They included the chairperson of the English department, the athletic director, two religion teachers, and teachers from the business, physical education, and English departments. The students, all seniors, included the student body president and activities commissioner, as well as three other students. Interviews were conducted in a conference room in the administration building.

### Interview Guides

The researcher developed the brief research questions of Chapter One into interview guides for administrators, teachers, and students based upon questionnaires and protocols used in other studies (Bryk et al 1984, Hater 1981c, Laria 1974, Newton 1979b, Yeager et al., 1984). These guides provided a framework for gathering the data. Copies of these guides are included in Appendices A through D.

The guides correlated with the research questions. Questions asked were open-ended. This provided respondents with the latitude of expanding on topics with a minimum of direct questioning or guidance. The aim of the interviews, although somewhat general, was to elicit responses that could be translated into evidence of the religious school culture.

In general, the administrators, teachers, and students answered the questions willingly and voluntarily gave a large amount of information. Possibly because the interviewer identified himself as a Catholic priest, all respondents were at ease and spoke freely about their schools.

Tape-recordings made with the permission of interviewees provided the interviewer with accurate records of data. Transcriptions of interview tapes provided easy access to the data.



### Unstructured Interviews

Lincoln and Guba (1985) indicate that it is proper to use unstructured interviews when the interviewer is not certain of which information he does not know and must therefore rely upon the respondent to tell him. Interviews for this study were not entirely unstructured since questions in the interview guide were formulated beforehand and respondents were expected to answer in terms of the researcher's framework. However, there were many opportunities for each respondent to provide additional information about their school over and above the questions of the interview guide.

### Key Informants

Key informants, according to LeCompte and Goetz (1984), are individuals who possess special knowledge, status, or communicative skills and who are willing to share that information with the researcher. Often they are chosen because they have access to observations denied the researcher. Such individuals in a Catholic school may be the principal, campus minister, and religion department chairperson.

In this study, the principal of each school was a key informant, being very willing to talk about the school. Generally, the campus minister and religion department chairperson also were key informants, except where they were

in their first year at the school. In each school, at least one teacher proved to be a key informant because of their willingness to speak freely about the religious culture of the school.

#### Other Data Collection

In addition to interviews conducted at the six schools, observations of the life of the school while the researcher was present on campus provided an insight into the interactions of students and faculty. The researcher gathered and examined printed materials such as statements of school philosophy, faculty handbooks, student handbooks, curriculum guides, newspapers, yearbooks, and recruiting materials for information related to the religious culture of each school.

In addition, the researcher observed the school setting when not conducting interviews. Informal conversations with students and faculty members helped to provide additional data about the religious culture of the school. The researcher participated in lunchtime meals with teachers in the dining area, talking informally with them.

#### Pilot Study

The researcher conducted a pilot study in a Catholic high school in the greater Los Angeles metropolitan area to

test several aspects of ethnographic methodology discussed earlier in this chapter. Several experts working in the area of school culture had suggested that an open ended approach to interviews would be a more effective means of data collection than formal protocols because of the lack of previous research in this area. One purpose for the pilot study was to test this suggestion.

The researcher spent three days at the pilot study school. The principal, a vice-principal, several campus ministers, seven teachers, and six students were interviewed in this time. Observations were made of school life primarily during student free time between classes and at lunch. The student handbook and other written documents were collected and examined.

The results of the pilot study revealed that formal protocols were not appropriate means of conducting the interviews for this study. Therefore, the researcher decided to use interview guides rather than formal protocols since basic research in the area of religious culture had not previously been conducted.

#### Analysis of Data

According to Miles and Huberman (1984), analysis of qualitative data consists of three concurrent flows of activity: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification.

Data reduction refers to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the raw data that appears in written-up field notes. This occurs continuously throughout the life of any qualitative oriented project. Data are sorted, discarded, and organized in such a way that conclusions can be drawn and verified.

Data display is the organized assembly of information that permits conclusion drawing and action taking. The most frequent form of display for qualitative data is the narrative text. Other forms used are matrices, graphs, networks, and charts. All are designed to assemble organized information in an immediately accessible compact form so that the analyst can see what is happening and either draw justified conclusions or move on to the next step analysis which the display suggests may be useful.

The third form of analysis is conclusion drawing and verification. The analyst must decide from the very beginning of data collection what things means, what regularities and patterns exist, what explanations and possible configurations can be drawn, and what causal flows and propositions exist. Final conclusions may not appear until data collection is completed, but often they have been prefigured from the beginning. Conclusions also must be verified as analysis proceeds. The meanings emerging from the data must be tested for their plausibility and validity.

validity.

Qualitative data analysis thus is a continuous iterative process. The three areas of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification are used to analyze the qualitative data gathered in this research.

#### The Problem of Bias

Charges are often made against qualitative research that it allows the prejudices and attitudes of the researcher to bias the data. The methods that the qualitative researcher uses, however, can help transcend personal biases. As Bogdan and Biklen (1982) indicated, the researcher is immersed in piles of data. Any conclusions which the researcher draws must be able to stand up to the evidence of such data.

In interviewing, there is always the temptation to disregard some of the responses and select only that which fit into a preconceived idea of what the answer should be. However, since the entire interviews were tape recorded, it became less likely that any parts would be omitted. The researcher spent an appreciable amount of time, care, and energy in logically interpreting and applying interview data to the conclusions reached.

The researcher received the same degree of interest, respect, and courtesy in each of the schools visited. The degree of willingness of participants, therefore, did not

bias this report. Since participants generally knew the purpose of the interviews only in a general way, they could not provide answers in a fashion which they thought would please the interviewer.

One of the best methods of preventing bias is through corroboration of themes and ideas by several respondents. Repetition by several individuals showed that the idea expressed was a valid expression of an aspect of the school culture.

The researcher was an outsider but had to decipher the content of the culture of each school from information received from insiders. To validate statements made, a draft of the chapter on each school was sent to one person interviewed to ensure that an accurate picture of the school had been presented. Feedback obtained from three of the schools enabled the researcher to revise factual errors and interpretations where necessary.

### Summary

This study is descriptive. It explores, describes, and interprets existing reality. Six Catholic high schools in metropolitan areas on the west coast were investigated because each had a reputation for having an outstanding religious culture. They are representative of the major groupings of western Catholic high schools in metropolitan areas.

The researcher developed a series of research questions to investigate the characteristics of strong religious school cultures. Personal interviews conducted in the schools with administrators, teachers, staff members, and students provided answers to the research questions. Direct observation of school life provided additional data. Corroboration of aspects of school cultures garnered from interviews came from documents.

The researcher looked for consistency in the data gathered and for trends and evidence of religious culture.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### NORTHSIDE CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

#### Introduction

Situated on the northern rim of a large suburban area, Northside Catholic High School occupies a sprawling array of low-lying buildings. Founded as a girls' high school in 1947, it became a co-institutional school in 1956. Unique to American Catholic secondary education, co-institutional schools consisted of two single-sex schools which shared expensive facilities such as the library and laboratories but with separate administrations and faculties.

In 1970 the school changed as the school became a co-educational school under the principalship of a diocesan priest. From the late 1960s the school underwent rapid growth, doubling in size in twenty years. In this regard it resembled the area in which it is located. Despite the change in the number of students, the physical plant is large enough to handle the current student body of 1,500. Reflecting its origins as a co-institutional school, the campus consists of two wings of classrooms separated by a



central building containing the chapel and library. At the time of the visit for this study, renovation on the chapel was in process, as a result of a gift of the class of 1985.

For the 1985-86 school year, it cost \$1,240, with an \$80 discount for Catholics, to send a student to Northside. This amount is low compared with most private schools in California, but typical of diocesan schools in the area. Even though the diocese does not offer any form of tuition assistance, \$50,000 is given annually by Northside Catholic to students in the form of no-interest loans which "they can pay back whenever they're able to." The principal uses donations as outright grants to needy individuals, working very closely with poorer feeder parishes to ensure that donated funds reach students who are in most need of the assistance.

#### The Student Body

With a slight predominance of girls, the student body is 35% Hispanic with smaller numbers of Asian and Black students. Between ten and fifteen percent of the students are non-Catholic. The uniform for girls consists of a short plaid skirt or corduroy pants. Boys' attire is governed by a dress code which calls for collared shirts with no jeans. In general, students dress neatly in a variety of clothes ranging from denim jackets to sweaters. A few boys sport

earrings and mustaches.

Students attend Northside Catholic in many cases because older siblings or friends attended the school. Most students had attended Catholic elementary schools and wanted to continue in Catholic high school. Parents like the school because they feel it offers a more disciplined environment than public schools do. There is a feeling that the school is physically a safe place to be.

Students come from a cross section of economic backgrounds, ranging from a well-to-do community on the west to a poor community on the east. Despite the ethnic mix, there are no gangs or ethnic cliques which are evident in the school even though such groups are prevalent in public schools in the general vicinity. Increasingly more students come from single-parent homes. The principal felt that Northside Catholic was really a mosaic of people.

We sit at a crossroads of three freeways. We have on our west, middle class and upper middle class communities. To the east we have middle and lower economic classes and the very poor. We have Hispanics, Orientals, Blacks. We have a real tapestry of people, a real tapestry of culture.

One teacher compared the school to a quilt: "Before, they're their own little piece of material; once they get here they're all stitched together. They finally become

something." A school community is formed.

### Non-Catholics

Approximately ten to fifteen percent of the student body and faculty are non-Catholics. The school philosophy sees them as a positive element within the school, bringing "an ecumenical perspective which enriches the school as a Catholic community." The principal indicated that "we don't want to discriminate or single them out, and yet if they are having special difficulties, we should address those." A large percentage of such students are Lutheran. The administrators are exploring the possibility of having Lutheran ministers teach a course in Lutheranism to these students in place of the survey of Catholic doctrine required for all students.

### Relationships with Parishes

Relationships with local parishes have not always been amicable. Ten to fifteen years ago, pastors advised parents from the pulpit not to send their children to Northside because of turmoil connected with attempts to unionize the faculty. That attitude has changed, and positive relationships exist currently.

The faculty tries to encourage students to become involved in their parish activities. However, some students do not find the parish programs attractive. "They're not

quite finding what they want in the parish, or [the programs] are not designed for youth."

Some students seem to find more nurturing in other religious denominational groups. "They will staunchly profess to me, 'Of course I'm Catholic,' but they seem to get more" from a different denomination's service or youth program.

The faculty realizes it has to continue to emphasize the importance of parish association since school activities often are much more attractive to students than are those in parishes. This problem is still straining relations with the parish people, but both sides are perhaps more realistic about the problem than in the previous decade.

#### Differences with Public Schools

Students feel that there are considerable differences with local public schools. The perception exists that students in public schools are treated much more impersonally than they are at Northside, partly because of the size of the public schools. A family atmosphere exists at the Catholic school. "I feel more comfortable being with [people of] my own religion because my opinions will parallel theirs." Similarly,

In a public school, I don't think you have the type of rapport with your teachers. One time I was going

through a really hard period of my life and my grades were slipping; I was just not doing the work I was supposed to do. Almost every single one of my teachers came up to me and asked, "Michelle, what's wrong? Can I help you?" I don't think I would get that in a public school.

Another student related a similar story.

I once got a note from a teacher when I was upset in class. It had hearts on it and she had taken a colored pen and wrote a "happy face" and a little note, "Have a wonderful day and if you need me, I'm here." She didn't just think, "She'll get over that." She didn't let it pass, she did something about it. To me that's what Northside's about.

### Curriculum

Northside Catholic provides a comprehensive curriculum in the liberal arts tradition for students of average and above average ability. The school philosophy indicates that students are "challenged to grow in those virtues characteristic of the Christian." Qualities which teachers and students want to see in graduates include honesty, courtesy and respect, a sense of responsibility, and a desire to pursue personal spiritual growth.

### Philosophy

Like the other Catholic schools visited, Northside Catholic incorporates concepts from To Teach as Jesus Did (National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1973) in its philosophy. The mission of the school is "to bring Jesus and his message into the formal educational experience of its students." The school is seen as part of the entire Church, carrying out its mission of evangelization by bringing the Good News into all strata of humanity in order to transform them.

The principal indicated that Northside was a very strong Catholic school. Yet I've been in other schools where administrators and teachers will talk a lot more about being Catholic. I don't think you'll find people here talking about being a Catholic school. I don't think that's part of the everyday vocabulary, but I think it's the experience here.

### The Principal

Reverend Paul Baer, an easy going, slightly-built, low key diocesan priest has occupied the principal's chair at Northside Catholic for seven years. Before being appointed as principal, he taught religion at the school. Students consider him a very caring, fair administrator. A teacher commented that

They respect him because he they know he follows what he believes in. He may be tough sometimes but they respect that in the long run. He has this idea that whatever's best for the kids is what's going to happen.

Both teachers and students feel that Father Baer and Sister Rita Jean, the campus minister, give momentum to the religious programs of the school. "They're both very inspiring people, at least to the faculty. They're both very aware of the needs that the students have." "He's the backbone of the whole thing."

The principal takes a gentle approach in dealing with students.

It's very important to teach Catholicism [in such a way] that the students have a good experience in their high school years. You try to give them as many good experiences as you can. I just think that when you come on too hard and use too many cliches and too much jargon, you turn them off and lose out in the long run.

Father Baer believes that it is important to be fair to students.

We give a lot of chances here. I don't know a school that gives kids the chances they get here. But once we reach that final point of accountability and consequences, they'll accuse us of being un-Christian.

I think that it's not un-Christian to hold a kid accountable for his/her behavior. In the whole process of getting there, the student will get lots of help.

The school administrators are very open to exploring alternatives to the status quo. "We're willing to try things. It certainly is not at a standstill." Teachers agree with this assessment:

People seem very open here. I think it has to do with Father Baer's continual research and looking into how people are doing things other places and different theories that people are trying. He's willing to try them if they look like they could improve. He's willing to look at the problems and try different solutions. It's very dynamic here.

### Values

#### Responsibilities to Self

School administrators desire to have students become independent responsible individuals, "to be able to walk in the world with their eyes open, dealing with situations instead of running from them or having other people handle them." Students should be "able to apply the use of reason to situations, decision making, and morality," with "a sense of identity and purpose within their lives." They should be giving people. "Our society today emphasizes so much 'the



self.' We go after the idea of being for others. If you can convince them that they should be for other people, I think it would be marvelous." As the principal indicated, sometimes these qualities are not visible during the four years of high school.

I'm trying to nudge them but at the same time not taking over their responsibilities. It's like a garden: you plant all these flowers and you nurture them but they have to grow, to blossom. Sometimes they don't blossom till long after being here.

### Caring

Concern for others is a value stressed in the school. In the words of the principal, "You ask the kids what they like about the school, and they will say that the teachers care." A true sense of family and community exists within the school, as evidenced by "the care and concern the students have for each other, that teachers have for students, and the respect that students give to teachers." A student commented that "I have friends in every grade and everybody is real close. There's not a lot of prejudice between classes." Unlike a nearby Catholic high school in which a student felt that "they're rich and stuck up," Northside students "all watch out for each other and try to help each other out. It's pretty much a family thing."

Whenever there are elections for the student council,

the thing that people bring up all the time is unity, or [how to] bring the classes together. . . . The school itself really doesn't stress any values but they're all here. You can sense them. You walk around the campus and you see people talking to people who aren't in the same grade or of the same nationality. I had a friend who attended [another Catholic school]. When she came here, it was so weird because everybody wanted to meet her and everybody wanted to know about her. She said it was like a second family here. It's not stressed, but it's there.

A senior commented that, "It's real scary to know that graduation is in three months. I've got to move on in my life. Really I just want to stay here for four more years."

The sense of family continues after students graduate. When they come back, they're always asking about some of their old classmates that they haven't seen. A lot of times, a lot of them get together on their own afterwards. They do have that sense of community.

Students are taught to realize that there are limits to their activities. Responsibilities to themselves and to others override personal comfort or convenience. One student indicated that others realized this.

We had a girl on campus last year who had a bad case of

arthritis. She had to finally go into a wheelchair in her senior year. [When] she would come to a place where she couldn't get up on her own, whoever was walking by would just "bump her up," push her up so that she could keep going. I think that it's small things like that that go on here.

### Justice

Justice is another virtue which is valued at Northside Catholic.

Each person has the right to be an individual and to have his/her human rights. We have the necessity to respect the rights of the students as much as they have the necessity to respect [the faculty's] rights and the rights of the school and the student body itself.

Conflicts are worked out peacefully.

We have constant reminders of justice towards one another and caring for one another and peace. There's a strong emphasis on lack of any kind of turmoil and on airing differences with a teacher or counselor rather than going to blows about it.

The Golden Rule governs students' ideas of fairness to others. "If the students see something going on that was harmful or hurtful," most students would "care enough to step in and try to do something to change the situation."

### Voluntary Participation

Voluntary participation is stressed very strongly at Northside Catholic. The recently revised school philosophy indicates that the school works to elicit free responses from students in the areas of liturgical and prayer experiences and Christian service activities because "it is better to encourage participation rather than require it." Optional schoolwide liturgies are the norm partly because of the lack of an auditorium to hold the entire student body, but more fundamentally from a philosophical perspective. One-fourth to one-third of the student body attend school Masses. The school's policy on participation in retreats and liturgical celebrations reflects the reasoned approach of Father Baer.

Following the lead of the principal, faculty members see a value in the students participating voluntarily in religious activities.

The approach is taken to try to educate the kids that it is a moral obligation that they should have, but they have to make the choice. I like that approach. You're not really making any kind of a a Christian commitment if it's something that's forced on you. Teaching individual responsibility is a reason for stressing voluntary attendance.

I think it's a good idea to keep them optional. In a way it teaches the kids that later on in life these

things aren't going to be mandatory. It's going to be up to you to take the initiative to go to Mass.

Another teacher stressed that voluntary participation prevented some problems.

If you force kids to come [to Mass], then you've got discipline problems. Teachers wouldn't get anything out of it and neither would a lot of kids. There's enough obligatory religious experiences for them in their religion classrooms that I don't think it would do any good to have them obliged to attend liturgies.

The students share this spirit of voluntary attendance. "It gives you the opportunity and the responsibility to choose."

If it's your decision, you have more of a desire to go. You want to be there. You know why you're there. You want to be with God. You know that these certain people there want to be with God too.

Teachers have the same type of attitude toward student acceptance of church doctrine that they do toward student participation at school liturgies. "The overall goal is to have the student develop a set of values for himself."

This is a time when they're going to drift, to challenge, to be bored. If you just accept that and say "That's all right," then they don't get their backs up. We don't jam it down their throats. Often times

[we say] "Here are ideas; just tuck them away and when you're ready to accept them [later] in your life or when they become more meaningful, you have the background to draw from." We try to stay within the realm of what the 1980s and the student is about with the philosophy and principles of the faith, and we may even be saying ". . . And when you're ready. . . ." It seems at least not to make them resent religion.

Teachers realize that their work does not always bear immediate fruit.

I wish that we could do more and that we could be convinced that it has a lasting effect, but you do what you can in the world we live in. We don't create these kids. We get them out of the families with the values they come with. A lot of the things we're doing here are going to mean more [to students later] than they do right now. We can just hope that they will live long enough to value the things that we give them.

Hope exists that students will practice their religion in later life:

I do believe in the way that we present [religious instruction] here, in the way we permit self-expression, questions, etc. If you have permitted the student to go through this cycle [of doubt] through high school, then even if they do not practice their

faith when they leave here, they have at least a point of reference. I'll bet that nine out of ten, even though they stray away, are going to come back because they have the basics.

It is encouraging to teachers that many students continue to practice their religion once they leave their families: "They're still going to church when they leave school. A lot of times they're on their own so you know it's not a situation where they're forced to go or feel obligated because of other people."

Not everyone on the faculty considered this voluntary approach to religious participation as entirely desirable.

We don't convince them of the value of the formal part of our religion. I think we are going to lose many of them as soon as they leave here. We've lost something of the mystery, the ritual, the demands of our church. We can say that everyone should go to Mass but if nobody gets up to go to Mass in the family, they aren't going to get up either. Twenty years ago they would have gotten up and gotten themselves ready. But now the parents aren't as strict about these things. I think this is too bad that our school is somehow not holding on to that beautiful ritual of the church.

Another teacher lamented the loss of tradition by students.

How do we get to the kids the sense of history,

richness of background, richness of doctrine, richness of teaching and things that the church has to offer? I think sometimes we're a little "wishy-washy" because we want to present something palatable to the kids.

The real cause for disinterest in religion was pinpointed by one teacher.

I think that most kids have not yet met Christ. They know who He is, they know His history, but there's no relationship to speak of, and I think this is why they have problems if Mass is boring. I think most of our kids are "unchurched" at this level.

Students at Northside are allowed to develop their religious life at their own pace. For many young people, full development will not occur until a decade after high school. The faculty has hope that the seeds of adult religious faith which they have planted will eventually bloom.

#### Religion Program

The religion program at Northside Catholic, according to the student handbook, concentrates on knowledge of God and Jesus Christ as the center of life, development of awareness of personal worth, social dimensions of life, appreciation and knowledge of the nature of the Church, its sacraments and liturgy, prayer, and the need and ability to



witness to the faith by personal conduct and service.

Religious activities receive a high priority from the school administrators. Student retreats are scheduled on school days, for instance, even though some teachers prefer not to have students miss classes. The campus ministry program receives a budget of over \$7,000. There is no scrimping on materials for the religious department. Everything teachers ask for, they get from the principal. "Father keeps saying, 'If you want to rent a film, go rent one.'" Top notch teachers are assigned to the religion department: "I know that there is emphasis given to assigning qualified religion teachers and not just putting someone in there because he/she is a leftover." Overall, "on a scale of one to ten, I would give [religious instruction] a ten. That's what makes us a community, what brings us together." Religious activities play an extremely important role in the life of the school.

Masses and other religious activities such as penance services frequently require changes in the school schedule. In the course of the school year, various Masses are celebrated either for the entire school or for particular groups of students. At the beginning of the year, class officers are installed at class Masses. Masses at Thanksgiving and Christmas prepare students for the holidays. The feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, December 12,

has great significance at the school because of the high percentage of Mexican-American students and is celebrated accordingly. The juniors have their rings blessed at a special Mass. A candlelight ceremony for peace brings students and parents back to campus in the evening to pray the Rosary for peace. The Baccalaureate Mass on the Sunday before the graduation ceremony gives an opportunity to pay tribute to the senior class.

Each school day begins with a prayer over the public address system led by the principal. Included are prayers for those students and teachers who have requested them. Many teachers begin class periods with prayer even though not required to do so. One religion teacher indicated that a brief period of meditation at the beginning of class seems to quiet down and to relax students who were "so rushed through the day."

#### Campus Ministry

At times, the ideals of Catholicism pale in the view of students before the slick culture and values presented by television, movies, and music groups. Northside Catholic tries to make Catholicism relevant to students through formal instruction and through the campus ministry program.

The campus minister at Northside Catholic is Sister Rita Jean, the "earth mother" of the school, loved by

students and faculty alike. Students feel that they can go to her office, talk to her and relax. "She's one of the most wonderful people on campus because she likes to involve herself with your life. She wants to touch everybody individually." But "she'll be blunt with them and tell them what she thinks but she'll do it in a loving, caring way." The image Sister Rita Jean uses for the school, that of the good shepherd, is a good reflection of her own character.

Most of the work of Sister Rita Jean as the sole campus minister revolves around three areas: spiritual formation of teachers, student retreats, and the liturgical and sacramental programs of the school. In addition, she counsels students in spiritual matters and organizes a retreat for parents during the school year as part of her ministry to the total school community.

Even though teachers nominally give Father Baer priority in leadership in religious matters, many faculty members consider Sister Rita Jean as "the main religious person on our campus." "She's a very very strong person. Her faith and positive outlook come through so clearly; we're all affected by that." Sister Rita Jean "brings [the religion program] all together. As far as I'm consciously aware, I would say she's the force behind [the religious ministry of the school]." In addition, members of the religion department, particularly its chairperson, provide

"tremendous momentum" in the religious direction of the school, working closely with Sister Rita Jean on religious projects.

### Retreat Program

Each week on a school day, a freshmen or sophomore religion section meets with Sister Rita Jean in the campus ministry office, a converted classroom, for an on-campus day of recollection. "It exposes them to what it feels like to share" and helps them become integrated into the student body.

Juniors and senior students attend off-campus optional overnight retreats several times a year. Benedictine priests conduct three retreats for juniors annually at a nearby retreat house. The senior Chi Rho retreats, student conducted in large part, are peak religious experiences for many students. One student described the impact a retreat had on her:

I hated coming home because I wanted to stay so bad. I felt so close, not just with God, but to all these people, to all these teachers and directors. You get some a different opinion when you see them and they open up. You really see inside people and you begin to love them for what they are. I remember coming back and seeing these [other] people who hadn't gone; they hadn't changed and they didn't understand what I was

feeling.

Students feel close to God through interacting with other people.

You just felt that God was with you in such a different way. He was there in each one of us, but in a way that we could see and we could feel, but we didn't know how. There's such a love. There's such a family atmosphere and such a neat feeling that I can't explain.

Teachers see that the lives of some students are dramatically changed by retreats.

His sophomore year he blossomed. He became sort of the monster of the class causing teachers a lot of problem. After Chi Rho, you saw a complete change. It's as if he matured ten years in a matter of a week. I saw in him a real sense of respect for himself and for others.

These retreats obviously made a considerable impact upon the lives of students.

Unfortunately not all students are able to make a retreat. One retreat had been cancelled earlier that school year because Sister Rita Jane was unable to fit it into her schedule. "A lot of the responsibility is on just one person [Sister Rita Jean]. It's a lot for one person to handle." The principal admits that the school cannot spend

enough individual time with each student.

There's a story behind each kid; so many of them need lots of individual attention and time. I really think we could do a lot more if we had time and personnel and more opportunities for retreats. We can't take every kid on the Chi Rho retreats and yet every kid should go through that experience.

### Christian Service Projects

Christian service projects help to make students more aware of social concerns. Although these activities are voluntary on the part of students, they attract a large percentage of the students. On Friday afternoons students and teachers stock shelves in the nearby MEND (Meet Each Person's Need with Dignity) Center and deliver food to needy families. Teachers and students "get a firsthand view of where the food is going, to garages without heat, to bare cement floors. That teaches those kids more than anything they would learn in the classroom."

We try to make the students givers and make [the fact] relevant that there are people out there who are in need and pain and suffering and that it is our obligation as Catholics to be aware of that. We cannot walk through the world unaware of the pain and the cries of other people.

Christian service provides valuable learning experiences for

students.

A variety of service activities occur each year. A food drive at Christmas and an Easter collection for the missions give students an awareness of the needs of others. On-campus student fund-raising activities for service agencies such as the Leukemia Society and the Red Cross Blood Bank supply funding for such worthy causes. An Adopt-a-Grandparent program at a local hospital and parties at convalescent hospitals bring students in contact with elderly persons.

In the principal's view, the Halloween Dance for exceptional children is the jewel in the school's service program. As one teacher put it,

[Our students] are a little hesitant at first; they don't know how to react [to retarded and handicapped children]. But within an hour, they're out there dancing with these kids, they're talking to them, and they are enjoying it. After that experience, most of our kids want to come back and do it again next year because it's such a positive experience for them.

A student had strong feelings about the value of this dance.

It was like a retreat to me. I came off with a "high" because I could see those people actually having fun and realize that we're helping them have fun. We're

giving them the opportunity to be persons.

Students appreciate the fact that service is not forced on them but is done voluntarily.

It's got to be out of their own free will or else they're not going to do it right or give any kind of effort. . . . I don't see that [forcing you to give service] is hurting you, but I don't see that it's helping you.

Students carry out Christian service even on campus toward other students. One girl told of the concern seniors had for a classmate:

When [her] father died, the whole senior class was really upset about it. So we all got together and bought her a stuffed animal and flowers. We went to the Mass.

The deaths of several parents of students and teachers brought out similar outpourings of support. One teacher's son was involved in a fatal auto accident.

The support he got from the students and particularly from the faculty kept him from going out of his mind. Everyone was so positive. Priests, sisters, other teachers really stepped forward and gave him what he needed.

Some faculty members see a definite advantage in voluntary service.



I'm not at all in favor of you doing good because I made you do good. I would rather that fifty kids [voluntarily] did something good for their neighbor than [have] one hundred kids who faked signatures [certifying that service had been done].

One teacher liked the voluntary nature of the service at the school.

[The drives at school are] based on the idea that it's voluntary. You're really not making any kind of a Christian commitment if it's something that's forced on you. The approach is taken to try to educate the kids that this is a moral obligation that they should have, but they have the choice.

The voluntary nature of service projects makes them more meaningful to students.

Not all faculty members, however, feel that it is entirely desirable that students are not made to carry out a service project.

I know those students that do partake of it benefit a great deal. But I'm not certain that we reach enough young people. Sometimes they won't volunteer on their own. If they are pushed more in that direction, they'll gain something from it, hopefully. Some will go through four years here without lifting a finger for anybody else. That's a real shame. We have the

liturgical, we have the educational, we do have the retreats and spiritual part, but I think the service concept is lacking.

Some faculty members require service projects in their classes. A religion class became involved with a nearby elementary school through the prodding of their teacher.

The students each had a child whom they took care of at Christmas time by providing various things, a program, a party, and all that. Putting [our students] in the right climate, they were extremely generous. I wonder sometimes if more things like that could not be provided to give them that taste of service.

One social studies teacher said students were shocked at his class requirement of service. "Their first reaction is, 'Oh no, here we go, another one.' But on the whole, when they're done, they say they're glad I asked them to do it." The student council moderator emphasized that "since we are a Catholic school, a Christian school, we have to tie in service" to the total education of children.

So we have a service commissioner and we have an awareness commissioner. Those kids are not responsible for setting up dances or for sales or things like that. What they do is deal with [programs like] the foster child program. They assisted with the drug awareness program that went on earlier in the year.

The moderator felt that the students do get something out of service projects.

### Religion Curriculum

The required religion curriculum begins with a Scripture course in the freshmen year. A mini-course on sexual morality has been added to help students acquire Christian values at an early age. The faculty sees the freshman curriculum as especially crucial since many entering students had suffered inferior religious education classes in elementary school or in Confraternity of Christian Doctrine classes. Other freshmen had been turned off to religion by "horrendous confirmation [preparation] experiences." Students feel they have had sufficient religious education. "They're little old men and women when it comes to ninth grade religion. They don't want to hear anything about it anymore." The lack of good religion textbooks makes the task of teachers more difficult, and makes it necessary for teachers to supplement texts with other materials to provide a more complete education.

Students study sacraments and morality in the sophomore year. Christian marriage is discussed for a semester in the junior year; a senior survey of Christian doctrine completes the required courses. A series of elective courses on ethics and morality, the study of Jesus, Oriental or Western

religions, and Christian womanhood fill the remaining two semesters of the junior and senior years. The department is considering an honors sophomore course because they sense that outstanding students preparing for college lack a solid foundation in Catholic philosophy.

Religion courses in the school are attractive to most students because of the teachers in that department. "Most of the people teaching religion, their personalities, their convictions, the kind of people they are, make what they are saying palatable to the students." Some students feel that the classes

[should be improved by getting teachers more involved and by teaching about things that students care about. I have Ethics and Morality now. That's good, because that's what we know about, what we need to learn about at this stage in our lives.

Not all teachers are able to make every student responsive to the subject material.

Students feel that interest in religion classes is associated with other religious activities. The student body president, an articulate, vivacious girl, stated that before attending a Chi Rho retreat, she "was getting sick of religion." But after the retreat, she began to find religion interesting.

The teachers don't force it on you but they discuss it

with you. They don't brainwash you into believing in stuff. They tell you what's right and what the Catholic church teaches. Overall they do a good job.

Another student felt very much the same way.

After the retreat you're on a totally different level. I know when I got back, I found religion interesting, which surprised me. A lot of teachers are boring. I've had my share. The teachers make [religion] interesting and the students make it interesting. If you have a good class with good discussions, then that makes it all worthwhile.

These students view their religion classes as an important part of their learning experiences.

As Fee et al. (1981) indicated, contact with religious individuals provides an important element of the religious socialization of teenagers. One teacher related the story of one of his students: "I know one person who was resentful against all priests and nuns. The funny thing was [once] he got to know Brother Brian, his attitude changed. Now he doesn't resent going to Mass." One veteran teacher felt that student attitudes toward religion have changed in the last ten years.

When I first came here in 1975 the atmosphere of the school was not good. We've been through difficulties. I've seen a distaste for things of religion [change] to

an appreciation today for them. We've been through this cycle.

Resentment of religion sometimes occurs because the decision to attend a Catholic school was made by the parent, not by the student. In most cases the student goes along with the parental decision and eventually comes to like or at least to accept the school. As one student indicated, "if they didn't like it here that much, they'd find a way to get out." However, most students come to accept religion classes as an integral part of their high school education at Northside and very few leave the school because of the religion program.

#### Departmental Goals

In keeping with the school philosophy, the overall goal of the religious program of the school is to "form worthwhile, vigorous Catholics in the twentieth century." Other departments share this feeling. The English chairperson stated that it is important to expose students to existentialism and naturalism within a Catholic framework "so that they're not hit with it next year when they get into college. We have a chance to refute what they're saying." A history teacher indicated that he relates classroom problems or concepts discussed to the type of morality and values that a Catholic Christian should have.

Methods of helping students face specific problems as

they become strong adult Christians pose a problem to the faculty. As stated by the principal,

They're not going to be able to discover their faith if they're not solving some of their problems at the same time. So it's very important that they develop values in regards to human sexuality. It's very important that they learn to cope with a society that's very drug laden. It's very important that they understand what is involved in human relationships. The toughest area in teaching high school kids in terms of religion is developing a social conscience. You can have social awareness courses, but I find that to be a very big challenge. Sometimes they are not too open to the social problems of the world of which they are a part.

#### Faculty

Dedication to the school is a hallmark of the faculty of Northside Catholic. Four teachers have taught at the school for over twenty years, with another large group teaching for over ten years. Many teachers have had children graduate from the school. The faculty of seventy includes five sisters, three religious priests and seven brothers. Like the student body, about fifteen percent of the faculty is non-Catholic. The school has been able to maintain and even increase the number of religious on the

staff despite decreases in the number of vocations to the religious life.

Individuals teach at Northside because they believe that worthwhile things happen at the school. One teacher said, "There's never a day that I go home that I don't have at least one thing to smile about and feel good and warm about inside." The school environment is very supportive to them. "There's a real sense of community. There is a strong sense of a caring community. I can see it with the faculty and I can see it with the kids." They feel that a visitor should be able to sense the camaraderie among the students: "If you watch the kids here at lunch time and at passing periods, I think you get that sense of the spirit of community, the friendliness that prevails in the school." The same spirit exists among the faculty: "This is a family. If you need something, [you'll get] ten people saying, 'What can I do to help?' You don't work here for the money, obviously."

Low salaries, however, are a real issue which the school administrators attempt to confront.

Unfortunately we can't pay enough for some young people [who are] supporting families. I think that young, talented teachers are important to our students. I wish we could keep some of that young talent.

In general, teachers work at Northside Catholic because



they have a commitment to Catholic education.

I think there are some teachers who teach [here] because it's the only job they could get or it's the only thing they know how to do. But as a vocation, as a way of relating with people, helping people, contributing to society, I think many teachers teach for that reason.

In the words of the principal,

I'm sure that the more sophisticated, better educated Catholic probably sees it as a ministry. I think that we have tried to get across the idea that teaching in a Catholic school is more than just employment.

#### Hiring Practices

Father Baer attempts to employ individuals who share the school's philosophy of education. Beyond teaching competence, he looks for teachers who are empathetic and professional.

I shy away from the preachy, pious type of Catholic on the staff. I try to find people who are genuinely human, truly authentically religious, who do care about the kids in a way that is firm and demanding and challenging.

When it is impossible to hire a suitable Catholic, the principal hires good Christians "who believe in what we believe in." The principal wants adults who have values and

convictions, and "who basically have it together."

The principal, vice-principal, and religion department chairman interview prospects for positions in the religion department. Attitudes toward Scripture and on moral and social issues are explored to sift out those not suited. Once hired, teachers receive orientation sessions to acquaint them with the philosophy and expectations of the school.

#### Expectations of Faculty

Faculty members are expected to be role models to students. In addition to being discussed in faculty orientation sessions, role modeling receives reinforcement from the example of teachers. As one teacher expressed it, "Your presence, your demeanor, what you happen to believe in without being preachy about it, says more to the kids than what the book will say." A teacher summed up the example of teachers: "The students will hardly ever remember what you taught, but they will remember what type of a person you were." Being a role model includes taking stances on moral issues in the view of another teacher. "When problems come up, the teachers are willing to take stands [that reflect a] Christian point of view, to speak out, not just overlook it." Teachers give example without even realizing it:

For example, when we hear [vulgar] language repeated that [students] must hear on TV, eyebrows are raised or

a comment is made. If they're being unkind to each other, that doesn't just get by us. [We react] whenever we see something that reflects the culture out there that we don't necessary approve of or do not think is healthy for them.

Some teachers see their work as ministry. Even though most staff members feel that the direct responsibility for ministering to students belongs to Sister Rita Jean, they sense that they also bear some responsibility for that ministry. They do not view, for instance, a requirement to be available for tutoring as an imposition.

I don't mind it at all. I'm usually here early in the morning and late afternoons. Often times the students come in during lunch for tutoring. I think most of the faculty try to be there. I never hear any gripes about it.

Teachers minister in different ways.

Students will select faculty members that they feel close to, that they feel they can trust, [to talk to about] anything from "my mother and I don't get along" to taking drugs. Teachers will minister in terms of "You are a good person, you do have value, you have a worth, you are special, and here's my suggestion." I think that happens probably on a daily basis based on my own experience across the board.

In the view of the principal, "Maybe the [teachers] wouldn't call that campus ministry, but it would certainly be an essential component of the school."

#### Faculty Religious Development

The school provides a variety of opportunities for faculty members to deepen their own religious lives. The most memorable of these times, teachers recall, are annual faculty days of recollection and a prayer breakfast on Ash Wednesday, at which "We talk about what we're about here and what makes us different as a Catholic school." Daily Mass is available for faculty members as well as students. Teachers share personal and collective concerns in organized small prayer groups. Administrators encourage teachers to attend the Chi Rho retreats as a way of sharing in the experiences of the students.

Once a month the faculty gathers for a social at the end of the school day as a way of building community. This helps break down barriers between the lay and religious staffs. A young lay teacher mused, "Sometimes you find yourself sharing in the faculty room with one of the nuns or priests on our campus or just with each other." To help in the socialization process, the school provides free meals to all faculty members in a pleasant separate dining room. Each day a morning snack and coffee precede lunch. Faculty use the room as an opportunity to share their daily

experiences with other adults in a friendly environment.

### Summary

Even though it was one of the largest schools visited for this study, Northside Catholic is characterized by a strong family atmosphere. A warm spirit of friendliness pervades the campus. Students of different ethnic backgrounds and economic classes mingle freely between classes, chattering brightly about current boy friends or conferring seriously about homework problems. The well tended campus is an extremely busy place, a beehive of activities which range from athletics to academics. Yet it is a serene place, with little racial or ethnic tension and with few examples of cliqueishness or violence.

As is the case with most teenagers, religion is not a burning issue for most Northside students. If pressed, most would say that they are at Northside because it is a Catholic school, but that is probably not the primary reason why student attend the school. They attend Northside because their parents want them to, because their friends are here, or because they sense that they receive a better and safer education than they would in a public school. Yet, students receive and express Christian values because of their association with the school. In that sense, the Catholicism of the school is insidious, gradually filling and changing students like yeast which spreads throughout a

mass of dough, causing it to rise and transform. Graduates do practice their religion in large part, gradually deepening their faith as they mature and increasingly appreciating what they received at Northside.

The virtues of caring, responsibility, and fairness are stressed at Northside. As members of the school family, students and teachers treat one another with respect, looking out for the best interests of each other. Students and teachers are able to deepen their faith by participation in religious activities such as Eucharistic liturgies and retreats. Teachers and administrators work to encourage students to make such activities an ongoing part of their lives.

There are two religious leaders on the Northside campus. Father Paul Baer, the principal, has set the overall tone for the school through policies which he has established. By allowing students the freedom to attend school liturgies and to be involved in Christian service projects voluntarily, he indicates to them that religion must be an individual commitment rather than a mandated requirement. Sister Rita Jean, the campus minister, gives students and faculty the example of a strongly committed religious person. Through participation in the spiritual activities she promotes, individuals in the school community are able to reflect upon their inner religious nature; thus

individuals are strengthened in their commitment to religious values.

The faculty of Northside Catholic for the most part is committed to the values promoted by the school. They understand their role as examples for students of adult Christian behavior. They are willing to accept low salaries in order to work in a supportive Christian environment where they can can openly attempt to instill values and knowledge in students.

The religious programs at Northside comprise a comprehensive package of intellectual and affective activities. Religion classes provide not only knowledge about the Catholic religion but also values and norms for acceptable Christian behavior. Through liturgies, retreats, and counseling, students can come to understand that Christianity is more than an intellectual exercise, but is also a vital part of human existence touching both heart and mind.

Northside Catholic High School is not perfect. Drugs and alcohol play a role in the lives of some students. Not all teachers perceive that they have personal responsibility for the religious formation of students. While the administrators and faculty seek to develop mature young Christians, not all students fully understand the implications of that direction. As a result, their

religious goals are less clear than those of the adult community.

By and large, Northside Catholic is a very good school. It represents the investment of parents and teachers to provide young people with an caring Catholic environment in which they can grow to maturity while having the freedom to explore and question.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### ANNUNCIATION HIGH SCHOOL

#### Introduction

The oldest of the six schools visited, Annunciation High School was founded in the 1850s by sisters who crossed the Isthmus of Panama on muleback. Originally a cloistered, elementary, convent school accepting both boys and girls, the student body became entirely female when the present three story stucco building was erected in 1930. During the Great Depression, the school provided commercial courses to graduates in the summers and found them jobs afterwards.

Although the school building, located on a busy city street in the heart of a major West Coast city, has changed very little, the focus of education within its walls shifted considerably since the 1930s. Originally an academy for college bound students, Annunciation gradually became more of a comprehensive high school by offering business and fine arts programs in addition to honors and regular classes.

With a considerable decline in the Catholic population of the city in the 1970s, the school began accepting a

greater percentage of non-Catholic students, particularly Asians and Blacks. Currently about 13% of the student body of 520 girls are not Catholic. At the time of the study, 62% of the student body are Caucasian, 20% Asian, 8% Black, and 10% Hispanic. Student Unions for Black, Asian, and Irish students exist to help ethnic awareness. A teacher described the school in metaphors reflecting the cultural mix:

There are so many different cultural accents in our school. They're pulled into this one group of people and what we want to get out is a common fragrance. You don't smell all the separate fragrances; they all come together. It's a potpourri here.

Another teacher used a different image for the school.

They used to talk about the United States as the melting pot. My preference for referring to Annunciation is more of a salad bowl or stew pot. The uniqueness of individuals contributes to this. We've got some religious differences. We have a whole variety of racial differences in the school. . . . Sometimes things go bad and sometimes recipes don't turn out the way you want them to. I guess that's even true of Annunciation. Some people don't always fit.

Administrators target several Catholic elementary feeder schools with high Hispanic populations to help such

students break out of the Chicano ghetto in the city. The principal told of one Chicana student who had visited a grade school on a recruiting mission and had told the eighth graders, "You've got to get out of here [the ghetto]. Anyway those white kids are exactly like us. They're really nice when you get to know them." Ten percent of the students receive some financial aid to help them attend Annunciation.

The principal complained that the diocese has done little to help Catholic secondary education even though a diocesan scholarship fund had been established. Survival of Catholic schools looms as a serious concern. "I think if we had people talking about Catholic education, they'd be talking about some central schools where you could bring the best resources, because we're becoming increasingly an older population which doesn't want to leave their neighborhoods" or accept neighbors of other ethnic groups. Catholic schools, she felt, existed in isolation with no clear focus on what they want to accomplish as a organization.

Ninety percent of the students attending Annunciation, even non-Catholics, come from Catholic grade schools. As the principal indicated, "We decided to take the students who were not the brightest but who had been attached to Catholic education a long time."

Non-Catholics come to the school because they feel that

they will get a better education at Annunciation. Although they attend the same religion classes as Catholic students, a few concessions are made for them. They can, for instance, write on their own denomination in a church history course in place of a paper specifically on a Catholic topic. The campus minister feels that the school makes no special outreach to non-Catholic students nor to students who are nominally Catholic but in actuality are unchurched.

#### Emphases at Annunciation

##### The Role of Women

As an all-girls school, Annunciation focuses on the role of women in the church. One teacher noted, "[Students] are at an important, viable, active church organization that is run by women and populated by women by and large. Hopefully, we can inspire confidence in them in this whole religion stuff."

In the view of the principal, "One of the characteristics [of Annunciation] is that we've always had a sense of the dignity of Christian womanhood and a responsibility to society." For many years the school conducted a four year program of topics ranging from fashion through home management, finances, and mental hygiene which it felt would help its graduates.

The women here always had a sense that women had more than a place as a drudge in the kitchen, barefoot and pregnant. One of the interesting things is that our women have consistently written back that they've gotten very good positions in society or in business. And, they've felt very competent as mothers and as wives.

### School Environment

Students perceive the school as a safe environment for them. The threat of violence and pressures to use drugs which they sense exist in the public schools are diminished. Locked doors prevent outsiders from wandering in from the street during the school day.

A different atmosphere exists in a girls' school than in a coeducational school, since "there's not the spirit of competition that boys on campus would provide." This lack of competition extends even into athletic competition with other schools. Girls compete with other schools without the strong spirit of rivalry which seems to exist in boys' sports.

### Respect for Others

The school also emphasizes respect for other individuals. As one teacher put it:

We're not going to make it unless we respect the rights

of others. We had a problem of theft for a number of years. Any discipline taken or discussion with the kids was all done in terms of respect for others, the property of others, the rights of others. That became key.

### Community

A high level of affection and emotion stems from the composition of the student body. One teacher opined, "I don't know if they would feel as free to be affectionate with one another" if boys were in the school. Even though there were fewer worries about being accepted as part of the group, "everything is an emotional issue." The presence of boys would, she senses, probably balance that out.

The ethnic groups and the small size of the school provide students with the opportunity to become "very, very close" to one another, an opportunity that may not be present in larger schools. Students can learn more about different cultures. One student mentioned that "you think you're different, but when it comes down to it, [if] you just take away those different colors or cultures, wee are all basically the same. You have the same feelings, thoughts, and experiences." A teacher stated that a strong sense of community exists.

When things are tough, that's when you really see it.

Whether it be around one student whose lost a parent or

whether it's something larger that affects the entire student body, there really is that sense. We had to cancel a dance at the last moment. The student officers wanted to talk to the entire student body. They said, "We're your officers but we're a community. We work for you. It's not our fault if something doesn't come through. It's not your fault. We've got to work together on what we can do. We wanted to talk to the whole student body because we all have to deal with it."

This incident had been very helpful according to a teacher because the student officers asked the student body to reflect on an undesirable situation to prevent it from recurring, rather than judging the students.

#### A Sense of Caring

Students and teachers express an overriding sense of care for one another in the school. "I don't think a kid can go through four years at Annunciation without having been touched by something or someone very deeply in at least one point or another." Students indicated that "teachers come across [not only] as teachers but [as] friends." Teachers could be approached by students for help with problems. One teacher compared the school to a conch shell:

It's traditional that in that kind of shell you can hear the ocean. A kid can walk along the beach and

find this shell and want to hear an answer to something; there would always be someone there for them, just as there would be the sound of the ocean.

Betsy Randolph, the head of the religion department, summed up the expectations which she and other faculty members have of students:

My favorite quote is from the prophet Micah: all that Yahweh asks of you is that you act justly, love tenderly, and walk humbly with your God. What I would want of our students is that sense of justice and caring for our fellow human beings and the openness and vulnerability and gentleness that loving tenderly takes.

Outsiders also notice this spirit of closeness in the school as well. The parent of an eighth grader commented at an open house that "There's just something about it [which I sense] when I walk in; I can't put my finger on it." Teachers report that graduates miss the experience of closeness and friendship at Annunciation. One teacher commented about the outward concern shown for students by faculty.

Katie, who was the Campus Minister for years, always ended [the morning prayer over the public address system] with "Have a good day. Take care of each other." Every now and then she wouldn't say that and I



would say it was like ending a prayer without an Amen. I would say, "Aren't we supposed to take care of each other today?" That's who we are, [that's] what we're about.

Faculty members work diligently to make students feel special.

We really try to bring out the best in each kid. It's amazing how something like a talent show can make kids really admire somebody whom they never even knew existed. I think that kids are made to feel as if they are significant because the kids here do seem to feel that teachers are really good and really care. We keep an eye on them; if they're absent from school or if the grades go down, somebody notices it. Somebody reacts to that kid. They might get lost somewhere else.

### Participation

School administrators insist on giving all students the opportunity to participate in costly school activities such as picnics and proms.

There is a real concern that at no point any activity will either be overpriced or that money is the reason why a student does not participate. We make it very clear that if there is a student who wants to go on the picnic [and] finances are a problem, the student can see the moderator, and that student will go. If [the

cost of] the prom is really a problem and we were aware of it, the student would be able to go.

Students notice and appreciate the individual attention. One student compared the school to "the stork that brings the babies. . . . We're wrapped in this blanket. When we've reached a point that we can make it, then they open the doors. They let you know that they're always there. You can always come back." Another student added that the school was "like an incubator. You're so underdeveloped when you first come here. In four short years you develop so many different things." A teacher used a similar metaphor:

I have another image of a litter of puppies. When they come in here as freshmen, they all come from these different backgrounds of family; somehow the school is the mother trying to nurture these kids to get them to be dogs. It's a mothering situation; we're trying to bring these people together and get them out there and become adults.

More than one third of the students come from single-parent homes. The school provides a refuge for the students, even to the point that "some kids have had a bit of a hard time leaving and going out into the 'world.'" The counseling staff conducts workshops for students whose parents are in the process of being divorced because "that

is really a very difficult thing for kids to go through." It requires much energy on the faculty's part to help students cope with their family environments.

You're not just dealing with the education of the students. You're dealing with their home environment, you're counseling them, you're directing them, you're disciplining them. You're doing everything for the student which should be done at home. It's not the parents' fault because they have to work a lot of time in order to survive themselves.

The love which faculty show to students does not degenerate into leniency in discipline. At times students feel "nagged" about what they are doing or what they are wearing. The school's staff expresses its love for students by making them accountable for their actions.

#### The Annunciation Sisters

The Annunciation Sisters supply good role models for the students in the opinion of other teachers. The emphasis they place on social outreach afford inspiration to students. Primarily a teaching congregation, the sisters contribute assertive if not aggressive leadership in the school.

There are eleven Annunciation Sisters on the staff of 42, three in full time administrative roles, one in

counseling, and four in full time teaching positions. Three older sisters fill part time positions on the support staff as assistant librarian, attendance officer, and assistant counselor. The ratio of religious to lay teachers, higher than in any other school visited, has remained fairly constant over the past decade. With fewer young sisters in the classroom, the average age of the sisters in the school has progressively increased.

This trend worries some of the Annunciation Sisters. The principal indicated that "we have fewer and fewer sisters who are interested in education." To many sisters in the congregation, "education is not really dealing with the needs of the poor"; consequently they looked for other apostolates in which they could have a more direct effect on the lives of the poor.

One sister indicated that as the teaching sisters grow older, the congregation will have more of a problem in staffing the school. Some administrative roles in the school are already filled by laywomen. Several sisters from other congregations have been hired to teach in the school. The mix of different sisters adds "a little excitement to the faculty," in the opinion of the principal. Such a pattern of staffing will probably become more common as fewer sisters are able to become fully involved in the lives of Catholic schools.

Individual sisters admired by other faculty members for their unwavering loyalty to the school include Sister Flavius, who has taken on many different roles in the general school program. Originally a teacher, she served as a dean, an administrator, and currently performs all the computer work for the school. Much admired also is Sister Alphonse, who never aspired to any administrative position. Instead, she has faithfully taught Spanish for many years and is a fixture in that department.

#### Mother Figures

Particular sisters play special roles in the lives of the girls, eventually becoming mother figures to students.

Sister Angela was here for years and years. She was the dean of discipline. Everybody was petrified [of] her but she was a pussycat. She would stand at the gate every day after school and check out all the cars of the boys who picked up the girls. This is from the 1930s until her death in the mid-70s.

Sister Angela was loved by all the students:

She took every single trouble-maker in the school and took them to her heart, and they knew they had a mother or grandmother. When she died of cancer in her eighties, the entire church was filled with 2,000 people.

One teacher summed up her influence by saying, "She

protected all the hellions in the school. She was fair, she disciplined them, but boy, they knew they had a friend in her."

After the death of Sister Angela, no sister assumed the mantle of mother figure for several years. Then Sister Bertha emerged as an admired and feared presence. "They used to call her Columbo because she'd wear this overcoat. Again she was an elderly nun, that firm mother figure, the kind disciplinarian."

Sister Paulette impressed many students in a different way.

She was very much a core figure in the school. She was very well known and very well liked. She got cancer and had to have a mastectomy. She was always willing to talk about her cancer in relationship to her faith. Finally, she got cancer seriously enough where she was going to die in a [short] period. During the whole course of the time, whether she was talking to me or another sister or another student who had graduated, she'd always be willing to talk and teach from her experience. That was her big thing. She came back during one of her remissions and talked to the death and dying class about what she was going through personally in relationship to the disease. She didn't see the disease as an enemy. She just saw it as in the

wrong place. She prepared for her death. She wrote out the ceremony. At least a hundred or so graduates came back [for the memorial service]. She wrote a message to the group to say "Do something for justice in my memory." So even in her death she was teaching faith, teaching religion to the school. That's how she was all the time.

Schools conducted by congregations of women religion often have individual nuns who devote a lengthy portion of their lives to a particular school. Such individuals become mother figures to entire generations of students. Their presence lends stability to the school.

#### Faculty

The lay faculty members interviewed for this study indicated that they teach at Annunciation because they like the environment.

The discipline problems we have here are minor ones. There's a real sense of community among the faculty. Sometimes it's worn very thin. We are human beings. Over the last couple of years particularly, we've had some real serious problems around here. Yet, somehow, we've all hung in here together. I think, at least for me, a large part of it is that I'm serving the Kingdom of God in some way that I don't feel I could be doing

in a public school.

The nurturing environment of the school more than offsets the lower salaries offered to some teachers. "The ability to stand around during the lunch period and talk to a bunch of kids, not to be afraid to walk down the corridor because somebody's going to pull a knife or a gun" is really important.

The hard part of teaching at Annunciation, according to one teacher, is the strong expectation of involvement. "The thing that's tough is the extracurricular activities and the drain on you." This was echoed by another teacher.

Very few people succeed around here who come in to teach five periods a day and disappear at the end of it. A lot of extra time is spent before school or at lunch or after school with the kids. It's not necessarily class related stuff.

"You have to be committed to the role modelling and the life style of a Christian," in order to teach at Annunciation. Faculty members are "people persons," who give daily witness to students of the meaning of adult Catholicism.

Vivian Dee has spent over forty years at the school. She sees her role as that of a servant.

Not that I call myself a servant. But I do think you have to give of yourself. I like doing that. It's part of my nature to do it. I believe what Christ



said. He came here and He washed the apostles' feet. Not that I'm going to wash feet, but I really feel that it is primarily the example that we set here and our attitude that we show [that will inspire the girls].

The faculty goes well beyond what might be expected in a typical school in forming a real community. According to one student, "There's always ways that they help you, whether it's money if you can't pay tuition, or counselors [who] always try to guide you." Another student who had transferred from another girls' high school expressed her feelings as she entered Annunciation.

Everyone was so nice. People who didn't even know me [treated me] like I was part of the family. . . . Teachers went out of their way to know my name; it made me feel important. I thought I'd love this school. [Now] I never want to leave it.

The school administrators try to help faculty members realize their role as Catholic school teachers through inservice sessions on the school philosophy and discussions at faculty meetings. Annual faculty retreats and meetings with the faculties of other nearby high schools conducted by the Annunciation Sisters help focus attention on the purpose of Catholic education.

As in any school, discussions among faculty tends to concentrate on academic areas. James Murphy pointed out

that "whatever opportunities are here [for deeper spiritual growth], they have to be seized in an individual sense on your own personal initiative." He regretted that he was not able to devote more time to the spiritual development of faculty.

#### Administration

A team consisting of the Principal, Sister Constance; the Curriculum Coordinator, Enid Arthur; the Academic Dean, Sister Benedict; and the Building Manager, Sister Flavius, administers Annunciation High School. As the administrative team, they meet weekly with the School Management Council, composed of the student activities director, the guidance director, the campus minister, the development director, and the dean of discipline to formulate policies for the day-to-day operation of the school.

The faculty's work on the school's philosophy gives direction to the operation of the school according to the principal:

We are really keyed into philosophy. [When something is suggested,] it has to relate to the philosophy. We'll spend hours and weeks and months on it. Nobody's hired here until they've talked about philosophy [for] maybe two or three hours. The students are aware of the fact that unless a program fits into our

philosophy, they can't have it. So it helps a great deal. I remember one time [when] the fine arts department [did not] want to have all students because [the art teachers] thought they should have only the talented. It was overturned by the curriculum council in light of the need that we have to educate the the whole student.

The school philosophy is not simply a document stored in a file cabinet and referred to occasionally but is a vital instrument which plays an important part in major and minor decision making at Annunciation.

#### Direction

A strong sense exists among faculty members that no one individual dominates the religious direction of the school. Direction for the overall religious thrust of the school comes more from groups of people than from individuals. Key individuals furnishing leadership to the religious areas of the school are the principal, the campus minister, the religion department chairperson, and members of the theology department.

While the principal indicated that the support she gives faculty members and her working relationships with staff members made a great difference, she indicated that other members of the administrative team and the school

management council play vital roles in decisions dealing with religious matters. One teacher mentioned that the principal is very supportive of the development and growth of the campus ministry program. By lecturing at Mass or leading the morning prayer over the public address system, she gives the example of a woman concerned with religious matters.

Several teachers place the major responsibility for religious leadership on the campus minister. "That's his job, to set the tone." However, another teacher clearly saw the matter differently. She felt that the school community simply does not put all responsibility on him alone, but everyone works with him to accomplish religious goals.

The campus minister, James Murphy, was newly hired at Annunciation. He had previously taught religion and had been campus minister at another girls' school which had just closed. Because he had only been at Annunciation for seven months at the time of this research, he felt reluctant to draw many strong conclusions about some aspects of the school, but he echoed the principal's belief that decision making is a shared activity.

In the opinion of several teachers, the members of the religion department afford a great deal of the religious leadership on campus. Betsy Rudolph, the head of the department and Peter Jeremiah, a teacher, were said to be

"two really significant people" because they live what they believe and are examples to students of the values the school tries to engender in students.

Other teachers thought that the entire faculty ultimately provide leadership to students. The teachers do "lot of the outreach and service in their various classes." One teacher added that students were aware of the commitment of teachers as represented by their salary scale. All of the sisters on campus, whether they teach religion or not, provide religious leadership according to the religion department chairperson. Some people in positions of responsibility, such as the deans and the moderators of clubs, impel various groups of students toward involvement in religious activities such as mission collections. Other teachers are active in community involvement, write morning prayers, or become involved in other projects.

No single individual has an overriding influence in religious matters precisely because almost everyone on the staff is thoroughly imbued with the concepts expressed in the school philosophy. Almost all of the faculty feel equally responsible for the entire program.

#### Priorities

Even though students attend Annunciation for a variety of reasons, the faculty and administration consider religion

to have the highest priority within the school. Various activities demonstrate this: mandatory religion classes, retreats during school time without academic penalty for missed classes, rearrangement of schedules for Masses and other religious activities, and cancellation of classes on occasion for an entire day for special days of prayer.

Not all teachers, however, fully accept the priority of religious activities. One teacher expressed some difficulty in balancing academic goals with missed classes for religious activities. This attitude distressed an administrator.

It's kind of discouraging to me that sometimes staff members resent time being taken out for these things. Sometimes some of the teachers have tunnel vision. "My math class is all that really matters." I get real discouraged when I see that.

Another administrator stated, "What we really try to say to teachers is, 'It's a Catholic school.' Our whole philosophy is based on that, and we ask them to accept the philosophy before we hire them."

While the school considers campus ministry to be important, Murphy noted that it was not given the highest priority. "The nature of the activity, the nature of the program, and what it means" should have placed it in first place. However, since he teaches three different religion

classes, he could not devote as much time to campus ministry as he feels it deserves. While campus ministry is responsible for preparing the morning prayers over the public address system and for schoolwide liturgies, he believes that much more should be done in the way of spiritual counseling.

#### Relationships with Parishes

The campus minister has made attempts to help students realize that there is a place for them in the Catholic Church. The task, however, seems to be an uphill battle. The campus minister and other teachers feel that parish priests often relate to teenagers only reluctantly.

Some of the [parish] teen clubs went through a period where they had real problems with dances, so many of the pastors backed off. The diocese backed off [and] won't allow us to use one of their halls for our school dances. In one respect they don't want us around. I think in many ways many of the parishes have said that to teenagers, "You are a problem so we don't want you." I don't think they have people in many of the parishes who can deal with teenagers.

The campus minister stated that young people are not really welcome in many parishes. He cited the example of a girl who wanted to join the Catholic Church.

I was told that she could not be received into the Church on Easter Vigil at the local parish of the chaplain here. She had to go to her own parish. I went to her own parish and asked the pastor and his word was "No. She hasn't been around here." To me it's a sign of where we are in relation to the Church. It's almost a no-man's land. I'll grant you I think the schools have to move a little bit more in the direction of the official formal Church. But as much as schools do, so must the official, formal Church move in the direction of the schools.

Even in parishes where parish priests become involved with students, often only social programs exist.

I think parishes have to find some way to get people who can relate to teenagers, [knowing] that there's going to be a slow start, but [who are willing to] get them involved. I think the kids would get involved. We don't have things outside of school time that would take a lot of their time. They have time to get involved in the parish. We encourage them to get involved in their parishes.

School personnel diligently tried to build better relations with neighboring parish priests. They have been invited to visit the school and experience the good things which are happening at Annunciation. Pastors receive



information on students accepted to the school and on the exceptional work of parishioners. However, the director of development indicated that these efforts often fail to produce any results.

I send out lots of letters to the parishes, in terms of open house, our plays, everything. I send these to every parish and usually to every single grammar school. It's amazing how many say nothing, publish nothing, do nothing.

Part of the lack of interest of students in parish activities stems from a change in family life, according to one teacher.

When I was growing up, my image of the Church was more of a family or community sort of institution. But the family structure is changing. You don't often see high school kids going to Mass with their parents. If they go, they go on their own.

The teacher did not blame anyone for this change, but simply noted it as a statement of reality.

#### The School Chaplain

The lack of a priest on campus for Eucharistic celebrations and for the sacrament of Reconciliation poses a problem for Annunciation, just as it does for other girls' schools. One teacher indicated that "it would be nice to

provide all students with the really positive, visible connections with the official church, [but] we have to rely on overworked parish priests. I remember a parent-daughter Communion breakfast that we had; I think I went through 23 or 24 names of priests" before finding one able and/or willing to come to the school. As a result, students often do not associate spiritual activities or prayer with the ordinary liturgical life of the church.

For the first time in many years, the diocese assigned a chaplain to Annunciation for the school year while the current research was conducted. The priest, an associate pastor at a neighboring parish, celebrates Mass on Fridays and will begin Reconciliation services during the spring. Through his presence, the school hopes to ensure the association of students with the ordinary liturgical life of the church.

Mandatory Masses are celebrated for the entire student body in the school auditorium only at the beginning the school year and on the feast of the Annunciation. The school does not require participation at school Masses on church holy days or on Fridays when the weekly Mass is celebrated.

#### Campus Ministry

Because of the students' poor relationships with their parishes, teachers feel that the school has a responsibility

to provide an experience of the Church as a community. At least one student acts as a Eucharistic minister at school Masses so that other students can see an example of religious involvement that can be transferred to parishes in adult life. James Murphy, the campus minister, believes that:

We've got a community here. It is not, technically, a Church community, but it is much more than you get in the overall society. I think the Church needs to realize that.

Shortly before the visit to Annunciation for this study, the school received a grant of \$125,000 from a local foundation to help the campus ministry and religion department programs. Funds would be used to support Christian Leadership Workshops, to fund peace and justice classes, and for religious outreach programs to parents. The principal saw the grant as an means of providing additional religious opportunities to students.

#### Christian Service

Both Murphy and Betsy Rudolph feel that a full time Christian service program should be established. While the school is moving in that direction, Murphy stated, "I think if you're really going to do that and do it well, you've got to put the dollars and the personnel there." One problem is

that most students commute considerable distances by public transit to school. The extra time needed for transit prevents their involvement in afterschool activities.

Even though the school does not formally require participation, many service opportunities exist in the school. The Christian Life Club moderated by Murphy helps the elderly at a neighboring hospital and at a soup kitchen downtown. Christian Fellowship raises money for charitable causes. Begun many years before in connection with a Thanksgiving food drive, the "Annun Annex" provides a flourishing on-campus collection of food items for the needy.

Academic departments and teachers in classes also encourage community service. The social studies department requires participation in service projects to be eligible for particular awards at graduation. Freshmen work with juniors to make valentines for convalescent homes.

The one activity in which most students participate is the mission collection. Under the direction of Sister Alphonse, homerooms collect money daily for the missions. Each month the section donating the most money receives a mission banner. James Murphy believes that the student body is remarkably generous. "I don't know of another student body across the face of the country that collects daily in every homeroom for the missions. To me, that's

extraordinary."

The school encourages students to give service to their fellow students. For instance, the stage crew gives a great deal of service within the school itself by preparing for assemblies and liturgies. The audiovisual club sets up projectors in classrooms for teachers and performs other similar services.

Outside of school, students coach teams and tutor in parish elementary schools. Various clubs collect toys each year at Christmas time for distribution to needy children.

Overall, the school stresses involvement of students in many activities. As one teacher commented, "We don't want kids to be here just to take; we want them to share in different capacities." One reason for participation is to improve the self-images of students. "Kids are accepted for who they are. I've seen kids who are considered 'nurdy' but are given opportunities to get involved and feel a part [of the group] and feel good about themselves."

Vivian Dee, a retired teacher, now serving as a teacher aide, told of a former principal asking students in an assembly what the school motto ("Not Words But Deeds") was. One girl volunteered a phrase which she had heard in Dee's class: "Off your seat and on your feet." The faculty prod students to change from spectators to active participants.

Faculty members go to great lengths to make students

understand the necessity of service, even though it is not required for graduation. A portion of the income from any fundraising activity on campus is donated to charity to assist students in realizing the need to help others.

Most of our activities have some form of otherness to them. We don't like clubs and dances to have fundraisers so that they can have bigger and better things. We do allow groups to sponsor a student in Taiwan for instance. . . . A lot of our activities try to help the students develop more awareness of a sense of community, not just "What can I do for myself?"

#### Religion Curriculum

All students take certain required religion courses during the first three years at Annunciation. Freshmen spend most of the year studying the New Testament. A quarter-long course on sexual morality fills a expressed need for sex education. Sophomores spend one semester on themes of caring in the New Testament centering on the Beatitudes and the other semester examining Christian morality. In the Junior year, students study the Church as community and the its expression through the sacraments.

Seniors can opt for a variety of quarter-long courses. Popular courses with students deal with death and dying, believing, peace and justice, relationships and Christian

marriage, and religious themes in literature. Each course helps students understand their values and their application throughout life. According to one teacher, the school emphasizes personal responsibility for one's actions as a reflection of Christianity. "You see it in the classroom, you see it in counseling, you see it in the rules, and you see it in what we're trying to teach, that there is a responsibility or consequences for things you do."

The department deliberately changed its name and emphasis several years ago from religion to theology.

I think we're a very academic department now. I include history and lots of theology [in my courses], and then make applications. We even changed our name from religion to theology to say to students that we're an academic subject. I think that we've moved away from [a concentration on] the side of religious experience to an intellectual and emotional confrontation.

### Religious Rituals

The school year begins each year with Hello Day, an occasion to welcome new students and teachers to the school. After a Mass, students introduce themselves to newcomers and spend the day in festivities.

The feast of the Annunciation of Mary, the patroness of

the religious community and the school, traditionally is celebrated with a Mass by one of the auxiliary bishops of the diocese. Because there are fewer Annunciation sisters than in previous years, emphasis for the day has shifted to a faculty appreciation day. Each faculty member receives a gift in recognition of his or her efforts on behalf of students.

Other religious oriented rituals include a Thanksgiving prayer service sponsored by the junior class, a sophomore ring ceremony, and a parent-daughter communion breakfast. Christmas and Halloween receive religious emphasis through prayer services. Each religion section participates in Reconciliation services during Lent.

A variety of retreat experiences allow students at Annunciation High to have additional spiritual experiences. These range from days of recollection for freshmen emphasizing friendship and participation to overnight retreats for seniors stressing the future.

#### Summary

Annunciation High School, through its administration and faculty, imbues its students with values and characteristics which will assist them throughout life. The school's staff makes an effort to instill in the graduates sensitivity and concern for others so that they will accept



with self-confidence whatever responsibilities they are given or may take up. The broad range of ethnic groups in the student body trains students to deal effectively with persons of differing backgrounds. A strong community based upon a shared faith and upon a sense of belonging is formed among students and faculty alike.

Awareness of the needs of others is strongly stressed by the staff of Annunciation. The daily mission collection keeps social concerns before the eyes of students. The school tries to help students see beyond a narrow frame of reference to a wider world vision. Christian service projects engender in students a sense of responsibility to society.

The school assists students in understanding their role as women in the contemporary Catholic Church and in the modern world. A conscious effort is made to affiliate students with the institutional Church. While the religious curriculum provides the necessary intellectual background for spiritual growth, religious rituals and the activities of campus ministry strive to deepen personal religious commitment.

Faculty members endeavor to bring out the best qualities within each student and to help the girls form positive self images. Students respond positively to the personal attention they receive. In so doing, they accept

the values which are presented to them as ideals.

A sense of satisfaction exists at Annunciation High School that the purpose of the school is being accomplished. At the same time, there is a feeling that the task at hand is not completed. More could be done if the time and funds were available.

The strong sense of purpose at Annunciation brings faculty members together in a common mission. The general agreement among administrators and faculty about the mission of the school helps the school community keep on track even without a strong charismatic leader.

The presence of the Annunciation Sisters gives support to the rest of the faculty. Their selfless generous service helps establish the tone of the school. The images of particular mother figures shape the attitudes and efforts of teachers in caring for students. The faculty is thus inspired to help students to grow into Christian adulthood.

## CHAPTER SIX

### THE ABBEY SCHOOL

#### Christian Service

A strong emphasis on Christian service distinguishes The Abbey School from the other schools visited for this study. In the course of the four years at the school, each student becomes involved in two separate service projects: the community service project and the senior internship.

Christian service received strong emphasis from Father Pablo Erenteria, the superior general of the Albertine congregation which operates The Abbey School. A charismatic Spaniard, he stressed the need for re-education toward social justice in the schools of the congregation.

Today, our prime educational objective must be to form men-for-others; men who will live not for themselves but for God and his Christ--for the God-man who lived and died for all the world; men who cannot even conceive of love of God which does not include love for the least of their neighbors; men completely convinced that love of God which does not issue in justice for

men is a farce.

This speech revolutionized the attitude of Albertines toward their schools and forced them to rethink their goals and objectives in more Christian terms.

The impetus for service programs at The Abbey School comes from the principal, Father Gideon Barnard, who arrived in 1980. The ultimate goal of the programs, he felt

like everything in education, is the formation of habits. You do things over and over again; practice makes perfect. You can't live a Christian life in a practical service sense unless you practice service. You can't do algebra unless you do algebra problems. You can't write an English paragraph unless you practice topic sentences. In that sense, [the service programs develop] the formation of habits. It should be mandatory because there are certain habits that a school must teach; if it doesn't, it's deficient. For Catholic schools, they have to teach the habit of Christianity.

### Christian Service Projects

Each sophomore and junior student completes a community service project, spending three hours a week outside of school time at a service placement for a four month period. During this period, a student meets with a faculty representative once a month to evaluate what was being

done. As examples, one student counseled abused women and runaways at a shelter. Another worked in the Chaplain's Office at a local Catholic university. A third taught a CCD (Confraternity of Christian Doctrine) class to public grade school pupils. Still another worked with a group raising funds to combat Sudden Infant Death Syndrome since his brother had died of SID.

Tom Maloney, the head counselor in charge of the service program, stresses to students that "we want something to fit into your life on a weekly basis," not just as a project to be rushed through. "If you do something for four months, there's a good chance that it'll perhaps become a habit." In Maloney's view, the goal had been accomplished since sixty percent of the students continue to work at the site after their official service project has been completed.

### Senior Internship

The year after the community service program was instituted, senior internships began. For three weeks in January in an intersession between the two semesters, each student spends at least five hours a day, the equivalent of a typical class day, working as a volunteer in an area or agency of his choice. Each Monday evening during the Internship, seniors return to the school for a reflection session with one of 26 volunteer faculty advisors. The

opening session features a talk by the principal on the purpose of the program. Each of the following Mondays students meet in small groups to reflect upon their experiences. The final Thursday evening students gather with their parents for a Mass to celebrate the conclusion of their internship.

The release of students from classes to become involved shows the importance of the internship program. As the director indicated, "They know that, if we're willing to give up school time, the precious 8:30 to 2:30 commodity, we're serious and that we're putting our money where our mouth is."

In the view of one teacher, the internship is important in helping students realize that another world exists.

A lot of them grudgingly begin that three week program. A lot of our kids are from the suburbs and middle and upper-middle class homes; they're very threatened by skid row and very threatened by an old folks home. I think it's a marvelous opportunity for them to confront these kinds of things right now and not [just] play dodge ball in their tree-lined suburbs. I think that it's an important mandate for the school to pose those kinds of social justice questions.

Despite the strong emphasis on Christian service

programs, one student felt that not all students really become aware of dire poverty. "They can do their community service projects at a place where they see middle-class children; they work with them but I wish the faculty would make it tougher to get project placement so that it teaches you more, that you're working with some class [of people] that you have not worked with or encountered before." He suggested that the poor neighborhood surrounding the school be brought more into the service program.

Most students report that their internships are eye opening. "Before I never even thought of it. It's not something that I was concerned with--the lives of old people. But this was a real big 'eye opener' and it exposed me to a way of life that I had never seen. So I changed in that respect." Another student worked downtown on skid row at the Catholic Worker soup kitchen for three weeks, making and serving soup, and carrying out other work. "It was a fantastic experience. I came to realize a lot. I wouldn't say that I was extremely sheltered as much as others, [but] you put in a hard day's work and you really feel good about it afterwards." A third student reflected on the value of his experiences:

It's easy to get set in your own little world, your own little bubble. It's interesting when it starts to collide with other people's little worlds. That really

happened down at the St. Joseph's Center [for the homeless]. It seemed for a while there that I became a part of that little sector. The things that I would just consider ordinary happenings in my life, I would really start to notice and feel almost strange about. These homeless people are really just people; you could talk with them coherently about anything. They really are human beings.

#### Christian Action Movement

In addition to the mandatory service, some students perform voluntary service through the Christian Action Movement (CAM). The religion department chairwoman described them as "the 'worker bees' on campus as far as raising the Christian conscience and consciousness level of everyone around here." The group consists of 20 to 25 core members moderated by the campus minister. They sponsor a Wednesday noontime lecture series during Lent dealing with various life issues to which response has been excellent.

#### Christian Life Communities

About one third of the student body of 1,100 boys belonged to Christian Life Communities (CLC). These small groups of students met every week or two to try to form community on a Christian level with faculty members. Meetings consisted of a film, a "rap session," or an



off-campus gathering. CLC is an attempt to bring the South American developed Comunidades de base, or small Christian communities, to an American setting.

### History

The Abbey School has a long history of education in the city in which it is located. Founded in 1865 as a college and school for males by a male religious congregation, it was turned over to the Albertine congregation in 1911. The present site was purchased in 1917. In 1929 the college division moved to a new location, leaving the high school with a classroom building and a monastery. Unchanged for many years, the campus was improved in the 1950s with the addition of a row of classrooms. Vigorous fund raising within the past ten years by an energetic director of development allowed the school to purchase adjacent land, to build a new classroom and library building, a little theater, and a gymnasium, swimming pool, and outdoor track. The neighborhood of the school has deteriorated since the school had moved to its present location and now is lower middle-class with some warehouses and cemeteries in the immediate vicinity of the school. A guard, posted at the entrance to the campus, ensures that transients do not enter the grounds. Several teachers referred to the school as "the castle in the ghetto" because of its age, size, and

location.

### Atmosphere of The Abbey School

A strong emphasis on academics is the main difference between The Abbey School and other public or Catholic schools in the view of teachers and students. One teacher described the students as "a bunch of mice running through mazes to get their diplomas, scurrying in and out trying to finally come out the right door at the end." In his view, the faculty's job is to "help them out by lifting up the separating walls and showing them which way to go."

People feel that the school has a strong religious atmosphere. One priest stated, "Once you're convinced that Jesus really is Lord, then your behavior, your whole philosophy, the way you act towards people, the way you want to help them, is changed for the good." The faculty gives generously of their time by moderating and facilitating extra-curricular activities and by talking to students. One teacher stated, "I think this faculty does more talking with students than any faculty I've ever been on," in 30 years of teaching. "If we're going to do what we say we're going to do and make the whole faculty responsible for the religiousness of our student body, then that's got to go beyond the theology department."

One teacher compared The Abbey School to the Catholic

Church after Vatican II. "We stress community, generosity, service. We stress all these things and I think that's the vision of Vatican II." A student saw the school as a tool whose purpose is to help students to achieve their goals.

There are few discipline problems within the school. One student attributed this to the fact that students are paying tuition. "They realize that they're paying, so this is an opportunity that they really don't want to waste." Because there are few serious discipline problems, teachers are able to do a better job. "A mediocre teacher can be a great teacher here, and a good teacher can be fantastic, just given the atmosphere," in the view of the head counselor. "I haven't seen a fight here on campus in five years." Students feel that they are treated fairly and justly. A few students left each year at the request of the Board of Discipline, but only after they received much counseling.

#### Direction

In the view of Father Barnard, The Abbey School will be called upon more in the future to be an agent in the Church's mission of education. "Many of the Catholic high schools in the area [are] either becoming very mediocre or are closing altogether." He felt that the school should provide the same type of leadership and example on the

secondary level that its sister college showed to other institutions of higher learning.

Faculty and students alike see Father Barnard, a charismatic alumnus about forty years old, as the real religious leader on campus. As a campus minister in another school, he had familiarized himself with the religious needs of young people. Under his direction, the community service project, the senior internship, and the retreat programs were established at The Abbey School. His outstanding homilies inspire members of the school community. One male teacher commented, "There is rarely a time when he speaks that I don't cry." He wants to create a Christian community in which being "a man for others" is a prime concern. This is more important to him than creating programs with Christian community as their outcome. Others share his vision. One faculty member commented that "The vast majority [of teachers] are tremendously committed to this kind of vision of a student maturing into a person who sees far beyond his own little world."

#### Faculty

The thirteen female teachers comprise a higher percentage of the faculty of 70 than is typical of other all-boys schools. Approximately half of the teachers are laymen. The Albertines number 17, 13 priests and 4

brothers. The faculty shows remarkable stability according to one teacher. "It's my impression from friends in other Catholic schools that the expectation is almost 'Stay a few years but we can't afford you, please move on.' The Abbey and the Albertines do not really foster that kind of attitude."

Realizing that fewer Albertines will be available to teach in the school in the future and being remarkably progressive, the school administrators have made efforts to retain lay faculty members by giving salaries matching those in local public schools. This, in the opinion of the head counselor, is another way in which The Abbey School is set above other Catholic schools. "The way you're going to touch anybody in society is to pay teachers. Get the best people. Get people flocking to the school and then everything else will bud from there."

The dedication of the faculty is remarkable according to one teacher.

Teachers here are enormously dedicated. They're all involved outside the classroom in a variety of capacities. Ninety percent of the boys go on to college so we really have to be on top of the game every hour in the classroom. Most of our teachers stay here because they really love it. Those who leave seldom if ever take another position in teaching.

With the exception of a few older Albertines, the faculty are dynamic teachers. One teacher said, Most of our veterans do not just stagnate. Most of them are growing, thriving. It's remarkable to see people who have been in the classroom longer than I have, who are still excited about what they're doing. When teachers stop being students, they lose their effectiveness.

#### Hiring and Orientation

Father Barnard tries to hire teachers who "see themselves as facilitators of growth." His first concern is to employ individuals who are competent in their subject area. Given a choice, he selects persons who "share that very, very special kind of love for the kids in which they love to be with them, they love to see them grow, they love to lead them toward growth," a growth which "is an appreciation of themselves so that they can put themselves at the service of others." One teacher felt that it is as difficult to be hired on the staff as it is for a student to be admitted to the school. New teachers receive an orientation to the school over the course of several days from administrators and teachers, followed by individual informal orientation by experienced faculty members.

#### Faculty Religious Growth

The inservices provided by the principal challenge

teachers each year.

Each year I try and do three things in the inservice education. One is to concentrate on the history of Albertine education and Albertine spirituality. Secondly, I try and concentrate on some aspect of education, maybe spiritual education or spiritual growth. And the third is something which I think they should hear about [but] which they don't necessarily come up with, but which I think is necessary for their own growth. Those last two may not be spiritual things, but we have a faculty retreat every year. I encourage them to be involved as moderators for the reflection groups for the service things and to give retreats. The response has been most generous. I think they really see the importance of this after they experience it, even people who have had no religious training or no religious background.

One faculty member valued the faculty retreats.

My wife and I generally go to one if not two of those a year. The cost is minimal so you can afford to go. They are great opportunities to just get away and regroup. There are some interesting and helpful kinds of talks during the day and liturgies, as well as a chance to build community. These things are not held on school time, so if people go it means it must be

important enough to give up one's own time.

Although not all the teachers are Catholic, the faculty lives up to the expectation that they should "be visibly supportive of the school's Catholic, Christian mission."

Visibly supportive doesn't necessarily mean that you're in the front row of the liturgies, but that you're not speaking out against the mission, that you're visibly supportive without being personally compromised.

The Albertines attempt to help lay faculty members feel that they play a vital role in the schools. The Colloquium on the Educational Ministry brings faculty members from different schools together to share their common experiences. Follow-up has not been good, however, according to Father Barnard.

What has been suggested as follow-up for the Colloquium has not really been that effective, [for instance,] meeting in small groups. People are just too busy to do that. What is effective, though, is to do some of the more affective aspects of the Colloquium throughout the year. For example, we have a faculty liturgy and breakfast a couple of times a year. No agenda. We ~~just~~ have Mass and then everybody has breakfast together. Those are fun. No big deal things. Just time to relax.

The head counselor wondered if more could be done for



the spiritual development of faculty.

I think [we need to recognize] that it's not only that the kids are happy which makes a school great. Is the faculty satisfied, motivated, encouraged? Do they have too much to do? Are our expectations reasonable on them? Are we feeding them spiritually, too, so that they can grow right along our students? I would suspect that we don't pay as much attention to this as we could. There's a large expectation that there's a deep well and [that faculty] can just keep giving.

Lay faculty, according to several teachers, have begun to take on more responsibility for religious activities. The dean of students indicated that previously four or five teachers might have signed up to conduct junior retreats, considered to be the domain of the priests. This year 15 teachers volunteered. "I think people are discovering that it's really a meaningful thing to be intimate on this kind of level. [A faculty member] could get as much out of it as a kid going on retreat at the same time. We're not just giving, we're also receiving quite a bit."

#### The Student Body

The Abbey School educates 1,100 boys from all over the metropolitan area. Since tuition is \$2,400 a year, students come mostly from upper and upper-middle class families. A

five million dollar endowment provides approximately \$134,000 in financial aid annually to about 15% of the students. One teacher said,

Because we have a very generous kind of scholarship aid program that tries to assist any kid, we have a cross section of youngsters from all over [the metropolitan area]. The only requirement is that they're bright. So we have what looks like the United Nations here all the time.

According to one teacher, quality education, not religion, is the main reason for many students to attend The Abbey School.

The diversity of the student body is a distinct advantage in the education of students. Very wealthy students become friendly with the very poor. One teacher said of a certain well-to-do boy, "It's got to affect him some way. It's going to affect how he uses his resources later in life." It is a miracle in the view of the principal that so much can be accomplished by so diverse a faculty and student body. The richness brought about by such heterogeneity led one teacher to compare the school to a tapestry viewed from the back. "Everything's different with knots and ties and rough edges. While you're there you don't appreciate it because you're in the midst of it, but when you're on the other side looking at it, you see how it

all comes together."

In the view of the dean of students, "many times kids who are having the hardest time here are those from one parent families." While the school does not have any special programs to deal with such students or their parents, the counseling staff works with them. Parents on occasion contact either a counselor or a priest to seek advice and assistance. As the head of the religion department put it,

When Abbey takes on a student, we realize that we're also taking on the family, the parents and everyone else under the sun. So frequently the youngster will bring whatever is going on at home to school. If the teacher is sharp, he picks up on that, and then a combination of things begin to happen. If the teacher has a rapport with the student, he begins working with the youngster right there. If the situation is one which calls for it, the youngster is referred to the counselor right away, and the counselor is with that person the same day. We really do try to nip heavy problems. Sometimes I wonder [how] kids can go on with life [with] difficulties so big.

#### Religion Curriculum

Each of the required religion courses taught at The

Abbey School stresses five major themes: scripture, church, sacraments, Christian values, and faith and prayer. Religion is not presented simply as another subject; rather, we try to gear the young person to see that theology is the air they breathe. By doing that and by making it terribly practical and something that they can reflect upon in the totality of their lives, I think we avoid some of [the problems inherent in religious education]. All freshmen study scripture, one semester being devoted to each testament. Sophomore classes deal with the problems of adolescence and the foundation of Christian consciousness. The course is not designed as a content course but as a process course, using discussion to look at issues such as beliefs, personal relationships, sexuality, and morality.

Upperclassmen study religion for three of four semesters. Electives include courses on church history, moral theology, Christology, liturgy, varieties of religious experiences, advanced scripture (Pauline letters, John's Gospel), Christian yoga, and Christian family life.

Tremendous changes have occurred in the last few years in the religion curriculum. The principal stated that

When I was here as a student, the religion department was the weakest department in the school. The priests who really couldn't do anything else taught religion.

They weren't equipped to deal very much with people's questions or problems. Now I think many of the religion courses are too intellectual and too far advanced for kids.

While praising the strength of the religious curriculum, he felt that too much emphasis is given to allowing students to make their own decisions. He prefers to furnish students with more direction in spiritual and moral issues.

One teacher felt that a segment on social justice should be incorporated into a morality course. While the community service projects and senior internship bring students into contact with needy persons, there is not an intellectual or academic component which exposes [students] to a large world which you can't reach on these local projects, a large world in which there are a lot of issues of justice [which] need to be reflected upon. Bring in those movies that the Maryknoll Fathers put out showing the actual plight of all these people. A lot of [students] haven't seen much of that. [Explain] why things are that way, the interdependent economic structure, and the great debt of the third world. People don't understand what this means in terms of practical daily realities. You can ask, "How moral is that? What can be done about that?"

Such a course would reinforce the practical aspects learned

in service projects.

Religious topics are discussed in other classes besides theology. The chairman of the social studies department indicated that his department consciously deals with social justice issues.

I think, unlike math teachers, we have a built-in advantage because the kinds of historical topics or current events topics that are part of our syllabi can also readily translate into moral and ethical questions. I try to play the devil's advocate with the students in class and try to get them to explore as many sides of these kinds of these questions which are admittedly delicate. Students are questioning, probing, doubting; I find that you can turn them off if you come down with some hard line, absolute, moral position; you can put them on the defensive [or] possibly fill them with guilt. That doesn't work. I think they appreciate more honest explorations of these kinds of questions, (more than they want or need at this point). Telling them all the answers isn't going to help.

#### Religious Activities

The campus minister, Father Leyden, agreed with the principal that the overall thrust of the religion program is

to "create a community, a religious experience of something they can understand." A new member of the faculty, Father Leyden arranges retreats, liturgies and other religious activities. Others on the faculty feel that he does an excellent job.

Retreats. Student retreats form a large part of the religious program at The Abbey School. When faculty members take seniors off-campus for three-day retreats, other faculty members voluntarily substitute for the missing teachers. One retreat of great value is the junior leadership retreat, given by Father Barnard and several lay teachers to a selected group of fifteen juniors who will fill leadership roles as seniors. In the view of the head counselor, "The fact that Gideon doesn't take four other Albertines but chooses to take the dean, myself, and another lay teacher, really says something about Gideon and how he sees that it's a shared ministry here." Approximately half the senior class attend a retreat each year.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation. Every Friday, a para-liturgical service is offered to give students on different class levels the opportunity to receive the sacrament of Reconciliation. Students can leave their classes to attend. Underclassmen participate in days of recollection throughout the course of the school year. One teacher felt that the direction of the principal provides a

more visible commitment and priority to religious programs.

Eucharistic Liturgies. Mass is offered daily in the monastery chapel. Although there are frequent liturgies on campus, only four mandatory Masses are celebrated each year. Some faculty members like the idea that most Masses are voluntary. Students who attend do so respectfully and maintain a fitting atmosphere. Students not attending Mass are given free time. In the view of one teacher, this did not establish the right conditions for students to choose to attend. "I think it's too much to ask a young kid to make a decision [whether] to play around with his friends for an hour, or do homework, or go to Mass. Obviously the choice is to play around with your friends." Another teacher felt that bringing all the students together periodically provides a sense of community, over and above any religious purpose.

The principal prefers to have more mandatory liturgies, but is practical enough to admit that "That was something I couldn't win unless I did it all myself. The people that I had to depend upon [to plan and organize the liturgies] didn't want to do it." From two hundred to six hundred students attend the voluntary schoolwide liturgies. Many other smaller Masses are celebrated in the course of the year for varsity or junior varsity teams, for the casts of plays, or for other groups.



### Student Response

In general, students respond well to the religious program of the school in the opinion of faculty and students. Many students come from homes which are culturally Catholic or at least Christian. In the opinion of one teacher, the extent to which religion becomes personally meaningful depends on the particular family. He feels that the school needs to educate students on the religious meaning of things at this important time of their lives.

The question is, how much can you help them personally? There's ongoing religious activity here. We're trying to inculcate attitudes by actually doing the thing. You try to challenge them in the classroom in your teaching: "What does this mean to you?" You do that, but probably all you can do is teach. To what extent is this pre-evangelization or nurturing of faith? I suppose it's somewhat a combination of both, and different in different kids.

Although faculty members are happy with the way students behave, they realize that the school is not perfect. The principal stated that more can be done "in the affective domain. I see the students as ready for a lot more. Sometimes we tend to retreat toward what we know, what we're comfortable with, rather than with what they

need." Students understand and accept what is being asked of them, but many have not yet made a commitment to the ideals that are being taught. One priest indicated, "As I tell my students, maybe it's going to take the rest of your lives to understand that Jesus Christ is Lord. Once you understand that, then you change your life. It's going to cost you to make that change, that conversion."

Faculty members want students to see them as adult caring Christians. For instance, the dean of students works to have students see him beyond the stereotype of his job. To do this, he has taken on the task of arranging the junior retreats so that students are able to experience him as a caring individual, not just as the disciplinarian of the school.

### Themes

Decision Making. Students are challenged to look at their value systems. The dean of students stated,

Kids don't want to make the difficult choices that our faith calls us to make and [that] our happiness also calls us to do. I think that the hardest thing for these kids is to understand-- that all these other choices are empty, lonely, and alienated choices, such as drugs, sex, not having a faith, all those choices one can make.

According to the principal, "Students decide what is relevant for them. The only thing we can do is to [try to] form habits and to help them remember when they're in their twenties or thirties that they were accepted unconditionally and were loved unconditionally, that they have a place to come back to." This was echoed by one student: "Some teachers are quite frank in saying, 'Some of this you may not agree with this right now or may not find applicable in your life, but I want to make sure you have it so that when that time comes, which it will, it's there for you.'"

Friendship. Developing friendships becomes an important part of a student's experiences at The Abbey School. "I think a lot of people will miss the school when they leave it, [because of] so many close friends. I think that they'll probably enjoy college but they won't ever really encounter this sense of unity." A senior commented that, "The one thing I would look back on as I graduate from here of the many different things that I got out of this place, is friendship." Friendships unify students and faculty.

The image that comes to mind is some sort of athletic team that's all working together. Like a volleyball team, instead of a tennis team which is an individual thing. It's more like a unity where everyone depends on everyone else to succeed.

A Man for Others. The theme of "A man for others"

dominates the vision which faculty members have of the ideal graduate.

We're bucking the tide here, I think, in attempting to get them "we-oriented," to think of others as opposed to themselves. If you're not living that "we oriented" person-for-others philosophy with friends and family, I'm not so sure it makes a great deal of sense to live it out there [in the real world].

Another teacher commented in the same vein:

I think it means a lot to our whole educational system to train young men to be sensitive to the plight of others, to see this in a religious light, as "These are my brothers in Christ." To help them see that and have a real feel for it, that's very important for me.

#### Summary

Single-sex high schools are the exception in the United States today, especially in the western states. In an all-boys school such as The Abbey School, friendships often develop and last a lifetime. The male bonding produces strong ties to classmates; invariably it increases allegiance to the school and to its values. The generosity of the alumni of The Abbey School in funding endowment programs is evidence of this.

Many students attend The Abbey School because of its

outstanding academic reputation. Once enrolled in the school, they receive more than just a solid college preparatory education. They also become members of a school religious community in which there is a great deal of concern for the social aspects of religion.

Through the various service projects, students are challenged to examine the values they have acquired from their largely upper and middle class environments. They are exposed to the plight of many persons in American society. They are urged to become "men for others," sharing generously of their time, energy, and talents in helping others. Through service projects, they learn that love of God is best expressed through love of other human beings.

Students are challenged as well in their classes to look at their values. The faculty of The Abbey School is dedicated to producing graduates who are outstanding individuals, both academically and morally. While perhaps not all students will continue to practice their religion after leaving high school, the knowledge and experience they received at The Abbey School can help them make moral decisions. Eventually the warmth they experienced in the school may help them return to the faith of their adolescence.

Students receive a valuable cross-cultural experience at The Abbey School. The predominance of white upper and

upper middle class students is tempered by an infusion of Black and Asian students from lower economic settings. This cross-cultural experience is assisted by school administrators, who provide a great deal of financial assistance in an effort to attract bright willing students of different ethnic and social backgrounds.

Father Gideon Barnard, acknowledged as the religious leader of the school community, forcefully and eloquently enunciates the elements of his vision: religious habits must be cultivated and practiced if they are to become integral parts of students' lives; students must become religious leaders because of the education which they have received. His example and inspiration draw faculty and students alike to work to achieve the vision.

As with Annunciation High School, the number of religious on the staff continues to decrease. The Albertines have made great efforts to assure lay teachers that they are an integral part of the school, not just hired hands. Lay teachers have responded by enthusiastically becoming deeply involved in student activities and by expanding their teaching capabilities. All seem to realize that they share in the responsibility for the religious development of students.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### CARDINAL GIBBONS HIGH SCHOOL

#### Introduction

Founded as a boys' school in 1891 by the Philippite Fathers, Cardinal Gibbons High School became a coeducational school eleven years ago. Established as an adjunct to Gibbons College, the high school gained a separate identity in 1920 through the purchase of its present windblown hillside site overlooking a state university. An additional classroom wing erected in the 1960s expanded the campus as did the conversion of the four story monastery to house a new library, additional classrooms, student and faculty lunch rooms, a faculty lounge, and offices. A large gymnasium built in the early 1980s completed the compact campus. Football and baseball fields offcampus are rented from other organizations.

A program conducted in conjunction with Gibbons College distinguishes Cardinal Gibbons High from other schools. After attending the high school for three years, about two-thirds of the students transfer to Gibbons College and

graduate with a bachelor's degree six years after initial enrollment as high school freshmen. Other institutions also accept students as accelerated college freshmen after the junior year. Although the original intention was to have all students involved in this program, it was modified three years ago to allow for a fourth year of high school. About one-third of the students remain for a college preparatory senior year.

This cooperative program resulted from efforts of the Philippite community in the late 1960s to concentrate its efforts in fewer schools because of a diminishing number of members. Declining enrollment and regional economics singled out Gibbons as a school which should be closed. However, Philippite religious superiors decided to keep Gibbons open because of its historical significance. Task forces studied every aspect of the school and made sweeping changes in major areas. The student body became co-educational. Changes in the curriculum revitalized the school, stabilizing its enrollment and financial support. A recent survey by a local marketing research organization revealed that Gibbons now has the most demanding academic program in the region.

Reflecting the male origin of the school, boys form 63% of the student body of 535 students. About one third of the students are not Catholic. Almost 16% of the students have



ethnic minority backgrounds. One third of the students come from public elementary schools, half from Catholic parochial schools, with the remainder from other private schools. The tuition of \$2,990 is higher than the average amount paid for comparable Catholic high schools in the area. About 30% of the students receive financial aid totalling \$110,000 annually.

### Collegio

The collegio, an integrated program of religion, social studies, and English, forms the heart of the curriculum in the freshman and sophomore years. Team-taught, the program emphasizes that religion is an integral part of life, not just a Sunday "add-on." Collegio classes occupy from one to three hours each school day. In the words of the religion department chairman, "We provide a religion program that keys into the students' needs and uses the areas they are interested in. We use that as kind of a hook to draw them in . . . to a consideration of their own religion." Movies or television programs often serve as starting places for such considerations.

For instance, we show [the movie] The Breakfast Club in class and then focus on two aspects: the friendships and the mask aspect. Then [we] have them look at those in terms of themselves. . . . "Is there anything there

that you can see has to do with God?" What we try to do really is to open up the possibility of them experiencing God in their day-to-day lives. So, they can taste God while they're watching the Cosby show as well as at Mass.

Another teacher talked about the school in holistic terms.

Gibbons fundamentally tries to create a new environment wherein the individual student begins to see himself or herself as a growing human being, growing toward dignity, independence and responsibility. Dignity, first of all, is the basis for love. Independence because one cannot be a member of the community without providing something freely. Responsibility means that one is responding by participating in the community.

### Building Community

Because students come from as many as eighty different feeder schools, the school begins its efforts to integrate them into the school community during the summer before the ninth grade. Groups of fourteen freshmen gather with several upperclassmen and two teachers for overnight retreats concentrating on the theme of community. These retreats were described by one of the teachers involved in them.

We try to teach them on their level first, and then bring them along as they develop in their own

adolescence. [Through the overnight retreats,] the kids get together and they start looking at community, at responsibilities, contracts, and covenants within their classes, just in order to exist socially. After a couple of years, they'll study [this] on a more academic level, but they're not ready for that at the start. They try to relate that to their own phenomena, [which is] their own religious development as a community here at school.

Emphasis on the theme of community continues through both the freshmen and sophomore years, gradually broadening to include awareness of the metropolitan and regional communities, Christian communities, and the global community. In the junior and senior years, religious courses stress the Church and sacraments as elements of a religious community.

The sixty students in each collegio provide a strong support group for one another. Realizing that students otherwise will not have much contact with classmates in other collegios, the faculty stress the importance of involvement in athletics and other activities.

Students sense that the school is a caring community with few cliques. The daughter of a teacher decided to attend Gibbons after witnessing the funeral of the child of another faculty member. Seeing the entire student body in

attendance, the daughter commented, "In a public school, this wouldn't even be mentioned. Nobody would care. Many people wouldn't even know." She was impressed at the sense of sharing that experience. Similarly, one student stated, "Everyone cares about one another. If you're involved in an accident, [even] people who don't know you come up and ask you if you're all right."

Community is built in other ways as well. One veteran teacher recalled earlier days when football teams would be required to attend the team Mass before games. Participation now is voluntary, but "it's a real experience to go over to that Mass that the football players have. No pressure to be there or not be there. [But] talk about building community, it's happening there."

#### Religious Activities

Gibbons High School does not have a strong campus ministry program in the view of the principal. Yet, many religious activities occur. Weekly on Wednesdays about sixty students choose to attend an optional Mass in place of a study hall. Various collegios and other groups organize and prepare these Masses in which students can experience liturgies which differ from typical parish Masses. Thus students are able to pray with a group in ways that met their needs. An annual Mothers Communion Breakfast involves parents in a religious activity within the school.

Teachers at Gibbons emphasize that the prime allegiance of students lies with their parishes. For this reason some religious activities such as penance services are not scheduled at the school. The religion department head stated,

We try to say, "This is what we're doing here. We want you to take that out and experience it outside, in your family, in your parish, because this is not your primary community." We certainly try not to pull them away from their parishes. Obviously [that will occur] in any school because that's where their athletic teams are and where their dances are held.

He continued, "We try to do a lot of experiential kinds of things in our classrooms, especially in collegios. That's why we have a retreat program that's run through the collegios." This allows students the opportunity "to become open to the experience of God in their lives, in people, in the events of their lives, and in the surroundings of their lives." Retreats during the upper years take the form of encounter retreats.

Better activities to help students develop a sense of prayer are needed, according to the religion department head. "We don't teach them prayer methods. We don't pray with them in the classroom. We don't ask them to pray and we don't give them techniques for continuing prayer in their

own [lives]."

### Community Service

Students carry out a service project lasting at least a week in each of the first two years. The junior year project requires at least two to three hours a week for twelve weeks. Students are taught to write in journals as a way of encouraging them to reflect upon their experiences. In this way they learn a method of integrating values and judgments into their lives. In particular, the service projects helps students realize their responsibility to help others. One teacher said, "Students learn to give of themselves. It's very community oriented in the sense that people need people and you can't go through life alone." The service program helps students understand their own identities by coming to understand their relationships with others. It also holds the possibility, according to the religion chairman, "of experiencing God at work either in them or in these other people."

Although service projects are mandatory, the principal worries that the school does not inculcate a desire to serve: "I don't get that sense. [Students] don't have that strong sense that you should serve, or that we have much that we should share." A teacher echoed the same feeling:

I don't think the students understand yet what it

means. They haven't come to the insight yet of what it means to give to others. I would parallel it this way: these kids are too young to know what love is, in the sense that they can love, in a mature sense. They are very aware of what love is when they are loved but they have yet to get the inside of what it is to love, to give, or to sacrifice.

Since most students become deeply involved in school activities, they have a limited amount of time to devote to outside interests. The only outside involvement in parish activities of which one teacher was aware was actually school related. Students in an upper level religion course were required to interview parishioners and the pastor to find their views on the Church.

One purpose for service projects is to help students acquire a better world perspective. "Maybe they couldn't change the world alone, but they have enough skill at [the] point [of graduation] to at least begin pulling a few other people into helping them change the world." Another teacher commented that "There's a strong attempt to get a balance so that kids are aware that there are other needs. Community service is one way of doing that." Values learned in service projects are reinforced through classwork. For instance, ethical questions on social justice are studied in sophomore collegio classes in connection with a study of the

world and the role of the United Nations.

### Religious Aims of the School

The purpose of the school, according to the head of the religion department, is to provide an initial religious experience upon which students could build lifetime values.

Some will choose to build on that and some won't. It seems to me that all we can do is provide them with those experiences and with some skills, like being able to read scripture and find their way around scripture, of knowing the Church they have belonged to or will belong to, of knowing what that Church means in terms of its service to others, and of knowing what it means to be working for peace and justice in the world. With [those] experience[s], then they can go where they want. That's what we're trying to do, to create people for the future.

Faculty members stress the development of inner discipline, both intellectual and spiritual. Several students described the school's approach in different ways: Students are "not taught, 'This is what it is, you can't question it.' The way that we're taught is, 'If you've got a question, ask. If you don't believe it, okay.'" Students are taught to think for themselves.

When you get to high school you think more for



yourself. The influence of your teachers and parents doesn't have as much of a bearing on you as it would when you're younger. You come up with your own ideas and maybe you don't know exactly where you're at, so you probably break away from religion a bit. However, when you're older, you might feel a need for it and get a lot more religious.

Faculty members realize that not all students fully accept the tenets of the Catholic faith while in school. "Faith is something you've got to wait and see what happens. I agonize when I see kids to whom it doesn't seem important; hopefully we're building a background that they'll come [back] to." Freshmen and sophomores become more involved in religious activities such as attending Mass, collegio retreats, and mission fundraising than do older students. In the junior and senior years, "that's when they really begin to break away from their parents. That's when they begin to reject prayer and resent [it]. They resent having scripture brought up, even resent having it read in class. They resent even the suggestion that Mass is a good thing. There's a real shift that takes place."

One teacher believes that teaching religious values to resisting students is worth the effort:

The intellectual pursuit of religious questions is part of our tradition, part of what it means to be human. .

. . The intellectual disciplines will draw the kids at least to ask the questions and to have to struggle with them. I doubt that there's going to be much metanoia [change] at this level, but perhaps there might be.

Another teacher compared the school to a farm on which "there's a lot of seed being planted and certainly a lot of manure being put on; we get some stuff growing in good soil and some on the hardpan. We see just a portion of the harvest. Most of the harvesting is done by somebody beyond us. It takes a lot of love and care, and it takes a lot . . . of concern from the parents and the faculty."

Parents generally respond positively to the approach used by the school.

You'll get the people who'll say, "Aren't you telling these kids that they have to go to Mass on Sunday? Why don't you offer confessions in the school? Do you talk about the Ten Commandments? Are you teaching them doctrine, the Baltimore Catechism?" But as a matter of fact, when we explain the program and what we're doing, they understand the rationale behind it, and they recognize the rightness of it; so we get a lot more praise for what we're doing than complaints about it.

#### The Philippite Community

Philippite priests occupy key roles in the school as

principal, religion department chairman, development director, and as members of the Board of Trustees. They act as the glue binding the school community together, according to one teacher. The local Philippite community of five priests, residing in two houses on the edge of the campus, provides a strong influence on the school as a whole. One teacher felt that

They have a real strong community. That spills over toward the rest of the people that are working with them, in overt and covert ways. You can pick it up from their own community, their own lifestyles, their involvement. For instance, [principal] Tim Barnett went down to Peru, first by himself, then with a group of kids. You get an idea of what their own life is about in terms of their commitment; then they bring that back to campus and share that with the people who are here, the lay people.

The time that the Philippites devote to the school impressed another teacher:

Their numbers are few but the kinds of things in which they're involved are some things I can't do. I'm married and do other things and [have other] responsibilities. Those guys are all over the place. I guess they have to be.

One nonCatholic teacher admired the Philippites for

their commitment to education.

The Philippites have always been perceived as being academic in the pursuit of educational excellence themselves. They have been men who have freed themselves up from a lot of life's requirements so that they could [dedicate] themselves more to teaching. The community perceives the Philippites as being a breed to themselves, highly intellectual, highly motivated. I think it's hard to find lay faculty who are that way, who have been able to free themselves up, who don't have to worry about house payments, or who are able to educate themselves with the same number of degrees.

Teachers feel that the administrators have done an excellent job of making them aware of the mission of the school. In the view of one priest, the Philippite ethos of Gibbons is perhaps stronger at present than it had been when the majority of the faculty were Philippites.

When [teachers] were all Philippites, we didn't bother to articulate it. When there was a majority of Philippites and a few lay people, we [still] didn't bother to articulate it, because we presumed they knew. It was "watch us." Now that we're the minority, we are at pains to explain what's going on. In that sense there's a clearer understanding of what is specifically Philippite.

The Philippite priests on the staff make a "real good effort" to help other faculty members understand the nature of Philippite education through faculty meetings, the annual faculty retreat, and informal discussions.

The principal, Father Tim Barnett, provides much of the example himself. On sabbatical leave several years ago, he went to Peru. During the 1984-85 school year, he took a group of students to South America to work on a service project. He planned to take another group during the summer of 1986. His individual gift to faculty members of subscriptions to Maryknoll Magazine, dedicated to third world mission efforts, reflects his interest in social justice causes.

#### Faculty

The faculty consists of 26 full time and 16 part time teachers of whom 20% are nonCatholic. In the opinion of one priest, the service of the faculty provides a model to students. "I'm not sure the students recognize that, but the faculty recognizes it. People give service to the school over and above what is required all the time." Another teacher compared the example of teachers to the modeling by parents of love: "I would say the community service projects, the collection of money during lent, food baskets, etc., are critical models. They are outward signs

[almost] of the sacramental order. They are outward signs to test the complacency of [the students'] immaturity."

Teachers are deeply concerned with students, according to several teachers. "We have very, very involved teachers who really like the kids and are involved with the kids on a human basis, [but who] retain our dignity as adults or as teachers." Faculty members see their work as more than just a job:

How many people get paid to go and think and read and talk to people about ideas? My God, what a wonderful opportunity! It's almost not a job. [I'm] kind of ashamed to take money for it, except that I have a wife and four kids.

Because several teachers work together in each collegio, a sense of ease in discussing religious topics exists among them. This results in strong interdepartmental dynamics with much interaction. Teachers feel that the administrators respect them and give them freedom to work out their curricula.

Administrators look for prospective teachers who project a good image and have a clear sense of the role of religion in the school. New teachers grow into the spirit of the school, in one teacher's opinion. "We're a different school than any others they've seen or visited." The amount of work that teachers throw themselves into lead people to

conclude that "there has to be something more that you're getting out of it" from a low salary.

Understanding of the Philippite philosophy of education comes easier to those lay faculty members who received their high school or college education in Philippite schools. In addition, several faculty members formerly belonged to the Philippites as seminarians. Their previous experience with the Philippites greatly assists them in understanding the philosophy of education at Gibbons. Still other teachers enjoy a long association with the school.

#### School Spirit

Respect for self, for others, and for property receive stress continuously throughout the school year. Students, according to one teacher, know that they will be dealt with fairly. Faculty members hope that the respect students have for one another will be evident in their treatment of one another and in their concern for others.

In general, students find Gibbons to be a pleasant environment. One teacher commented that, "This is a happy place for a kid to really be nurtured; they can grow here. They don't [suffer from] embarrassment by doing things that I know would embarrass other kids in other schools and situations, [such as] speaking out on a subject or prayer in class."

The school is a beehive of activity involving students and teachers. The religion department chairman stated that "There's always something going on here. You have a sense that the faculty is going in a lot of different directions all at the same time. And yet not in frantic ways but just in very productive and celebratory ways, recreational ways. People enjoy each others' company." Students also find strong friendships among their classmates.

One English teacher, acknowledged by his peers as the most intellectual of the faculty, used the analogy of a phenomenon in modern physics to describe Gibbons. Material objects can be viewed in several ways. Ordinarily they are perceived as solid objects with the characteristics of size, mass, and shape. On the atomic level, however, they can be described in terms of the energy possessed by individual atoms. Similarly, a school is frequently viewed only as buildings and people. Its inner energy is not often glimpsed because observers see only the externals. "Obviously when I get down to the bottom, that energy is love." Pure love is God, the energizer, motivator and source of any other energy within the school.

#### The Ideal Gibbons Graduate

The ultimate aim of Cardinal Gibbons High School, in the words of one teacher, is to matriculate students who are



"able to enter into the world, to dialogue and to ask questions, to be sensitive, intelligent, rational, and responsible. . . . Those persons are open to the world and open to the Spirit. I believe conversion can take place there." Such students, according to another teacher, will be those "who learned something" during their time at Gibbons and have been affected by the school program. They are "enthusiastic about a change in their life attitude because of something that happened at school." That might have been a social situation which was finally worked through, "getting really excited about a class and wanting to learn," or "having a religious experience." The faculty "project twenty years down the road for the kids" by providing them with the skill to express themselves and to analyze situations.

The process of educating students is an unending one. The school is like an unfinished building, to one student, "where every student that goes through the program places [a] brick." The experience of educating one class is slightly different from that of the previous class because faculty members have grown and matured somewhat each year.

#### Summary

There is a distinctive integration of religion into the curriculum and everyday student life at Cardinal Gibbons

High School. In the collegios, students come to understand the relationship of religion to other academic disciplines. Students provide support for one another by their close associations in the intense setting of the collegios. In this way, a deep sense of community develops among students and teachers. Yet, school personnel do not want students to feel that the school faith community is a permanent one. Efforts are made to help students associate with their parishes as their natural religious communities.

Great emphasis is placed by the faculty on helping students develop skills for adult living. The ability to think through a problem and develop solutions is stressed. Students are not judged harshly, but are allowed the freedom to experiment and make mistakes in the process of developing the values which will guide them in the future.

In addition, students gain a sense of responsibility through service projects. They come to realize that the world beyond their immediate interests can be changed only through their concern and involvement. Teachers try to instill a sense of inner discipline, making students understand that purpose and resolve are needed to accomplish noble ends.

As at Northside Catholic, the faculty and administration realize that students cannot be forced to accept religious values and practices. Lifetime values and

commitments will be made only if students sense that their religious experiences at Gibbons are meaningful. Teachers are willing to wait and see, giving students nudges in the right direction, but not attempting to force values upon the young people.

Perhaps the strongest factor in directing students is the example of teachers. The dedication which they show in putting forth far more than a minimum effort is noticed and appreciated by students. Their devotion is evident in the time and energy they devote to assisting students.

In particular, the Philippites provide direction and models for the faculty and students. They are united under Father Barnett in clearly stating and working to accomplish the mission of the school. The religious environment of the school nurtures the spiritual development of students.

A realization exists among teachers that there is much more that could be done and that some religious areas of the school need improvement. Yet, they do not lose heart, but redouble their efforts to provide religious experiences which will help students become adult Christians.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### MARYHAVEN ACADEMY

#### Introduction

The smallest and most expensive school visited, Maryhaven Academy charges its 175 girl students tuition of \$6,000 annually. Originally the townhouse of a wealthy tin baron, the present building had been donated to the school by his widow in 1939. Before that time Maryhaven had been located in several other locations in the city after its founding in 1888. A convent school, it educated the daughters of wealthy Catholic families in social graces and liberal arts.

#### School Traditions

In earlier days, the school was staffed almost entirely by Sisters of the Incarnation of Mary, a community founded in France in the 1700s. According to one veteran teacher,

Back in those days, . . . everything was more uniform. The expectations were more uniform. Now it's much more diverse. I don't know how much of it is the differing

times. But it was a much quieter environment because there was a philosophy of what ought to happen in the school from eight to four. . . . The philosophy of what ought to be happening was more uniform among a society of religious than it would be among a group of people from different backgrounds.

In the view of the dean of students,

there was a great deal of tradition and Incarnation culture very evident in our daily lives when I was a student here. It has changed. It's wearing a new face, but the foundations are still the same. The strength is the individual and [collective] goals that we have set up for our students and for our faculty; they're still here in the community. The goals are being lived out.

Changes in the school are in keeping with the philosophy of the foundress of the Incarnation Sisters.

[She] had a strong thesis in her moral educational ideology; basically it was that education has to serve the challenges of the changing person, the changing society. . . . I think that's what this school is doing, keeping the best [of the old] and taking the best from the future and the present.

### Networking

In the early 1970s, changes within the Incarnation Sisters stemming from Vatican Council II brought about changes in the school. The present principal reflected that the sisters

were struggling, trying to keep people on board who really didn't want to be in this kind of business. . . . All of a sudden people starting seeing that the question of education is a very strong thing. People were walking away from something that was tremendously valuable for the Church, especially the Church in America.

As described by one of the sisters, the Incarnation Sisters made the very painful decision to close some of our schools. The next step was to say that we needed to have some criteria [if a] school [was] to be called a Incarnation school. We developed a network of Incarnation schools; then we developed some goals that would be a mark of those particular schools. We had come out of a past [in which] there had been a common curriculum for all of our Incarnation schools throughout the world; [that] had to be modified in the 1950s because of governments in other countries. The modification for this country made in the 1970s was a further step in that process.

The common goals established for networked Incarnation schools are:

1. To develop faith which is relevant in a secularized world;
2. To build a deep respect for intellectual values;
3. To create a social awareness which impels to action;
4. To build community as a Christian value;
5. To foster personal growth in an atmosphere of wise freedom.

The principal believes that the goals of the network give needed direction to the school.

Now you really have to say, "These are the goals, and this is the way you're supposed to carry them out. If [you're not doing it that way], then you don't belong in the network." I think the influence of [the founders of the network] is felt very strongly. I think it was great foresight; I think it's a wonderful vision.

The network assists each school to maintain common values. Enriched by the rich tradition of the Incarnation Sisters, the schools share common feast days and the history of saints and other outstanding persons.

Boards of trustees established in each of the schools are entrusted with developing methods of carrying out the philosophy of the Incarnation schools. Since the boards are

largely composed of lay persons, biennial conferences provide school heads and board members with an understanding of the common goals of the schools. However, the Board of Trustees at Maryhaven did not yet exert any great influence on the school. It will take more time for the Board to become sufficiently familiar with the operation of the school to be able to influence it in a substantial manner.

A team of administrators and faculty from other network schools evaluate each school in the network every six years to determine if it maintains the common goals of the group. Faculty members receive training on evaluation techniques to assist them in this process. As a sister commented, "[We recognize that] not only will there be fewer Incarnation Sisters in our schools, but the day is coming when there will perhaps be none in a given school. Therefore, we are doing what we can to [insure that] the lay people who are involved are well trained."

Each school in the network is assessed an annual fee to underwrite the costs of workshops for teachers and board members and to provide grants for some schools. A network development office has been established to obtain grants for the network as a whole.

The networking of Incarnation schools provides a valuable support system to lay teachers. Sister Catherine, the head of the religion department, stated that teachers in



different schools work together and "formed some of the bridges that just happened automatically [when] you had a bunch of nuns who knew each other. Now you have to structure that sort of connection. There is a sense of trying to shape and pass on a tradition and value system." Because individual sisters will be transferred after a few years in a school, "it's the dedicated lay people who are in the school year after year," who provide the continuity of tradition. One lay teacher commented:

One of the things that I respect about the network is that it is attempting to integrate religious and lay educators in a working relationship, more than I have seen anywhere else. It's been a wonderful relationship. I've done a lot of school visits, and I can't tell you how growing [an experience] that has been for me.

The real strength of the network, according to one teacher, lies in the support which each teacher receives. "Maryhaven is so much more than just what you get from the people here because it's worldwide. It's nationwide. We all have the same goals, the same ideals, and we're all working for them."

One disadvantage of the network felt by several teachers is a separation from other local Catholic schools.

We're not that involved in conferences and [other]

sharing situations. We should be. The network is tremendous and exciting, [but] in some ways it has contributed to our being isolated. [At one time] Maryhaven wanted to be separate from the diocesan [education] office. We don't have that need any more. We need to integrate ourselves.

Maryhaven can contribute to Catholic education in its area:

I could see us as being a leader in Catholic education. Now there might be some Catholic educators who would resent that tremendously. Maybe we need to do something about our image in the greater world of Catholic education.

#### The Incarnation Sisters

The Incarnation Sisters provide a very strong influence in the school, even though their numbers are vastly diminished from earlier years. A study carried out early in the first lay principal's term had indicated that there was a serious lack of faith in the school. Most of the sisters on the faculty at that time were middle aged or older women who "had a a lot of doubts about the value of changes, and [who] weren't all that strong," according to one sister. In response to the study, the Incarnation Sisters brought in several younger nuns who were dedicated to improving the situation. The religion curriculum was strengthened, and

more emphasis was placed upon religious activities and liturgies. One former nun somewhat cynically stated, "I'm not saying that our faith isn't just the same as it was before, but [now] we have the visible symbols" of sisters involved in religious activities.

#### Governance

Maryhaven is one of the first among a growing number of Catholic girls' schools to have a male lay principal. A former Christian Brother with extensive experience in school administration, Lawrence Halliwell became principal ten years ago when the Incarnation Sisters found that they could no longer supply a principal from their own ranks. His previous experience as a Catholic school principal and religious superior gives him the sensitivity to deal with religious concerns of Maryhaven.

Halliwell's' background keeps him from falling into the types of problems which he sees in a nearby Catholic high school where two successive principals had been hired directly from public schools. He compares their experiences with his unsuccessful attempt to be the headmaster of an independent private school: "It's a whole different ballgame. I knew I was out of my element; they're out of their element."

Halliwell's style of administration is low-key, yet

perceptive. One teacher commented that "he never pretends to know all the answers; he knows his teachers well and is always open to suggestions and asks for input. His door is always open. . . . He's one of the best administrators I've worked for."

Besides Halliwell, the deans of studies and students are also lay persons. However, Sister Agnes occupies the position of Director of Maryhaven and two elementary schools associated with the Incarnation Sisters. As such, she is responsible for financial development and the overall thrust of the three schools, but she does not become directly involved in the daily operations of any one of the schools.

#### Religious Leadership

Faculty members feel that Sister Agnes, Halliwell, and the other administrators ultimately provide religious direction for the school, but that the proximate leadership of the religious program comes from Sister Catherine, head of the theology department. Teachers in the religious department are seen by other faculty members as the professionals in charge of religious activities. Sister Catherine indicated that when she arrived five years ago, although there was a chaplain on the staff, no one really had any responsibility for campus ministry, "so I took it on." Campus ministry at Maryhaven includes liturgies,

retreats, and the service program. A gradual separation between the theology department and campus ministry is evolving at Maryhaven, but a formal distinction has not yet been made. A priest on the faculty, Father Morgan, teaches religion and is responsible for school liturgies, but is not officially considered the campus minister in charge of retreats or the service program.

Maryhaven is really a school searching for someone to provide it with strong religious leadership. Considerable strides have been taken in developing campus ministry and community service programs, but faculty members feel that they show only the beginning of a new spirit on campus. "If we are basically a Christian school, it should permeate. It shouldn't be boxed in the theology department." Another teacher said: "The faculty and parents need to be brought in more to the process of creating an overall religious environment." Sister Catherine wondered how this could be done. "How do we make this a collective experience and get it out of the department? It helps now that various faculty members help with the reflection groups. But we've got to break loose of being categorized."

At present, many faculty members relegate religious activities to others rather than sharing the responsibility for their achievement. For instance, the dean of studies feels that the theology teachers should take "an even more

active role in impressing their objectives and their goals on all the faculty." The dean of students indicates that someone should be appointed as the campus minister to prevent it from being lost as other school activities had in the past. Sister Catherine complained about these attitudes: "None of this should be dependent on [a particular] person or job. . . . Something needs to permeate throughout. It's too program oriented."

In the past, religious leadership had emanated from the sisters in administrative roles. Now, the lay administrators look to the theology department for that leadership. Other departments also look to the theology department:

The theology classes could have more of an impact on the English classes; for instance, in literature when you're studying immorality in a play, have the English department turn to the theology department and say, "How should we discuss these things?"

#### Faculty

Even though half of the faculty members are not Catholic, all should share the responsibility for the religious life of the school according to Sisters Agnes and Catherine. A lay teacher echoed this feeling in stating, "I think that it's very important to make clear to the people

who are pursuing a job here, what kind of community we are and the type of person that we are looking for to promote the spirit of our community." A faculty member unable or unwilling to become involved does not belong in the school and eventually will leave voluntarily or will be asked to leave the faculty.

Some of the lay faculty members have been at Maryhaven for over twenty years. The school gives preference in hiring to alumnae of other Incarnation schools because of their familiarity with the traditions of the group. Women who had left the Incarnation Sisters because of changes in religious life after Vatican II Council believe strongly enough in the educational traditions of the school to continue to teach at Maryhaven. In the words of one teacher, "People who are here and have chosen to stay here when they've had offers [to teach elsewhere] are committed. We share a commitment."

Although billed as retreats, annual faculty meetings function more as faculty workdays than spiritual exercises. Newer faculty members participate in network summer workshops in which they learn the spirit and traditions of Incarnation schools. Annual goal setting sessions with the principal allow teachers to establish personal goals consonant with those of the school.

Not all teachers, however, perceive themselves as

religious educators according to one teacher.

[While] teachers have the feeling that part of their role is to instill in our students values and a sense of morality, ethics, honesty and [other] attributes that any ministry would want to impart, I don't think that they feel that they are ministers of the Catholic Church.

There is a need for more inservice on Christian ministry.

If I had a goal [for] the next two years, it would be to share with the faculty an understanding of the important role that they have for these students as role models and as supporters of this community spirit. . . . There are times when we need to come together as an adult community and display that for our students together.

Most faculty members, however, recognize their position as role models. One teacher cited examples of this:

I see a great deal of concern and caring on the part of teachers, a lot of personal interaction with the students [on a] first name basis. [At] the death of one of the seniors a few weeks ago, the outpouring of emotion and genuine grief on the part of the faculty were real.

The death had been a very difficult time for the school community, but it was a valuable experience for the



students. The dean of students felt that "the students witnessed something that they had never experienced before. It was a call upon their faith and a call upon our faith as a community."

### Dedication

One former nun compared the sisters she had known previously with the present lay teachers.

I couldn't have found a more dedicated group of women teaching. . . . The nuns would turn themselves inside out to help children, no matter what their needs were. . . . The faculties that I've encountered teaching in our schools are just as dedicated as the nuns. They seem to have a special calling to go to the heart of the matter, the education of the girl [and] the non-Catholic, Christian girls. I think it's just remarkable that teachers are attracted to a school like this. . . . I don't know if it's the school or what it is, but that's the kind of teacher we get here.

Students find faculty members approachable. In the words of the librarian,

Almost every student finds one or more faculty members to whom she can talk about things, the things she could talk to her mother about, except she thinks she can't, because she's fourteen. . . . We all accept that involvement and responsibility because it also is part

of life with our students. So we get respect (though we don't say "Respect me") because we respect them. Students respect and look up to those teachers who generously make extra efforts for them and to those teachers who challenge them intellectually.

#### Faculty-Student Interaction

One strength of Maryhaven is the close relationship between faculty and students. Faculty members are unusually open to students in the principal's opinion.

We can't get away from them; we don't have the space to move. There's a tremendous amount of interaction with the faculty. I look for that in people when they get here, how they interact with the kids. Can they drop down anywhere and talk?

Rapport often develops beyond a typical student-teacher relationship and deepens into friendship.

The faculty is willing to put "itself out on the line when it comes to students." In a larger school, a similar relationship would be impossible.

When you've got 32 in a classroom and you teach five periods, you can't have that contact. It's both the role modeling and the kind of contact that our teachers have with the students that provides for them a sense of "I am a person, unique and important, and I'm getting the best of what I can get right here." That's

what they call spirit. It creates an aura and an ambience in the school community. There's a lot to be said about our being in an environment like this. We're in a home. We're not in a sterile complex that has halls lined with lockers. We're in small spaces. That necessitates an element of sharing and compromising and using that kind of environment to the best advantage. I think what they call spirit is really that sense of personal communication with the people they deal with. I don't mean that in the "buddy" sense. They don't have to call me by my first name [or] the principal by his first name to have a close relationship. But it is a real and genuine extension of self to self here.

#### The Student Body

At one time it had been expected that parents and students would be staunch Catholics. The school had the image of being "snooty and snobby," according to one veteran teacher. "We used to think of ourselves not as the expensive Catholic school but as the cheap private school. Now, we're expensive in both areas."

Now the student population has changed, along with other aspects of life at Maryhaven. Over one-third of the student body is non-Catholic. Enrollment has dropped from a

maximum of 210 students to the present 175 girls, partly because of a downswing in the birthrate and partly because of the high tuition. About 6% of the operating income of the school, or about \$90,000, is set aside for tuition assistance for needy students.

About half the students had attended the associated girls' elementary school next door. One administrator profiled the typical student.

The type of person who comes to Maryhaven first and foremost is a student who seems to be conscientious, who wants to succeed, who wants recognition, and who wants recognition and affirmation from the people who are in this community. Secondly, [the parents] can pay the tuition. A lot of our kids are on financial aid, though. We have a good work-study program. [For instance,] honor students help me in my office. . . . There might be only one student from this part of town and [one from] that part of town, but [the student body] is representative of [the city]. . . . Even though it's been termed an affluent school--it is to some degree--that's not all it is. It's available to any student who can buy into the spirit and do that kind of work. . . . It's not for everybody. It's just for the people who want to come in and grow here.

### Family Backgrounds

Many of the students at Maryhaven come from families in which parents are divorced and remarried. While the school does not attempt directly to deal with such situations, counselors are sensitive to the backgrounds of students, and attempt to help them work through such family difficulties. Informal peer counseling also helps students in such difficult times. One teacher commented that "some of them, because of their family situations, may find here something that they're not getting" at home, such as a mother or father figure. Another teacher indicated that

we talk to our parents enough about . . . [providing] a support mechanism . . . for the academic religion program. . . . We need to talk more with parents and students about religion because it can't just be a dynamic that's in school [alone]. . . . We need to do more with our parents in retreats [and] religious education programs.

Parents do not always approve of the theology courses taught at Maryhaven. Coming from a pre-Vatican II background, a few parents "think the teachers are [not] forceful enough in their presentations of theology and that there are too many new and liberal ideas being presented," according to one student. Father Morgan, however, feels that parents generally support the religion program. In his view, the school provides an avenue for parents who have

drifted from the Church to resume some sort of affiliation through their daughter's involvement in religious instruction.

### Emphases at Maryhaven

#### Leadership

Maryhaven makes a conscious effort to furnish students with the tools of leadership so that they will make a difference in society. The school attempts to instill values so that students can make valid moral judgments in their everyday life situations. Students expect to be leaders partly because they come from families in which parents are models of leadership through their professional positions. Although the all-girls school provides its students with opportunities to practice leadership in student government, classes, and athletics, "they're learning to be leaders rather than [being] leaders here," according to the principal.

The dean of students, however, felt that "more kids have opportunities to participate" in student government, athletics, and dramatic presentations at Maryhaven because of the small size of the student body.

Because we're small, because we've spent time with our kids, . . . we can say "I think it would be great for Susie to try this," and invite Susie to try that. . .

. They might not have tried to run for an office, but working with them, we get them to run. We just had freshmen class elections. We have a class of 37 and we had seven girls run for president.

A counselor felt that the school is "a place of stability, encouragement, and empowerment" for many of the students.

### Individuality

The faculty places great emphasis on the individuality of each student. The small size of the school allows for a great deal of individual attention. In the tradition established by the founder of the Incarnation Sisters, each girl is considered to have a gift within herself. The role of the school is to "make the girl aware of herself and her potential, that she does have a value and does influence others. That's the most important thing that we do." Such awareness should lead a girl, according to the Director, "to really give her best," because the possibility for excellence exists in all areas of life.

Not all the girls consider the individual attention as desirable. Because the average class size is eleven students, each girl is called upon every day in each class. There is no opportunity to hide in the large middle portion of a class as there is in a larger school. As typical teenagers, "they want to get lost in the crowd." Maryhaven does not give them that opportunity.

The dean of students described ideal graduates as having strong personalities.

You would notice their strength as individuals. They would be able to stand up in front of a small group or a large group. . . . Their strength would be in their power of communication, their good sense of humor, their understanding and respect for the people that they were addressing and the people they were representing.

Another faculty member felt that such graduates have a sense that "the world does not revolve around them, and that there are other values and goals which they can work toward besides their own benefit and development."

They would be thoughtful of others. They would think before they act. They would be competent. They would have self confidence enough to be able to say "No" to things they felt uncomfortable doing, such as drugs.

"They would stand apart from the crowd. . . . They wouldn't be afraid to question certain issues," said still another teacher.

One teacher indicated that the emphasis on individuality occasionally engenders an elitist mentality.

How do you [develop] a school which is strongly academic in nature, is interested in preparing girls for leadership roles in the community and church,



without fostering a sense of looking different? . . .  
We don't want to foster the elite, superior mentality,  
and yet when you push in the directions that we push  
in, it's very difficult not to.

However, another teacher felt that "part of the education of the Incarnation Sisters in a lot of ways is meant to undercut some of that. Not undercut all of it because there's a real commitment to doing your best," but develop a sensitivity in students to the needs of others.

#### Community Spirit

The ideal graduate has "positive self-identity" but cares for others, according to several faculty members.

One of the things of which we're proud is that they come out with that sense of social awareness that they have had something of a very privileged nature. At the ring ceremony when they turn their rings from the heart facing in to the heart facing out, they verbalize the fact that this means that the love they've received is now to be shared.

An administrator senses a need to help students see beyond their individual talents and achievements to their roles as members of a community.

Our challenge, as administrators and faculty and role models for our students, is the fact that we live in a society where the students are geared to performance,

to their individual performance. We need also to bring them back to the community and focus on their performance as a member of our community. I think we do that quite well. [From] that sense of community stems all those values of appreciation, of love and honesty and truth and humor, all those things that come from community.

Teachers and students evoked various images in trying to explain the busy community life of the school. "There's a sense of being contained within some sort of space that allows people to bounce around, discovering who they are and what they're all about. [It's] a cross between a popcorn popper and bumper cars." The school is a kaleidoscope to one teacher, a big shoe with everyone in it to a student, and a jar filled to the top with different kinds of miniature candy bars to another girl.

Because the school is so small, we're all close like in a jar, but we want to be there. We all sort of have a certain sameness about us. I think that's good. I think we all have something homogeneous about us, yet we're different. We're diverse enough for our groups, but we're not so diverse that we aren't going to get along.

A teacher felt the school resembles a lacrosse or hockey team "where each one has a definite responsibility. Each

has to keep alert to everybody else."

### Family Spirit

Teachers and students also viewed the school community as a family, a value which a teacher felt was very important to girls coming from families which are not always fully intact. "They get a real sense of family" through the stability and permanence engendered in the school in imitation of genuine families. The librarian sees students going beyond themselves as siblings would in a family:

I think they really learn here to value their own contributions, but just as much [to value] the contributions that others can make. The teenage years for all of us are a rather selfish time. We're very much taken up with ourselves. Yet one of the things that I value most about what goes on here is seeing the kids delighted and pleased and excited about the achievements of their classmates. I believe that must stem from this spirit of community. They compete with each other, the way all normal kids do. If there's a good looking guy, look out. But just the same, it's a very supportive spirit, evidently based on faith.

The sense of community leads the girls to an awareness of their personal responsibility and to an acceptance of the consequence of one's actions. The faculty works to help students realize that they should not act "just on the spur

of the moment, but [should be] reflective people who attack life" in a moral way.

### Role Modeling

Maryhaven attempts to produce graduates who are outstanding examples to other. One teacher recalled a graduate who did not excel in college or in the work world, but truly could be considered as successful.

She appeared to be a complete person who was a contributor to her community, to her small microcosm; she was doing that in a happy way; she was happy with herself. That, I think, is really characteristic of our education. We like to say, and it's an honest thing to say, that we produce leaders here. I think that's true. When I look at the girls that I've taught over the past 17 years, I see them as leaders in the community. Not just in job situations, [but] many [are] in maternal situations. But there's an element of leadership there. That's what I see as a role model--the positive dimension of a woman going out into the world and being a source of inspiration and example to others.

### Curriculum

High academic standards exist at Maryhaven. All students take a full program of courses which satisfies the

University of California entrance requirements. Advanced Placement courses are offered in English, United States history, European history, French, Spanish, calculus, and Pascal. Parents expect excellent instruction in exchange for the high tuition. Students and teachers feel that the extremely competitive environment existing within the school places pressure on students to work harder. Even though one girl stated that "people who don't want to work hard are weeded out within the four years," the attrition rate is actually very low, with only a handful of students leaving between entrance and graduation.

Even though the image of the school included that of a highly intellectual student body, not all students are outstanding students. Even the most selective private school admits some students with lower academic potential, such as younger siblings of other students, or daughters of alumnae. "We say we are a college oriented school. We say that, and some of our new teachers say it, but it isn't true. We are educating the ones that need that special attention." In addition, one teacher commented that "The quality of our students has changed recently. We've allowed in students who might not be the same caliber as [students] in the past. I don't see that as bad. I see that as a strength, that we can accommodate that and be flexible."

### Religion Curriculum

The process of teaching religion at Maryhaven often amounts to pre-evangelization, presenting religious truths to students without outwardly labelling such concepts as Catholic. A teacher indicated the difficulty of teaching theology at Maryhaven:

On the one hand, there's a desire not to alienate the girls and meet them where they really are and call things by nonreligious names so that they can hear it. [But] there's a real fear that I'm being untrue to myself by not being as blatant about my own religious convictions. . . .You have to win them over before you can even get anything taught.

The faculty continues to grapple with the perception that "religion as such, especially in the classes, does not seem to be that important in the girls' lives. It's just another class." If anything, theology classes turn the girls off.

I guess the question that I'm asking is "It is necessary to make [the religion program] stronger?," or is it more important to give the girls a taste of what religion is, . . . so that when they get through their teenage rebellion against religion, they come back to their religion?

One student suggested that there should be more discussion

classes on ethics to make them more interesting and to avoid repetition of material learned in elementary school.

Students who are nominally Catholic often are "the products of a real secularized element of society," according to one teacher. Father Morgan estimates that the majority of students are not regular church goers. "The majority of the girls are pretty irreligious," easily criticizing the Church and abuses within it without also seeing the positive values of Catholicism. In this, they somewhat reflect the values of their parents.

Our girls are heavily influenced in their thinking by the whole feminist movement. I think they've certainly been encouraged in that by the Incarnation Sisters. To a large extent, that colors their attitude toward the institutional Church. On the two issues of abortion and the nonordination of women especially, the Church has lost a lot of credibility [in their eyes], and so they disassociate themselves from the Church because of those two issues. If they saw any possible change of attitude on the part of the Church towards women's issues, I think they would be more open to the Church. Once those two issues come up in any kind of a class discussion, the walls go up. You're fighting a losing battle with these young women of the eighties to a large extent because of that. I find myself having to

try to cultivate a more personal faith in Jesus [in the students], with the hope that they will gain more from that, something they can come back to in future years.

According to an English teacher, the whole thrust of the religious program is on

critical thinking, on urging them to examine their own lives and seeing where things fit. Not just religion per se, but these other elements of culture as well, making the students aware that when they make choices, whether it be what movies to go to or what entertainment to choose, they are acting out of a particular value system.

#### Community Service

Community service programs serve to elicit compassionate responses to situations which are not among the ordinary experiences of students. The director of the community service program, Patsy England, a young, dynamic, parttime teacher, explained the origin of the present program.

The program had been in effect for about two or three years in the sophomore year. The students would take a course that was a social issues course and at the same time work in the community in some capacity, approximately fifteen hours a semester. It had to be



done in those nine months [of the sophomore year]. A lot of students experienced frustration with the types of service that were available to them.

Feeling that the service program could be improved, the administrators hired England as its director in 1985. Her vision of community service involves the transformation of students, those served, and the school.

The students would be changed by their contact with various parts of society that they wouldn't normally contact; their actions within those parts of society would transform or act as elements of change in those sectors. Being changed, [the students] would bring that change back to the school community; then the school community would be transformed by them.

The service projects are important to the principal.

Schools can be very insular. The fact that [the students] have to do one hundred hours of service in the community is kind of a practicum in values.

At the beginning of the 1986-87 school year the service requirement was increased to 100 hours of service during the course of a girl's high school education. Since service is no longer limited to the sophomore year, more flexibility exists to carry out service projects during vacation periods or during the summer. Plans are underway to take several groups of students to an orphanage in Tijuana, Mexico and to

other network schools which have service projects in poor communities. In England's mind,

Those sorts of opportunities are going to be available to the students. Although it's a little early to tell, it's my hope that that sort of experience will be much more meaningful for the students and will eventually be something that the students will be excited about.

Students currently perform service in a variety of ways. One senior indicated that she had substituted for an absent freshmen teacher. This kind of service is in line with faculty perception of "an obligation to deal with the school community, . . . anything from keeping the school clean to the notion of social responsibility in a smaller community. People [are] in need here." As a sophomore the student had worked at "Seconds to Go," the school-run thrift shop which brought in over \$80,000 annually for tuition assistance. "But [the faculty] won't let you do that this year, because they want you to do something more religious," more directly beneficial to needy people. Other students assist with the retreats for the eighth grade girls in the adjacent girls' elementary school.

Father Morgan indicated that students feel comfortable with the service program.

I believe they see more value [in the service program] as the years go on and [are] appreciating it more. We

do as much as we can to bring the service program out of the Christian tradition of care for and service to a neighbor. So it's getting a good response now; I think the coordinator of that program is making every effort to open up as many different possibilities as she can find for the different interests and values of the kids. It's more individually attuned.

Students involved in service projects are recognized in awards ceremonies and on other occasions by the administration to inspire other students to similar acts of service.

Reflection Groups. To help students integrate the service program into their lives, juniors and seniors meet in small reflection groups once a week with volunteer faculty advisors. One teacher indicated that "I think a service program has little value if it doesn't provide the component [of reflection]."

Although originally intended as a means of allowing students to reflect on their community service experiences, students use the weekly hour to discuss a variety of topics, "basically values, the kind of values you hold. . . and your morals." One student likes the weekly session because

When you share things that are so personal, you get close to [the others in the group]. I like it because for a week you attend six or eight classes a day and

you never really [have to] think about anything. You get here for 45 minutes, and all they want you to do is think.

Patsy England indicated that students in her reflection group show "a lot of anxiety, a lot of fear, a lot of anger, about working with the poor and the elderly." One benefit of the groups is to provide "preparation for developing coping mechanisms for doing that kind of work." The service program can be improved, she feels, by giving students "the skills to deal with some of the things that are really difficult to deal with."

Many faculty members, including the principal, dean of students, and school director, participate as faculty advisors for the reflection groups. England admits that faculty advisors need more training, "so that the facilitators have a better concept of what the program is about."

The recent death of a student had been discussed in one reflection group for over six weeks since the event. Its advisor commented that "Some of the issues that have arisen have not directly impacted the service program but are aspects of the whole school community. Since Incarnation education is geared toward educating the whole child, I see the reflection groups as a really dynamic part of being able to do that."

### Community Involvement

One teacher feels that the school should become more involved with the religious communities in its vicinity,

Most of my spiritual life is focused on the school. I don't identify with my parish. I think a lot of our students feel the same way. On the other hand, I think we need to outreach a little more. We have a parish school and church nearby that we have had really no communication with. . . . We need to do something more ecumenical with the other religious organizations that are in our community. That could possibly be accomplished through the service program. . . . Maryhaven could be more than just a center of Catholic education. It could really be a religious center in this community.

### Religious Rituals

#### Retreats

Student retreats are held for students on school days, "so that you are accountable as you would be on a school day. . . . We couldn't make it mandatory on a weekend, so we give them two days from school." Faculty members are still trying to figure out how to arrange offcampus overnight retreats for underclassmen. To overcome

resistance to religious activities among students, retreats center on friendship. One girl noted that the retreat she attended "was more spiritual than religious," in other words, it was not overtly Catholic in tone. She indicated that a meditation exercise was a highlight of the retreat.

More faculty members should be involved in the retreat program, in the opinion of one teacher.

We've been kind of nilly-willy about retreats in the past. Some years we've had them; some years we haven't. A lot of that is dependent on the religion department. I would see a retreat program with all kinds of input and all the ideals of a modern retreat as one of the real advantages we could offer our students here; I would think that that is something we should talk about.

### Liturgies

Liturgies are held throughout the school year, particularly on holy days and feasts proper to the Incarnation Sisters. A Christmas liturgy brings students, faculties, and families of the high school and two associated elementary schools together. More elementary school families than high school families attend a family Mass on the first Sunday of each month. Father Morgan indicated that

the high school girls are more disconnected as far as

church is concerned; we don't see that much of them unless you actually ask them to [instrumentally] accompany songs or to read. There are exceptions, and they're the ones who have come up through the elementary years with the families and maintained that tradition in the family.

On other occasions, paraliturgical services are provided. For instance, the student council directs a friendship service to help bond students to their classes. A prayer service during Lent each year helps students to understand the need for penance in their lives. At other times, Father Morgan is available for private confession, although students do not generally avail themselves of this opportunity because they know him as a teacher.

Father Morgan commented about the antipathy of the students for some religious activities.

They do not like [religious] services, Masses or paraliturgies. A lot of times you hear complaints about having to go to Mass. And yet there are paraliturgies that have become very much part of the tradition of the school. If you were to eliminate them some year, you would really hear the uproar.

Students agree with the priest's assessment. The peak religious experiences for some students during their high school years are prayer services. "I think some of our

students particularly enjoy the prayer services and the liturgies and truly participate in them." Another girl enjoys playing the piano for Masses. "I get excited about playing these songs for Mass. It's great. The students love to sing; to play with them is just the neatest feeling." Another student summed up the attitudes of students toward religious activities: "I know some people who enjoy liturgies because of the singing or just because you sit together with your friends for an hour; they wait for the sign of peace."

Greater work is needed, Father Morgan felt, to increase student appreciation of and excitement for the liturgy.

They may like a particular song in the liturgy or some nonscriptural reading that is used occasionally, but because the faith dimension is weak or they don't have a lot of ties to the institutional Church, liturgies [lack] enthusiasm and an expression of joy and commitment. . . . That pains me the most, because I know how important the liturgy was to my own faith development; I sense that it's not going on with our students. I wish there was more we could do to make that viable for them.

#### Student Response

Faculty members differ in their assessment of student



response to the religious program of the school. The counselor indicated that very likely each student feels differently about religion.

I think some kids are very, very receptive and open and welcome the religious thrust. . . . I went on a retreat about five weeks ago with the eighth graders next door; five high school juniors acted as facilitators [in addition to] one of the theology teachers and myself. Those [high school] kids were just remarkable. Yet, one of them described herself as basically agnostic, but she was really into working on this retreat. There are kids like that, that are open. Then there are kids just as forthright with their questioning and their resistance, denial or disinterest. And then there are kids in between, who are still trying to figure out where they fit.

Father Morgan feels that "the students don't have a real love for the institutional Church. . . . If anything is too Catholic, you generally hear more complaints about it than if it's less so. . . . If things come out of [the official Church], they'll let you know that they don't like it being shoved down their throats in any way, shape or form." One teacher felt that

there's very little appreciation for what [religion] is providing them with while they're here. A very small

percentage of them, if you really ask them, would feel that the [theology] classes are worthwhile. Ten years after they graduate, they will begin to understand and appreciate what [Catholicism] provides them. I don't think that's a problem, but I don't think the students feel that [religion is] a strong point.

On the other hand, an English teacher feels that the response to the religion program is "fairly positive." Sister Catherine feels that the response has improved in the past five years.

[Religious instruction] has a sense of credibility. The students probably relate to the teachers as much as to the content of the courses. . . . We don't get any hassle at this point about "Why do we have to take this?" They're really practical in their perspectives on life. They try to get into good colleges. They figure, if nothing else, that it's not real hard to get good grades [in religion]. It does get averaged into the grade point average. . . . They've really come to like being involved in the liturgy. I never have any trouble getting people involved. There were no retreats when I first got here. The students have begun to take [retreats] on as a right; "When are we going on our retreat?" So I find it fairly optimistic.

Another teacher also feels optimistic about the response of students to the religion program.

I think our students by and large really appreciate the religion program. I think we need to adapt it in a way [so] that it's going to be more meaningful on the transcript, . . . [For instance], we could give names to the religion courses in the upper division that schools like Stanford and the University of California would accept. . . . That's holding out a carrot for the kids, but why not? In other words, we require them to take religion, and that's right and appropriate, but if they are making that time commitment, how can we then facilitate making [the transcript] represent course work that isn't rejected by colleges or universities?

#### Summary

Like the first impression of the baroque mansion which houses the school, the first impressions of Maryhaven can be deceiving. The marble lined entrance hall stuns the casual visitor with its beauty and spaciousness. But when one probes beyond the surface and looks more closely at the school, one finds that original bedrooms and servants' quarters have been divided into inconvenient and cramped classrooms and offices. The surface appearances of

spaciousness and grandeur are most misleading.

The casual visitor to Maryhaven might assume that Maryhaven has a very strong religious culture. The curriculum features a full course of theology classes; there are schoolwide liturgies offered at regular intervals; a great deal of emphasis is placed on Christian service programs; students attend retreats in the course of the school year. All these certainly are evidence for a religious culture. However, there is considerable evidence that the religious culture is not shared by all members of the school community.

As was described earlier in this research, a commitment by participants to the values of the organization is needed to have a strong culture. A school needs the concurrence of administrators, parents, teachers and students on the religious purposes of the school to have a strong religious culture. Such does not appear to be the case at Maryhaven since many students seem not to conform with the religious purposes of the faculty and administrators. In other regards, however, some of the characteristics of a strong school culture are clearly evident. For instance, the concern of teachers for the development of students emotionally, religiously and academically, the spirit of caring among faculty and students, and the presence of strong school traditions are indications of a strong school

culture. That culture, however, does not appear to be particularly religious, since it could characterize almost any school with a strong culture.

Improvements have been made in the religious culture of Maryhaven in the past few years. Several sisters new to the faculty have dedicated themselves to addressing some of the religious needs of the school. Greater emphasis has been placed on the religious curriculum and on religious activities, particularly on retreats and the Christian service program. The overwhelming spirit, however, still is that of a private school rather than a Catholic school.

In the spirit of their foundress, the Incarnation Sisters have been willing to change to meet the needs of a changing society. Being most prescient, they have prepared Maryhaven and their other schools to meet the challenges presented by diminished numbers of sisters. Networking of schools has provided lay administrators with guidance in methods of preserving Incarnation traditions while moving forward in situations radically different from earlier times. The cadre of sisters involved in the school have become visible symbols to the faculty of the dedication expected of them.

By assuming administrative roles in the school, lay persons have allowed the sisters to concentrate on teaching and ministry to students. The lay administrators, however,

still seem to be uncertain whether or not they should provide religious leadership to the school community. They still look to the sisters and the theology faculty, the religious professionals on the staff, for that leadership. Whatever gains have been made religiously have come from the efforts of individual faculty members. There is still no one strong leader who unites the school community by proposing a religious vision, persuading others to accept that vision, and working to accomplish it. The goals proposed by the Incarnation Sisters for their network schools have not become integrated by teachers or students in a practical way into the day to day operation of the school.

Many faculty members also seem unwilling to assume the responsibility for religious commitment. Understandably the large number of non-Catholic teachers are reluctant to assume spiritual direction in a Catholic school. They do provide role models of adult Christian behavior through their dedication and example, but they need clear direction in overtly religious areas from the administrators and sisters on their involvement in the religious mission of the school.

Students at Maryhaven generally are bright, independent, ambitious young people who take their education very seriously. They look forward to assuming positions of

leadership in the world. Christian service projects assist them in becoming aware of the needs of their community and in devoting themselves to working to alleviate some of the social ills they encounter.

Perhaps it is the independence of these young women which propels them in large part to resist the religious ideals of the Catholic Church. Affected by modern feminist ideas, they seem to associate the Church with the oppression of women. Although they come from Catholic or Christian homes, it seems that they are imbued with the values of modern pragmatic society to a higher degree than their counterparts in some of the other high schools visited. Teachers hope that the values which they attempt to instill in the girls will eventually win out over other secular values, but there seems to be little active effort on the part of the faculty to deal with the overall problem.

Maryhaven differs from the other schools visited in this study by reason of its size, economic status, and percentage of non-Catholic students and faculty. Its religious culture appears to be the weakest of the six schools visited. Despite that, its faculty has made a concerted effort to help young women grow into Christian adulthood despite their resistance or neutrality. For that alone, the school community deserves much praise.

## CHAPTER NINE

### ST. MICHAEL'S HIGH SCHOOL

#### Introduction

St. Michael's High School is located in a middle class, blue collar neighborhood on a busy, two lane thoroughfare. Situated in an aging, L-shaped, brick building, it was founded in 1939 as a diocesan high school for boys. The school flourished with a staff of diocesan priests, reaching a peak enrollment of 800 in the early 1960s. Every congregation of sisters in the diocese was expected to furnish two outstanding teachers for the school. According to a priest who has been on the faculty for many years, "it was a totally different school" than it is today. "We were worried about all kinds of extreme clothing regulations. . . . We had a full range of honors classes. We still draw some of those students, but we don't draw some of the higher socio-economic classes like we once did." During the 1970s, enrollment gradually declined until it reached 440 students in 1979. In order to revive the school, diocesan officials decided to admit girls and to hire a layman to replace the priest principal. Since then, enrollment has steadily increased until it now stands at over 700 students with the prospect of further increases. In the period when



enrollment was lower, several classrooms were converted into offices and a small chapel. Science labs were enlarged. The addition of girls' athletics required the conversion of other space to locker rooms. Now the school is badly cramped for space. As a result, administrators are involved in a capital campaign, trying to raise \$1.8 million for additional facilities.

One teacher compared the school to an old car in the process of being restored.

We're an old school with a lot of tradition. Now we have girls. Physically there's a building program and the curriculum is changing. There is a change from priests and religious running the school to laypeople. It's being restored, modified to fit the times and the needs of the kids.

Another teacher thought of the school as a grey cloud with a silver lining. "It doesn't look the best on the outside, but we understand that it's not what's on the outside that counts; it's the inside. We sure have a lot of silver or gold inside the walls."

St. Michael's was described by a teacher as being "less competitive and somewhat less academically demanding" than some of the other Catholic schools in town.

You don't have to be a superstar to really do well here. A good example is in athletics. Every kid makes

the football team or the track team. If you are of limited ability, you can really do well and feel good about yourself and feel that you're making a contribution. Academically, it's the same way.

The principal wants to maintain good education for the 50 to 60% of the students who are in college preparatory classes, but at the same time provide a quality education for students with limited or average skills. One teacher compared the school to a prism in reverse. "People are of all colors and come from all over." At St. Michael's, they all blend in together.

#### Finances

One of the main concerns of the principal is to keep tuition affordable to blue collar families of ordinary means. Annual tuition is presently \$1,600, lower than at the other Catholic high schools in the area. Most of the students come from middle income families, with a small percentage from professional and wealthy backgrounds. The school has an endowment fund of about \$400,000, most of which was willed to the school by the founding bishop to provide scholarships for needy students. The endowment, plus a diocesan tax of \$80 per student from the home parishes of students, supplies \$140,000 in tuition assistance annually.

### Religious Leadership

St. Michael's is administered by Tom Nedding, a dynamic ex-Christian Brother. Faculty members state that he has guided the school community very well in his five years as principal. According to a counselor, "When he came, this school changed quickly. It didn't take long. People felt his courage and genuine concern for the school. People weren't afraid of him or what he was saying. They really believe in what he has to say."

The main difference which faculty members feel between Nedding and his predecessors is not

that people didn't believe in them; it's just that they weren't going anywhere. Tom's going places. People like that feeling. He gave them the feeling that they were okay and he believed in them. . . . Since then, a lot of teachers have gained a lot of vision just because of his sense of where we're going. Before, people sat back, not wanting to try new things. Now people are willing to try. He is the catalyst.

The vision which Nedding imparts is that the faculty has "got to really live the gospel message. Somehow by living it, by being role models, and by developing and hiring staff, it's going to be easier to tell kids about the gospel." He feels that the school must maintain the vigor and dynamism of its historical Catholic heritage. "You can do all kinds of other things, but if [the school community

isn't] faithful to its mission and purpose as a Catholic school, then you might as well forget it." For this reason, he expects teachers to begin each class period with a prayer. Nedding sees his job as principal is to

sustain the tone and the atmosphere by word, by example, by decision, and by talking to the faculty in a positive, persuasive way about the religious, Catholic nature of the school. I think it's critical that the school [community], now predominantly lay people, doesn't lose that vision, doesn't lose sight of the goals and the mission statement. To be a good private school is not enough.

This message has been accepted by other staff members. The vice-principal, himself a former Catholic high school principal, stated that "as part of the administration here at St. Michael's, I realize that you've got to broadcast the philosophy; you've got to connect it to what you do. Every decision that we make on a daily basis is somehow connected to the philosophy. Believe me, it's not very easy to do that."

Nedding is not afraid to become vulnerable to others in the school community by showing his emotions. "When he's talking to the students, he can almost be in tears. He's not afraid to be a person in front of the students." He is willing to risk losing the respect given to his position as principal in order to present a model of Christian behavior

to the students. As he expressed it,

there's so much informally that happens in terms of relationships and decision making that isn't highly visible and isn't programmed, but has a lot to do with the Catholic nature of the school and the sustaining and modeling of religious values. You've got to get beyond what is prescribed and what is visible at times. While walking down a corridor between classes, he hugs students and banters with them about things occurring in their lives. Students look up to him and think that he has done a great deal for the school. One teacher indicated that "after an assembly, he will stand up and tell the students that they are the best students of any high school that he's worked at. That is just so powerful an experience for the kids to hear their principal say that."

Nedding sees that his job is "to be able to see the goodness in people and to enable them to use that goodness for others. It's so easy to be critical and negative. I really want to enable goodness to be visible, to permeate the place, and to make it so palatable, tangible, and concrete that people respond to it."

Other members of the faculty feel that Nedding has shared his leadership with others in positions of authority. The campus minister, the head counselor, and teachers in the religion department in particular demonstrate leadership in religious areas.

### Campus Ministry

George Connell has been the campus minister at St. Michael's for four years. Other teachers see that he provides a great deal of religious leadership to the faculty. "He's another one with vision. He knows where he's going and he knows where he'd like his program to go." Another teacher felt that, supported by the principal, Connell supplies the major religious thrust on the campus.

Connell's strength, he feels, is in directing student retreats. In his assessment, the campus ministry program is "pretty good." He feels that it could be improved by offering a greater variety of programs to students. "I'm kind of limited in my own gifts, talents, and time, so I tend to stick with the basics. I have dreams of training kids in liturgy and different areas of ministry, but I haven't been able to come up with the wherewithal to do that yet."

Campus ministry is given a high priority at St. Michael's. Connell related an incident which occurred.

The principal came up to me my first day and said, "I want to let you know that the work you do in campus ministry is first and foremost. The spiritual needs of the kids get priority over and above everything else." I've never been refused anything that I legitimately felt I needed for the program. Not only does Tom

Nedding say, "It's number one," but his actions show it.

### The Faculty

The staff of forty is now almost entirely composed of lay persons. There are only three full time and one part time sisters and two part time diocesan priests on the faculty. About one third of the faculty is not Catholic. The principal admits that "it has been a real challenge to maintain the Catholicity of the school because of the heavy involvement of lay Catholics and other Christians." The burden of providing the real religious strength of the school is now with the laity.

This responsibility does not bother the principal or faculty. The vice-principal indicated that,

the answer is that we are the Church. . . . I understand, working with priests and nuns and religious and laity, that a title is not very significant. What is significant is [that] someone believes and practices what they believe.

The fact that religious direction is being given the school by laity does not appear to be worrisome to parents. Even though they might yearn for an environment in which the faculty would be entirely priests and sisters,

I've never heard the kids say, nor have I had feedback from a parent, that "[religious instruction] is not

quite as good as [it would be] if a priest were teaching." I think the community is really growing to realize that it doesn't make a big difference whether a teacher in a Catholic high school is a religious or not.

The presence of priests or religious on a faculty is desirable, in the opinion of a teacher, but not absolutely essential.

We're all ministers; we have to believe that. If we believe that we all have a role, then we're going to look at how to reorient ourselves in the Church [as we assume] positions which were formerly taken up by nuns, priests, or brothers.

One teacher expressed disappointment that the priests and sisters on the faculty are not more actively involved in the life of the school. They are marvelous individuals, she feels, but they are older individuals with other outside interests. For instance, one of the two priests on the faculty is also the pastor of a parish; the other is an elderly retired priest who teaches only one class. She felt that students will not become interested in pursuing religious vocations without example and encouragement. "If they don't see the priests and the nuns involved in social things or at [athletic] games," students receive the message that priests and sisters "lead the lives of recluses," paths that few active teenagers want to follow.



### Role Models

Tom Nedding strongly feels that the teachers fill "Christian role models for the kids."

I tell them that every decision, every word, every assignment, everything you do as coach, moderator, or teacher, somehow expresses the value system we're all trying to deal with. These kids are going to observe how we treat each other. You can't tell them one thing and not do it among ourselves.

A few teachers do not live up to the principal's expectations, according to students. "In a couple of classes we don't pray before class. They don't stress that we're in a Catholic school."

Most lay faculty members, however, realize that they have a responsibility to be role models for students. Administrators remind faculty of this frequently. One teacher commented, "If you were to ask the faculty members, 'Do you see yourself as a model?' I don't think they would say that they see themselves as models. I think most of them see themselves as a kind of instrument to help students along. . . . I don't think they see themselves as role models, but they are great role models." One teacher felt that through the preaching of the administrators, he had become more conscious of his position. "I've made it more prevalent in my mind that I'm someone the students see most of the time during the day. They watch all my actions, my

words, listening and seeing what I'm saying and doing. . .  
. I have to be a role model."

Several teachers felt that the staff makes a serious effort to minister to students. The campus minister always amazed at the number of faculty who give up an entire weekend of their time to help me with the weekend retreats. It just wipes them out [physically]. Teaching five days a week is hard enough, but to teach five days, do a retreat straight through the weekend, and then come back and teach five more days, is incredible. And with no financial remuneration. To a person, they always tell me when I thank them afterwards, "I think it's great. I gained an awful lot more than I gave; the value isn't monetary."

One teacher commented that "I don't think very many public school teachers could come here and make it. It's a good atmosphere. Why should you get paid for everything you do? [We] just do it because it's the right thing to do."

Even without occasionally being involved in a weekend retreat, being a teacher at St. Michael's can be tiring, according to one teacher. Teachers are expected to do more than the minimum. "[The school] really does ask us for a lot." According to another teacher, faculty members are willing to do more than they would in a public school because "they know it's a Catholic school and they know that it's expected." The head counselor felt the problem is that

"teachers get burned out. They are so busy; they get so much into their jobs. By nature, teachers are pretty guarded individuals. It's an occupation in which people don't express their feelings very well; they don't let their guard down, so they get pretty protective."

Teachers express concern for one another. "After my father died, I got letters from faculty members and I had people express concern and care; they wanted to know if I wanted to talk. The faculty are very aware of what goes on in each others' lives." A spirit of camaraderie exists among the faculty. "Everyone's struggling to do their best with what we have." Teachers substitute for one another, a situation which can become onerous. One teacher expressed confidence that teachers who were absent had good reasons for being gone. "A couple of years ago I wouldn't have said that. But I feel that there's probably no one on the faculty who takes advantage of the absentee policies."

The school community was described as "a big family" by students and teachers. "High schools normally are more oriented toward rules and academics and more structured. There is the ability here for kids to share their hurts, their fears, their hopes, their dreams in a family environment." The principal added, "[The school community] has a lot of strong basic love for family members; yet there are all those different individuals with their limitations, skills, successes, and failures which you can critique. You

can get angry with them, but in the long run, you wind up embracing them and helping them through their problems." The small size of the school added to the family flavor, in the mind of one student. The fact that "you know most of the people" makes you "feel like an individual rather than just a student."

Most teachers are willing to help students not only with classwork, but also in areas beyond schoolwork, according to a student. "I can go to any one of my teachers and talk to them about other problems that I'm having in my life. I think that they're open to listen." A teacher stated that "people really go out of their way, especially with their time. There are people here Saturdays, Sundays, and at night. It's just amazing how much time people give to the kids." One of the counselors works with students on weekends at their homes on problems which are alcohol associated. Teachers have taken students into their own homes in difficult family situations.

Most teachers do an excellent job of living what they profess. According to a Lutheran teacher, "That's another thing that makes me feel real good" about working at St. Michael's. While he would agree with that assessment, the principal believes that the consciousness of the faculty in living the Christian message is an area in which the teachers need additional help.

Staff development on that level needs some work. The

whole posture of being supportive, good, generous, loving, and all that, is terribly important to the moral atmosphere of the school. It provides good rapport in the building, but you've got to get beyond that by sustaining people and helping them grow in faith, their profession, and development.

### Faculty Turnover

Perhaps because of the high expectations placed upon teachers, the turnover in the faculty has been fairly high. As a result, the faculty is young. Salaries are about 80% of those given in local public schools. After a few years at St. Michael's, some teachers move to public schools because they need the additional money to raise their families. A veteran teacher ruefully commented that, "Over the years, we've trained some of the finest teachers in the local public schools." Others remain at St. Michael's because "it's a good place to teach. Most of the kids are real good, and so classroom management and discipline isn't that big of an issue."

To one teacher, the lower salary is not an active issue.

Our [family] values are such that it's not how much you earn, it's what you do and how you live your life. I look forward to working with people who also enjoy being here; most of all, I just love these kids. They're wonderful to work with. They're the equal of,

if not superior to, any other student body I've ever been associated with. It makes it all worthwhile. That's why I stay.

The students are the reason that another teacher also felt it was worthwhile to teach as St. Michael's. "I like to teach in a Catholic school because of the attitude and the things I can do with the kids. I've been here for six years and I've grown attached to a lot of these kids."

### Hiring Practices

Tom Nedding is not afraid to ask potential teachers about their religious values and practices.

I try to do it indirectly and not in a threatening way, but I do try to figure out what their value system is. We ask them what religion they are, what church they belong to, and who their pastor is. Frequently, if they've gone to a Catholic school in the past, I'll ask them what kind of an experience that was. I ask them if they love kids, "Why do you want to be a teacher?" I won't have faculty members who don't love the kids. I know it sounds trite but it's a gospel value, and if you don't love the kids, you don't get very far. They need to be loved.

The vice-principal indicated that it had only been since the arrival of Nedding that such values had been explored.

In the past we probably focussed on the academic background and the experiences that went with that.

Unfortunately, [as a result] while we had teachers here who were great teachers and could relate to kids, their value systems weren't consistent with the role model that we wanted to see; we found that we really hadn't identified that [when we hired them]. We have to identify an academic job description, but we also have to identify a role model position which is consistent with what we'd like to see in the building. That's difficult because values are very hard to measure in a person. You almost have to see them and live with them for an extended period of time before that comes out. The head counselor indicated that the administrators look for quality. "In our hiring, we look for people who care. . . . If a priest is the best man, then we hire him; if a layperson is the best man or woman, we hire that person."

#### Spiritual Development of Faculty

According to the vice-principal and others, not enough is done to stimulate the spiritual development of faculty members. Several years ago, the diocese ceased its practice of holding meetings of all Catholic high school teachers. The annual pre-school faculty retreat is now optional because some teachers had grumbled when it was mandatory. Some teachers felt that September is the wrong time to hold a faculty retreat because they are so involved with preparation for the opening of school or in coaching that they cannot become engrossed in a retreat. "You find

yourself getting so tied up in getting all your work done that you don't have a chance to sit back and say, 'What are we doing?'" Several people felt that the faculty should set aside time in the course of the school year to reflect upon individual and collective values, but they realized that there is no occasion which will be entirely satisfactory to all of the staff.

Despite the fact that the administrators do not provide many activities for faculty spiritual development, the faculty has a solid core of strong, religious people. Some of the nonCatholic teachers were, in the view of a sister, some of the most conscientious teachers in starting each class period with a prayer and in being willing to discuss religious matters with students.

Nedding is encouraged by the fact that the faculty are "mature in their faith," not afraid to talk to students about religious matters.

In assemblies we talk to students about respect for persons, respect for others, respect for property, loving their neighbor, and taking care of the poor. The faculty is not afraid to do those things. It's a community effort, but I think it falls specifically on the shoulders of the [lay] adults.

A number of faculty members are former brothers or seminarians; consequently they have had some of the same theological and spiritual training that the former faculty



of priests and sisters enjoyed.

### The Student Body

Ninety percent of the students at St. Michael's are Catholic. The students reflect the racial background of the city, being mostly white, middle class, and Anglo. A few Black, Hispanic, and Oriental students add an ethnic flavor to the student body. One teacher saw the the school as "not inner city, but central city, drawing from the city and suburbs. We have a bunch of ordinary kids. We don't have a high segment of high or low socio-economic families. We're basically a middle to lower middle class school."

The head counselor indicated that administrators perceive the school

as an institution which is dedicated not only to the wealthy, but to the poor. We take in kids who sometimes don't have the skills to handle our program. We created a learning program for these kids. They're not labeled as being learning disabled. We don't take kids who are severely learning disabled, but we do take kids who usually have problems in school. We help them.

Students attend St. Michael's in part because their fathers or older siblings attended. Some students come to the school because they had heard it is a good school where "neat things go on." The small size of the school attracts

others or their parents.

Increasingly, more students come from broken homes. Occasionally, a student's academic or disciplinary pattern will change drastically because of tensions within the family. Teachers refer such students to counselors who work with them individually. School counselors have also formed support groups for students and students with similar problems. One counselor sadly remarked that he could hardly keep up with all the students referred to him, much less see all the students in the school as his job description called for.

Since my day began, I've dealt with a girl who wants to run away from home and one who is thinking about suicide. I've dealt with a kid who actually attempted suicide and another kid who is very depressed. All these were referrals from other kids in the school or parents or from other teachers.

Faculty members work to help their students grow to maturity. Teachers want graduates of the school to have "an understanding of themselves--where they are, who they are, where they need to go, what's important in life. . . . When I see a group of seniors, I want them to be God fearing, God knowing, and God loving, with a kindness and concern for others." Faculty members are realistic enough, however, to understand that "it almost seems that your awareness of life and of the presence of God comes at a later time in life."

### Caring and Concern

A number of faculty members and students felt that caring for others is the overriding value stressed at St. Michael's. This concern for others produces a genuine spirit of community and family. Because many students come from families which are not especially stable, the faculty wants to furnish students with an experience of family.

Some kids don't have that family structure at home. Maybe it's a single parent family or both parents work. The kids rely on the family atmosphere of the school. We can see it because they'll come here at seven in the morning and won't leave until five in the afternoon. They hang around here. They're being nurtured. Their needs are being met. We talk to them. We love them and care about them, and they feel that.

Nurturing and caring about one another is a pervasive attitude at St. Michael's.

We emphasize that a lot of what you do affects other people. . . . Look at all the people you're affecting by what you're doing. You affect the community. You affect the way that everybody relates with everybody else. So we stress appropriateness of action, not just because it's right or wrong, but because it affects others.

The principal labelled this spirit of caring as personalism.

I think it permeates the whole school. I see faculty and students among themselves embracing and hugging in the hallway; I do it myself. There's a sincere affection. I've never seen a faculty member, no matter where they are or what they're doing, not get up to see what a kid wants. Kids come up to me in the hallway before or after school. "Mr. Nedding, I left my coat in Room 114, and it's locked." So I walk down there and get the coat. It's those little things, done habitually and gracefully, that make the kids believe, "Maybe I am worthwhile; people do care for me."

Students express their interest in and concern for one another.

If you look in the halls right before any vacation, such as spring break or Christmas, you see kids exchanging cards or hugs and saying, "Have a great vacation." There's always a sense of real excitement about the vacation, but a sense also of looking forward to getting back and seeing everybody. That means they care about each other; that's what we emphasize.

One student commented that "Nobody really puts anybody down. They make you feel really accepted here. They give you a chance to prove yourself to other people. Groups accept you for who you are." Another said, "Everybody cares

about each other. They're not out to hurt you, but they care."

One teacher felt that there is a great deal of warmth in the school community.

People touch each other, they talk to each other. There's a lot of community and mutual support. What I notice here is knowing and feeling that God is one part of the school. You might not even call it God, but instead call it loving other people and making contact. I find it really hard to believe that God is not part of that.

The strong family spirit is felt by students. "It seems to me that students at St. Michael's are closer, more of a family thing. We do a lot of things together. You can really talk and be more open." One teacher felt that administrators and teachers consider support for students to be very important.

There is a real emphasis to do for others. I've been involved in athletics for nine years. There's never been an emphasis from the principal or athletic director to win. The emphasis is to have a good time and play as a team. One of the things I emphasized was to acknowledge a good play or a good effort by a teammate. I see that in the hallways. When someone does something or is a success in something, I see a lot of support. At the same time, I see support when

students are in need because things aren't going their way.

Associated with the emphasis on caring is a concern for helping others. Care for others implies a willingness to help them when they need assistance. Through involvement in service projects and peer counseling, students are able to show their concern for members of the school community and for outsiders.

#### The Religious Program

All members of the school community are expected to attend schoolwide Masses held about once a month. Occasionally, there will be a optional Mass at lunchtime to celebrate some special feast or to pray for a special intention. One student felt that older students enjoy the Masses more than freshmen or sophomores because "it's nice to get together as a school and celebrate the Lord."

The principal expects each teacher to begin each class period with a prayer.

The students have now gotten to the point that if you forget, they'll remind you, "Aren't we going to pray today?" or "We need to pray today." Teachers and students have come to the point where they expect that now.

Students are more open to spontaneous prayer, perhaps partially because of their experiences on Search Weekends.

One of the religion teachers felt that "the heart of the religion program is the teachers and what they say, how they perform, and how they help the kids' experiences. I don't think that more Masses or structured activities will necessarily" make the students better Catholics. "Religion is something that you can't force kids to accept or understand or participate in; a lot of them aren't ready for that yet. It hits you when you least expect it." He felt that there is nothing which could be added to the school programs to make St. Michael's a more viable religious community. Another teacher felt that many activities at St. Michael's have religious overtones.

#### Religious Curriculum

Students at St. Michael's take a standard religious curriculum. In their study of the Christian life, freshmen examine their values and the things which have influenced those values. Sophomores study each testament of the Bible for one semester. In the junior year students are exposed to religious values in literature and Church history. Seniors study Christian relationships and comparative religions. Students like their classes because of the teachers in that department. The department just decided to put in some elective courses including social justice for juniors and seniors for future years.

George Connell tries to make Catholicism alive for his students.

I was an English teachers for a couple of years, but I decided to move into religion, primarily because I wanted to deal with kids right in the midst of where they are. I get a chance, day after day, to talk about applying their faith in their daily life. We talk about poverty and hunger and discuss things they can do on an individual basis right now to deal with these kinds of problems. They've heard enough about the Catholic faith up to this point; we've got to start dealing with some personal issues that they have. I try to get them to understand.

Another religion teacher also tries to make religion relevant to students.

We try to find out what the needs of the kids are by talking to them and participating in their activities. Then we try to design our classes around satisfying those needs which usually deal with relationships, family problems, self esteem, and other issues. We address those issues and show how faith, the Church, and God can somehow be influential in those areas. We also focus on subject content because I think they need that, too.

The principal felt that the course in scripture in the tenth grade is "probably one of the most valuable courses of the whole curriculum, because it gives the kids a good ground on revelation and makes sense of things that used to



be overlooked." The other course he felt was most influential on students was the Christian relationship course. "I'm not sure whether that's due to the teachers or the content. It's that delicate melding or interplay between the supernatural [course content] and natural [the personality of the teacher]."

The religion department chairperson, Father Wilson, felt that the religion teachers are very enthused about their work. "Obviously they love teaching scripture and Christian life and getting thoroughly involved. I see that they must be doing some positive things there."

Having lay teachers for religion is relatively new at St. Michael's. Father Wilson commented that "it's a new venture. We've always had lay people teaching science and things like that, but this is new. It was forbidden territory. But they're doing well. They do better than some priests I knew in past years, who hated teaching and wanted to get out of it." He felt, however, that the religion department teachers should get together more often. "The will to do that is there, but the spirit isn't. We meet and plan, but we have to make sure we're following a unified program. That's even more important now that we have a diversified faculty."

The head counselor felt that students should receive more education on Christian morality, especially in regard to family life and relationship issues.

It's nice to tell them not to have premarital sex, but why? It's a good rule, but what's the logic behind the rule? We've always told to do something or we won't get into heaven. That doesn't go with kids anymore. We have to change our thinking. We have to touch these forbidden issues without having to approve of them. I think teachers think that if we talk about something, it means we approve of it.

Religion teachers make an effort to get students to question the values of society rather than simply accept them. Actions are not correct just because they are legal. "I tell even the freshmen that now is the time to start making some decisions about how you're going to live your lives; start to be reflective about it." Another teacher indicated that

We have to present Christianity as another way of looking at the world, because our society isn't really Christian by any means. We have to let them know that Christianity is a very, very revolutionary, very radical kind of teaching. We try to challenge them and show them that to be a Christian is not just fitting in with the way society does things.

As the vice principal put it, "We have to fight to maintain some kind of vestige of what we believe are our strong values. We're almost counterculture."

The examples of the teachers help students to

understand Christian values. "We choose this kind of work because this is what we value. I think that rubs off on the kids." The task of teachers is made more difficult since they "can no longer rely on the fact that what we believe and what we teach is necessarily accepted by a large number of parents."

Students generally think favorably of their religion courses. "All the religion classes that I've taken here have been directly related to me and my relationship with God."

Although students do not always recognize topics discussed in other subjects as being religious in nature, teachers in other departments "try to relate their subject matter to Christian values, especially Catholic values. I teach history; it's real easy to talk about Christianity and morality when you're talking about Adolf Hitler, for instance."

### Retreats

The campus minister holds retreat days for the freshmen and sophomore classes in the course of the school year. While these retreats are optional, students "are all but required to go; I get over 95% of the kids." Connell indicates to students that "our retreats are outstanding ways of strengthening your relationships with God and other people." He understands that there are other ways in which students can accomplish this, and thus "they can decide

responsibly after a couple of these day retreat experiences whether the type of retreat I run is helpful or not." He would like to be able to expand the retreat program to offer optional, faith building, retreats for freshmen and sophomores but doesn't feel he has the time presently do put on more retreats.

Retreats for freshmen deal with the transition between grade school and high school. We try to help them understand the kinds of success and fears that they have, with the hope that they get to know themselves just a little better. They kind of clear the air, because it's such a confusing time for them. We help them to understand that in the midst of all the change and confusion [in their lives], they are loveable, likeable, and capable.

Sophomore days of retreat concentrate on the growing responsibilities which students have in their families and among their peers. "A lot more is expected of them; how do they handle that? Much of the way that they will handle those things depends on how they care about themselves and their understanding of their relationship with God."

Juniors and seniors are encouraged to attend a Search Weekend retreat. Offered three times a year, these retreats concentrate on students' understanding of themselves and their relationships with God and others. Even though organized by the campus minister, much of the work of the

retreat is done by students, including the giving of talks and cooking.

Students consider Search Weekends to be their greatest high school experience. "I didn't feel that I went out and 'found myself,' but I had a good weekend. They had a lot of activities to make you feel more confident and secure about yourself. That's what I really got out of it." Another student felt that his retreat was "the most profitable thing that I've ever done, seeing who you are and where you're going and what you want to do. It showed me a lot of stuff that I was doing that was really negative. I didn't want to do these things, but I was." The students who attend a Search Weekend feel that all students should either be made to attend one, or at least strongly encouraged. "I think people need to be forced to be involved, but that should be done in such a way that they don't realize they're being forced." Although about half the students attend these retreats, the others don't because "they don't know enough about it" or "they're afraid."

#### Community Service Programs

While students are not required to perform any type of community service as a graduation requirement, many students become involved in service projects. Faculty members and administrators look for ways to increase the awareness of students' concerns for social justice. Several weeks prior to the research visit, an entire week had been devoted to

the theme of peace. A local activist "who lives very simply and humbly" in helping street people made a presentation to the entire student body. "After his talk, students responded by asking 'How do I get involved? How do I help?'" The principal feels that the faculty continually "put the needs of others before the kids as something they should be able to respond to," either through food and clothing drives or through time and energy working on a project.

Generally the response of students has been good. One teacher noted that students do not readily respond to announcements in the school bulletin or posters, but are very willing to work on projects if they are asked. "I've never been turned down by anyone I've asked. I think they're willing, but they have to be asked. Once they get involved, they say that the work is neat. The service club is getting bigger every year."

Betty Doolan began working as a volunteer on service projects with students. The principal offered to pay her to show that he appreciated her efforts. "She said, 'That doesn't make any sense. I'm asking the kids to volunteer, so how can I get paid for doing this?'"

Doolan works with the service club, a group of about ten committed students. Other students are invited to help with specific projects. The campus minister feels that student response has been excellent. "One of the beauties

of the Service Club is that it fits into so many schedules on a limited basis. You don't have to commit yourself to fourteen projects in a year. When you hear announcements in the daily bulletin and you find you have time, then you go ahead and plug in."

Not many other teachers become involved in activities of the service club. Doolan commented,

Primarily it all falls on my shoulders, which is a great disappointment. I know that I have their support morally and religiously, but I don't get their help in doing things. They help with inschool drives like the food drive, but when I say, "I really need somebody to help out on a walkathon, I don't get any volunteers," except for the campus minister on occasion. That bothers me sometimes. Teachers are such valuable models. The kids see me doing things, but they never see their other teachers [doing service projects].

Offcampus projects on which the service club and Student Council have worked include visiting the elderly at St. Joseph's Nursing Home, working at a soup kitchen, renovating shelters for homeless people on skid row, taking patients from a convalescent home to plays, and collecting items for the Red Cross. They prepare Christmas food boxes which are distributed through the St. Vincent de Paul Society. As one teacher pointed out, "It's hard to separate the work of the campus ministry, the service club, and the

Student Council because the same kids are involved in practically all of them."

Some years ago, students at St. Michaels's had been required to perform a service project. However, the requirement had been dropped because of problems proving that students actually did the work they claimed. Teachers have mixed feelings about the possibility of requiring service again. "It's been my experience that people blossom at different times. As long as we're teaching kids that it's important to care about other people, when they're ready, the students are going to help." The campus minister saw two sides of the issue:

I'd like to require them to do service, but I'm not certain how much they gain if it were required. Some do. Some get surprised by things like that and say, "Boy, I didn't realize I would enjoy this or that it would be rewarding at all." But a lot of kids have negative energy. Their attitude would work against the success of the whole program. I think service will occur when kids really learn to understand that we're all called to care for each other.

One teacher felt the awareness which mandatory service would engender would help the students. "The more they become aware of the real world, the better."

An optional social justice course which the religion department will offer in 1987-88 will blend background



material presented in the classroom with service work done in the community. Doolan had hoped to make the course mandatory, but realized that "you can't make kids do service, because then it's not from the heart. Service has to be something that you want to do. If you take a kid out on a service project and he's frowning, you might as well not take him."

### Peer Counseling

A peer counseling program operates at St. Michael's under the direction of the campus minister. Because not all students relate well with adults, fellow students sometimes are able to assist them in working with their problems. "When you can't go to see a teacher to talk about things, you talk about your problems with someone who may have had the same experience as you. They help you get through your problems easier because they're your age."

The program was initiated five years ago by the former campus minister as part of the service club which was involved in projects both within the school and in the community. "About four years ago, the service club broke off and started doing their own thing. One of the other teachers got interested in this, and so peer ministry turned into peer counseling." The campus minister described the training given to students.

We train anywhere from twelve to twenty students a year in fundamental counseling skills. We encourage them to

keep their eyes open for people who are having trouble. Fundamentally, the program runs itself. We'll get together every now and again to talk about what the peer counselors are doing and the kinds of experiences they're having. Once in a while we'll get together for further training. We dealt with depression and suicide one afternoon. Another day we dealt with drug and alcohol abuse as followups to things we covered in the workshop.

One student felt that the program was worthwhile. "You are able to help other people, and at the same time, help yourself by doing this." She felt that she had been able to use the skills learned in the peer counseling program while working on a Search Weekend.

#### Student Response

Although the principal felt that the impact of the school on students really could not be assessed until they were about thirty, there are signs that students are affected. George Connell told the story of a popular student leader who gave a talk on a Search Weekend retreat.

When I was a freshmen, I became a cheerleader and got involved in student government. I started to make some friends and loved it. I wanted more. I wanted to be real popular, the most popular girl in school. By the time I got to my junior year, I understood that it was

okay not to be the most popular kid in school. I started to get a sense that I was okay the way I was. Connell commented that "She didn't realize it, but I think it's a perfect example of what happens to kids. I watched her being transformed into a more genuinely, caring person. I think it says a lot about the system, the community, and people here."

While they are in high school, students often change their attitudes about religion. Their parents enroll them in a Catholic high school such as St. Michael's because "they want to have them in a Catholic culture, to protect their kids from the world, from dope and sex and all that." As freshmen, students are childlike in their faith. They are more dependent upon their parents and teachers for their beliefs. "They haven't gotten to the level of intelligence yet where they even question what people have told them." Therefore, they follow rules such as attendance at Mass slavishly.

As the students mature, their views change. "They break away from their parents" and begin independently to formulate their values. "In their junior year, they start putting it all together; then they're able to make responsible decisions in areas in which they really believe. They are able to use their own conscience to arrive at what's right and wrong. They might make some wrong decisions, but at this point they're starting to think

about making right decisions." They synthesize what they have learned.

Some students rebel at what they had previously accepted. "They may be saying, 'They may be right, but I don't have to like it. In fact, I don't, so I'm not going to deal with it.'" Some students automatically reject the ideas held by adults without thinking about them. One teacher also pointed out that "students go through a growing up period with their spirituality. Part of that sometimes is backing away and taking a second look."

According to one teacher, parish priests sometimes fail to realize that teenagers go through these stages. "They say that we take students who entered high school going to church, and they come out not going. But you've got to look at the whole picture. It's more of a spectrum. Graduation is somewhere in midpoint. You can't measure their religious life when they graduate from high school."

#### Summary

Administered by laypersons, St. Michael's and Maryhaven are forerunners of the type of school which most American Catholic high schools will become. However, there are notable differences between the schools. Maryhaven has the backing of a religious community which has established a support network to assist in the maintenance of the traditions of that community. St. Michael's, as a diocesan

school, does not enjoy that type of assistance and has had to depend upon the resources of its administrators and faculty to maintain its Catholic traditions. Keeping such traditions alive has been difficult, but the school community has done an excellent job in this regard.

Both schools have benefitted from the religious backgrounds of their principals. The two men were members of a religious order which trained them in spiritual and academic matters. Both served as principals in other Catholic high schools. They are able to draw upon their extensive backgrounds to assist their school communities to develop their modern Catholic cultures.

St. Michael's also has benefitted from the continued presence of priests and sisters. Although not extremely influential within the school community, they maintain a link for the lay faculty and parents with the strong heritage of the past. The school would be poorer without them.

In general, the lay faculty is aware of its responsibility to provide adult role models for the students. Teachers do more than the minimum to help students not only with schoolwork but with personal problems as well. A need exists for methods of helping the teachers realize more fully the ideals proposed for Catholic educators.

The students at St. Michael's are a cross section of

Catholic youth in the region. Students from a wide range of academic ability are admitted to the school, unlike earlier days when the student body was renowned for its superior students. The change in composition from a boys' school to a coeducational school has been good for the school community.

Care for individual students and Christian concern for their welfare characterize the attitudes of administrators, teachers, and students. People genuinely care for each other and are not ashamed to show their love by their actions. The strong sense of family enables teachers and students to work in harmony to accomplish their common goals. Like a furnace, the Christian concern shown for one another warms the entire school.

The curriculum, retreats, service projects, and peer counseling are used by administrators and faculty members to make religious truths come alive for students. The courses offered are traditional in their scope and sequence. It is the enthusiasm and interest of the teachers which make them interesting and relevant to students. Retreats conducted by the campus minister become the spiritual high point for students. While Christian service is stressed, it is not mandated. Students are encouraged to share their time and energy with the less fortunate. A portion of this service is carried out through the peer counseling program in which students help one another through difficult life

situations.

Students generally respond favorably to the religious program offered at St. Michael's. Since the high school years are only four years in the process of development from adolescence to maturity, the adult school community sees itself as a waystation. Students pass through, receiving information and support, but without necessarily being changed during their stay. It is usually another decade before the long term effects of Catholic education on young persons can be assessed.

St. Michael's High School is like a grizzled, old mountain man of the last century. It is tough and resilient, having weathered many different storms in its history. It is adaptable, accurately able to read situations which will affect it and to change accordingly. While not financially wealthy, it possesses innumerable, intangible riches within its walls. In particular, its greatest asset is its heart, the faculty. Without them, the school would be simply a tired, worn building. Because of them, the walls vibrate with energy. The school lives.

## CHAPTER TEN

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

#### Introduction

This study has been an attempt to examine the religious cultures of selected American Catholic secondary schools. No pre-existing hypotheses were investigated; rather, using an ethnographic approach, careful examination was made of the religious cultures of six Catholic high schools with reputations for having strong religious cultures. From the data gathered from interviews, documents, and direct observation, the researcher developed a profile of the religious culture of each school.

The purposes of this research were several. The researcher set out to add to the literature concerned with a particular aspect of organizational culture, namely, the religious cultures of contemporary American Catholic high schools. An attempt was made to investigate the roles that the principal and other key individuals play in maintaining and developing these strong cultures. The researcher also attempted to gain insights into the methods used to



strengthen religious school culture so that other administrators might use them in their schools.

These six schools were selected for this study because of their reputations as having strong religious cultures. The research done after the selection of the schools allows the researcher to conclude that all the schools except Maryhaven did indeed have strong religious cultures. The characteristics of schools with strong religious cultures outlined in Chapter Two appeared in these schools in varying degrees.

The Abbey School and St. Michael's had exceptionally strong religious cultures, in large part due to the vision and leadership of their principals. Consensus among faculty members and students existed on the religious goals of the schools. Strong faith communities existed among teachers and students. Programs existed which enhanced the faith development of students. The climates of these schools involved teacher commitment on religious goals, Christian norms for behavior of students and teachers, with resultant high morale.

While the religious cultures of Annunciation, Northside Catholic, and Cardinal Gibbons were not as strong as in the first two schools, they were still moderately strong. All had strong religious values which were accepted by the majority of the school community. The religious curricula

and programs of the schools promoted the development of Christian values in students. While Annunciation lacked strong leadership by the principal in presenting her vision, the philosophy of the school was commonly accepted by teachers as the guidepost for action. Gibbons was similar to Annunciation in enjoying the presence of a religious community which provided traditions and the lived example of a faith community to strengthen its religious culture. Northside Catholic had strong shared leadership in Father Baer and Sister Rita Jean. However, the large size of the school inhibits the establishment of a truly unified faith community.

The religious culture at Maryhaven, however, was considerably weaker than in the other five schools. Consensus on the religious goals of the school was lacking, particularly among students. Many individuals saw the school more as a private school than as a religiously oriented school. Although there were efforts to make religious activities more relevant to students, there was no strong leadership by the principal or other individuals to reach a shared religious vision.

In concluding this study, Chapter Ten contains five areas of discussion: (1) an analysis of the data in terms of the research questions, (2) comments on other conclusions, (3) implications and recommendations for school

administrators, (4) areas for future research, and (5) concluding remarks.

#### Research Questions: An Analysis of the Data

Chapter One posed four major questions for this research; responses to each of those questions derived from the data collected during the research are provided here.

1a. In Catholic high schools identified as having particularly strong religious cultures, what common elements can be identified as characteristic of those religious cultures?

The religious cultures of the six school communities share certain characteristics. All the schools have philosophies based upon recent Church educational documents such as To Teach as Jesus Did. All the schools have religious curricula which attempt to deepen the students' understanding of Church doctrine and to help them understand a proper relationship with God and other people. All have programs such as retreats, Christian service, and liturgies to promote the affective element of religion. Most faculty members in the schools recognize their responsibility to be models of adult Christian living for students. Religious traditions are present in each of the schools, thus providing links to their Catholic heritage.

While all these elements are present in each school and

are important for the development of a strong religious culture, it appears to the researcher that a school can have an exceptionally strong religious culture only if the religion curriculum and programs are extremely well developed.

Even though the characteristics listed above are shared by all the schools, not all the schools are as successful in arriving at consensus on their importance. For instance, many students enroll at The Abbey School and Maryhaven more for their academic reputations than their religious atmospheres. Teachers at The Abbey School are better able to lead the students to accept Catholic teaching and practice through the religious curriculum, strong service programs, and leadership of the principal than the faculty members at Maryhaven are able to do.

Several particular characteristics noted in these schools especially stand out because of their strength and importance to the religious cultures of these school communities.

Faith Community. Students and faculties in each of the schools feel that they are molded into a strong community. In each school, persons refer to the school community as a family. There is a strong sense that, despite friction and occasional bickering, unity exists among members of the school community.

A sense of community, however, is itself not a sign of a religious culture. This sense ultimately must be based on the religious faith shared by the administrators, teachers, and students if the community is to be a faith community. As Reichart (1974) and teachers in several of the schools indicated, it is difficult to build a school faith community which includes both teachers and students since high school students are still in the process of deciding in what they will believe. The school faith community must essentially exist among faculty members as a model for students. Once students have committed themselves to the common faith and practices, then they become members.

Such faith communities exist in different degrees among the faculties of the six schools. Annunciation, The Abbey School, Maryhaven, and Cardinal Gibbons are gifted with communities of sisters or priests as the nuclei of the school faith community. While Northside Catholic has members of several religious communities on its faculty, none of them predominates as the focus of the school religious life. Instead, the faith community centers around the religious activities instituted by Sister Rita Jean. In a similar fashion, the faith community at St. Michael's has grown from the direction of Tom Nedding and the retreat program developed by George Connell. The large number of nonCatholic teachers and lack of religious leadership at

Maryhaven militate against the establishment of a widespread faith community. Communities based on shared faith are very important to the other five schools, however.

Christian Concern. A hallmark of each school is a strong sense of concern for others. This trait follows logically from the faith community present in each school. Faculty members cherish students; students hold one another dear; students are taught to have an interest in the good of others.

As with the sense of community, concern per se is not a distinctively Catholic or Christian virtue. It becomes Christian when it is associated with religious values. At The Abbey School, it becomes connected with the development of Christian habits. The strong Christian service program helps students realize that they have a responsibility to help the less fortunate because they also are members of the people of God. At St. Michael's, students share the problems that burden other students through the peer counseling program. Girls at Annunciation donate to the missions and thus share in the apostolic work of the Church throughout the world. Northside students learn to be compassionate towards the less fortunate through their voluntary Christian service projects. In collegios, students at Gibbons are made aware of their responsibilities to one another as members of a religious community. Concern for others is not

just a humanitarian gesture, but is associated with a belief that all are children of God.

Values Contrary To Those of Society. A feeling exists in each of the schools that the values proposed to students in large part run counter to the values of contemporary American society. While there is a sense, at least at The Abbey School and Maryhaven, of striving to achieve and get ahead in American society, there is also an emphasis in all the schools that there is more to life than simply receiving a good education and having a good job. Christian service projects have been mandated at Maryhaven and The Abbey School and encouraged at the other four schools, partly to counteract the spirit of materialism prevalent in society. Through the campus ministry program at Northside Catholic, students are made aware of their need to serve others and to take on Christian values. Students at Annunciation donate a portion of the income from each fundraising event to charity to help students realize their need to assist others. Teachers at Cardinal Gibbons require service projects of students so that they have the opportunity to experience God at work in them or in other people. Students are challenged at St. Michael's to see that worldly ways are not always fitting for the Christian. The values proposed in these schools run counter to those of American society.

Teacher Dedication. Teachers are dedicated to teaching

in their schools. Despite low wages and large classes in most of the schools, they thoroughly enjoy teaching. Teachers see their work as more than just a job; they view it as an opportunity to influence youth in a positive way.

Teachers and administrators are not afraid to express their religious values to students. In many cases there is deep involvement in religious activities by teachers other than campus ministers or religion teachers. Teachers take an active part in leading student retreats and community service programs. Teachers at Northside see their work as a way of helping others. The longevity of many teachers despite low salaries reinforces the idea among them that teaching is more than just a job. Annunciation faculty members are committed to role modeling for students and to a Christian life style. The principal at The Abbey School tries to hire teachers who manifest a love for students and who see themselves as facilitators of growth. Maryhaven faculty members feel that their role is to instill values and a sense of morality and ethics in their students. They volunteer to serve as facilitators for student reflection groups. St. Michael's teachers are examples of Christian living for the students, working on weekend retreats to assist student religious growth. Teachers in these schools are dedicated to helping students grow spiritually.

A Spirit of Hope. There is a strong sense of hope among



the faculties of each school. Teachers and administrators do not grieve that students are not as religious as desired during high school or at the time of graduation. They realize that students are groping during adolescence to establish lasting sets of values. While encouragement and direction can be given by teachers, only the student can make the important choices which will guide them through life. Coercion by teachers can turn a student against Christian values. That is why Father Baer at Northside and the faculty of The Abbey School, for instance, emphasize that students must be given the free choice of attending liturgical functions. Teachers are convinced that for many students, perhaps even the majority, the seeds of religious faith planted during the high school years will grow to maturity ten or more years after graduation. Teachers have hope that students will eventually realize the importance of the religious values and practices which they have been taught.

Teachers do not give up on students. They believe that the moral values which they passed on to students are meaningful to young people and will generally be adhered to, even if regular religious practice is not. The teachers do not think of themselves as quixotic dreamers in this regard, but as realists who understand the emotions and behavior of teenagers. Teachers at Gibbons, for example, assist

students in growing toward dignity, independence, and responsibility. Individual talents of girls are nurtured at Maryhaven in the belief that leadership traits will develop. Faculty members at St. Michael's realize that the awareness of the presence of God comes to most students after graduation from high school.

Religious Leaders. Most of the six schools have strong leaders with firm visions of what their schools can become. Father Gideon Barnard is convinced that students of The Abbey School can become "Men for Others" by learning habits of service. Father Paul Baer wants students at Northside Catholic to accept freely the religious principles they have been taught and thus become committed adult Catholics. Tom Nedding never loses an opportunity to point out to the faculty members of St. Michael's their responsibilities to be role models for students. The importance of social justice issues becomes evident to students and teachers of Cardinal Gibbons because of the emphasis which Father Tim Barnett gives to these issues.

The two girls' schools do not appear to have single strong religious leaders. While Maryhaven has an excellent principal in Lawrence Halliwell, teachers and students do not automatically think of him when asked to name the religious leader of the school. Annunciation also seems to lack one strong individual who is able to proclaim

the religious vision of the school. At Maryhaven goals have been established through the network of other Incarnation schools. The consensus of the faculty on the school philosophy at Annunciation gives all teachers a common sense of purpose, even without one outstanding person to spur the group onward.

Leadership is not held solely by one individual in some of the schools. Father Paul Baer shares his religious leadership at Northside Catholic with Sister Rita Jean. He provides the overall vision for the school; she directs the distinctively religious activities which are directed toward accomplishing the schoolwide religious goals. Similarly, Tom Nedding has established a vision to inspire the school community at St. Michael's. George Connell carries out that mission through the campus ministry activities. Shared leadership is thus a hallmark of two schools with strong religious cultures.

Of all the characteristics noted in these schools, the ones which the researcher feels are most important in developing a strong religious culture are a) the leadership of the principal in developing and promoting a religious vision, b) the strength of the religious curriculum, c) the importance given to the religious programs such as retreats and service programs within the school, and d) the dedication of the faculty. Leadership is essential to any

development of religious culture beyond the ordinary. The curriculum and programs are needed to provide the intellectual and affective settings for student awareness and acceptance of religious values. Faculty members must be committed to religious values if they are truly to become adult role models of Christian living for students.

The other characteristics mentioned flow from these four major areas. The philosophy of the school and values taught, for instance, will reflect the vision of the school community as enunciated by the principal. Building of faith community and religious traditions and deepening of the senses of Christian concern and hope are derived by the faculty from the curriculum, religious programs, and leadership of the principal.

Not surprisingly, the distinctive features noted in these six schools correlate well with the cultural characteristics of Catholic secondary schools noted by earlier researchers and described in Chapter Two. This investigation thus corroborated the findings of Benson et al. (1986), Benson & Guerra (1985), Bryk et al. (1984), and Yeager et al. (1984) regarding Catholic high schools.

1b. In what ways do these elements differ from those of the cultures of other schools identified as having strong cultures?

The schools visited for this research generally appear

to have characteristics similar to the schools with strong cultures identified by Grant (1982b, 1985), Lightfoot (1983), and other researchers. For example, there is strong consensus on clear goals in all the schools. Faculty members and students at The Abbey School and at Maryhaven agree that leadership traits should be developed in students to help them become leaders in other communities later in life. High expectations of students are held by teachers. Teachers at Gibbons, for instance, had clear ideals of the ideal graduate. Teachers are committed to working with students. The longevity of faculty members at Northside, The Abbey School, and Annunciation testify to their dedication to the students of their schools.

Traditions play a large role in the lives of each of the schools. Such traditions range from team Masses before games at Gibbons to dances for handicapped students at Northside Catholic; from mother figures among the sisters at Annunciation to weekly reconciliation services at The Abbey School; and from ring ceremonies at Maryhaven to prayer before each period at St. Michael's. A strong sense of community exists in each of the schools. Faculty members work together in a collegial fashion. Thus, these Catholic high schools share characteristics with other schools with strong cultures.

### Differences

However, a major difference exists between the cultures of these Catholic schools and the non-Catholic schools studied previously. In most of these Catholic schools, a religious emphasis is placed upon many of the cultural elements. For instance, in these Catholic schools, the consensus which exists centers on religious purposes as well as academic goals. Teachers at The Abbey School, for instance, view Christian service as an integral part of the education of students.

Standards and values are based in Catholic schools on the religious intent of the school, not just on academic purposes. Teachers at St. Michael's are judged not only on their academic expertise but on the way in which they see themselves as Christian role models for students. The necessity of personal commitment to religious practice and belief are impressed upon the students at Northside. The school communities are viewed as faith communities as well as academic communities. Teachers at Annunciation, for example, work to provide students with an example of Christian community.

Teachers and administrators model adult Christian behavior for the teenage students. The principal of Gibbons indicates the importance of concern for the less fortunate to faculty members by his Christmas gift of Maryknoll Magazine. Traditions in the schools go beyond school

traditions to religious traditions of the universal Church and religious orders. The Maryhaven school community celebrates feasts of the foundress and other Incarnation sisters. The strong cultures in these Catholic schools differ from those in other schools by reason of their strong religious bent.

2. In Catholic high schools with strong religious cultures, what structures, practices and procedures do administrators use to develop and enhance such strong religious cultures?

Strong religious cultures are developed and enhanced by administrators in these schools in a variety of ways.

#### Hiring practices

Administrators in most of the schools look for teachers who will fit into the school setting because of their religious philosophies. Principals concentrate not just on good academic abilities but also on religious values of applicants. At The Abbey School, Gideon Barnard looks for teachers who see themselves as facilitators of growth. Paul Baer seeks teachers who are authentically religious and empathetic. Administrators at Gibbons look for candidates who have a clear sense of the role of religion in the school. Tom Nedding is willing to ask candidates at St. Michael's about their religious values and practices. The principals see hiring of teachers with Christian values as

the first and perhaps most important aspect of culture building.

#### Staff Development

Teachers are led by principals to a greater understanding and appreciation of the religious culture of their schools in formal and informal ways. Northside, Annunciation, and The Abbey School have annual faculty retreat days during which important religious values are presented to the faculty for their reflection and discussion. Discussions at faculty meetings at Annunciation concentrate on the school philosophy. Gideon Barnard has a plan for presenting religious topics to his faculty at The Abbey School as part of inservice sessions. In addition, faculty members have participated in the Colloquium for Educational Ministry in which they have shared ideals with teachers from other Albertine schools. Tom Nedding keeps reminding the faculty at St. Michael's that they are role models for students. New teachers at Maryhaven attend summer workshops in which the history, goals, and values of network schools are presented. Similarly, teachers at Annunciation have joined with the faculties of other schools conducted by the Annunciation sisters for retreats. In these ways, values which the principal wishes to reinforce among the faculty are highlighted.



### Rituals and Ceremonies

A variety of rituals and ceremonies are used in these schools to reinforce religious values. The principal at St. Michael's, for example, requires teachers to begin classes with a prayer as a reminder that God is present in every activity. Eucharistic liturgies are held periodically in all schools. The sacrament of reconciliation is offered weekly at The Abbey School. The ability to leave class to receive the sacrament shows students that administrators and teachers especially consider reconciliation is an important ritual. At Maryhaven and Annunciation, penance services during Lent reinforce the need for sorrow and repentance. The daily mission collection at Annunciation ritualizes the need for concern for unfortunates throughout the world.

Retreats are rituals in each school which have become integral means of imparting religious values to students. The campus ministers at Gibbons, Annunciation, St. Michael's, and Northside use retreats as a means of socializing freshmen into the school community. Upper class retreats at Northside and St. Michael's focus on an examination of relationships with others and with God. The principal at The Abbey School personally conducts a leadership retreat for juniors. Through such retreats, religious values which are important to the school community are imparted to students.

### Articulation of Shared Values

Values held by faculty members often are shared with newer teachers or students in a variety of ways. Northside teachers, for example, are encouraged to participate in student retreats and Christian service projects to give example to students. The campus minister at St. Michael's invites faculty members to conduct student retreats.

Faculty members at Annunciation make their values known to students. For instance, teachers do not allow dances or other social activities to be overpriced and thus exclude some students. Students at Maryhaven and Annunciation are expected and are pushed by teachers to participate in school activities.

Reflection groups established at Maryhaven and The Abbey School provide students with the opportunity to discuss the relevance of their Christian service experiences under the direction of faculty members. Student leaders are helped to develop empathetic skills through the peer counseling program at St. Michael's.

### Socialization Processes

Faculty members become integrated into the school community through informal socialization established by administrators. By providing lunches, Northside Catholic and The Abbey School give teachers an opportunity to mingle

in an informal social setting. All the other schools except St. Michael's have pleasant lunchrooms in which faculty members have the occasion to share ideas. Since teachers from several disciplines teach together in collegios at Gibbons, they are able to overcome the separation between departments which sometimes exist in schools.

Students at The Abbey School become socialized through participation in Catholic Action Movement groups or Christian Life Communities. The collegios at Gibbons give students the opportunity to become very closely associated with a small group of colleagues.

### Heroes

Although administrators do not have direct control over the choice of student heroes, they are able to capitalize upon the feelings of students by praising particular teachers who exemplify special values or virtues. The principal at Northside Catholic, for instance, lauds Sister Rita Jean, the campus minister, for her concern for each individual student. The mother figures at Annunciation are held up for the emulation of the faculty because of their motherly concern for students. The entire Philippite community at Gibbons is looked up to as a model of Christian living for students.

Administrators themselves are heroes for teachers and students in some schools. Tom Nedding is greatly admired by

the St. Michael's school community for his tireless efforts to inspire them. Father Tim Barnett promotes concepts of social justice at Gibbons and thus leads teachers and students to accept and practice them. Father Gideon Barnard likewise uplifts teachers at The Abbey School by his persistence in pursuing his vision. The examples of these principals direct the attention of their school communities to values which are important.

3a. Is the nature and effectiveness of the religious culture of a Catholic high school related to the fact that the principal and other key personnel are clerics, religious, or laypersons? Is the culture of a school different if the principal is a layperson than if the principal is a priest, sister, or brother?

In theory, the fact that the principal and other key persons are priests, sisters, or brothers might have an influence on the strength of the religious culture of the school. The Catholic Church has always been a hierarchical organization; consciously or unconsciously, priests and religious are usually treated with deference by most Catholics. The religious vision and directives of clerical or religious administrators, at least externally, might receive greater acceptance than similar statements from laypersons because the cleric or religious is identified as a religious professional. Hence in theory a layperson

should have a more difficult time than a priest or religious in influencing the religious culture of a school. The lay administrators at Maryhaven, for example, do not exert the same religious influence on their faculty as do religious principals at Annunciation, Northside, The Abbey School, or Gibbons.

Although in theory priests or religious can influence the religious culture of a school more easily than a layperson, in practice the development of a strong religious culture appears to depend more upon the leadership ability and personality of the principal and other key individuals than on clerical or religious status. For example, Tom Nedding has been able to develop a strong religious culture at St. Michael's, whereas Sister Constance alone does not appear to have dramatically affected the culture of Annunciation.

A key factor in the strength and nature of the religious culture is the presence and sponsorship of a religious community. For instance, Sister Constance, while not personally a charismatic leader, is seen as a representative of the Annunciation community. Her direction carries additional impact because it is perceived as reflective of the will of the sponsoring congregation. This increased influence enables Sister Constance to maintain a strong religious culture at Annunciation. Nedding, on the

other hand, must win over the rest of the school community by dint of his personal vision and charisma. He is, however, able to do this; thus the school community at St. Michael's has a stronger religious culture than that at Annunciation.

3b. Does a priest, sister, or brother use different types of administrative structures, practices, and procedures than a lay principal to develop an strong religious culture?

No evidence from this study suggests that priests, sisters, or brothers use different types of administrative structures, practices, or procedures than lay principals do in developing strong religious cultures. All the administrators and key individuals appear to use similar techniques to promote the religious cultures of their schools. For instance, Tom Nedding and Gideon Barnard both use faculty meetings as occasions for promoting particular values which they wish to stress. Faculty retreats at The Abbey School, Northside, and Annunciation are used as occasions to put forth special values.

The training and background of administrators is partly responsible for the reliance on particular structures, practices, and procedures of developing religious school cultures. Both lay principals, Tom Nedding and Lawrence Halliwell, belonged to religious orders. As a result, they

received religious training and were imbued with religious values of the schools in which they taught or administered. They learned the types of structures, practices, and procedures which helped strengthen the religious cultures of schools. By using such techniques, Nedding has been able to successfully promote a strong religious culture at St. Michael's. On the other hand, even though he has been able to deal successfully with some of the concerns of the Incarnation sisters by reason of his background, Halliwell has not been able to develop a strong religious culture at Maryhaven.

4a. Is the religious culture different in schools of various types and sizes?

In theory, the larger a school, the less opportunity exists for individual students to have contact with the principal, campus minister, or other key individuals. Because of this, the religious influence of the school culture upon students should be inversely related to the size of the school.

However, in this study, the religious cultures in the two largest schools visited, The Abbey School and Northside Catholic, are stronger than that in the smallest school, Maryhaven. This is perhaps not due to the size of the school, but to the religious and family backgrounds of the students, something not directly investigated in this

study. Even though students at Maryhaven and The Abbey School come from similar socioeconomic backgrounds, Maryhaven has a higher percentage of non-Catholic students than does The Abbey School. In addition, students in other schools, such as Northside, come mostly from middle class backgrounds in which the family practice of religion seems to be stronger than in the families of Maryhaven students. In any case, size alone does not determine whether or not a school will have a strong religious culture. Two of the three middle sized schools, Annunciation and Gibbons, have moderately strong religious cultures, while St. Michael's, of similar size, has a strong religious culture.

4b. Is there a difference in the strong religious cultures in coeducational schools and single-sex schools?

There is a difference in the religious cultures of coeducational and single-sex schools. According to McArdle (1985) a greater sense of community exists in single-sex male schools than in other types of schools. In the three single-sex schools visited, the development of male or female bonding is viewed by faculty members as an important aspect of community building. At The Abbey School, this bonding becomes particularly important in terms of the long term affiliation with the school community after graduation. While the development of friendships is considered to be important at Gibbons, Northside, and St.



Michael's, it does not seem to play as important a role in the maintenance of the religious cultures of the schools.

Maryhaven and Annunciation, the girls' schools in this study, make special efforts to prepare their students to enter the modern world. The role of women in the Catholic Church today is a predominant theme in both schools, although it was handled quite differently in each school. The administrators at Annunciation make deliberate efforts to integrate students into the ecclesial life of the Church. Faculty members at Maryhaven, however, only lament that students do not more faithfully adhere to Catholic doctrine and practice. Emphasis on the role of women in the Church was not noted in the three coeducational schools visited.

4c. Do diocesan schools have a different culture than schools administered by religious congregations?

As the principal of a private high school administered by a religious order, and as a member of that order, the researcher acknowledges that his view of the differences between the religious cultures of private and diocesan schools is colored by his experience and perceptions. However, there are several factors which lead the researcher to conclude that there are distinct differences between the religious cultures of private and diocesan schools.

As mentioned above, the presence of a religious congregation influences the culture of the school. Because

religious administrators are viewed as representatives of the philosophy of the community, they are able to direct the school community even if they are not charismatic leaders. Members of the congregation can have an effect on the community far beyond what might be predicted from their numbers. The four Philippites at Cardinal Gibbons, for instance, inspire the other faculty members by their example of Christian living. This is not always the case, however. The three sisters at Maryhaven, for example, did not have the same synergistic effect on the school community, even though they had done much to improve the religious culture of the school.

The charism of the religious congregation affects the religious culture of the school. The emphasis on "Men for Others" among the Albertines, for instance, has dramatically changed the service programs at The Abbey School. At Annunciation, particular religious become surrogate parents to students. At Northside, however, themes from none of the five religious communities dominated the religious culture of the school.

Diocesan schools administered by a diocesan priest, such as Father Paul Baer at Northside Catholic, or a layperson, such as Tom Nedding at St. Michael's, do not enjoy the support arising from the spirit and traditions of a sponsoring religious order. As a result, their

administrators and faculty do not concentrate on the cultivation of a particular characteristic virtue of Christian life as private schools can. The religious culture of a school, affected by the presence of a religious community, is different in schools conducted by religious congregations than it is in diocesan schools because of perceived differences in the quality of religious experiences.

#### Other Conclusions

1. The American bishops stressed three dimensions of Catholic education in To Teach as Jesus Did: proclamation of the gospel message, building of a community of believers, and service to the Christian and human communities. The first of these appears to be strongly developed in the religious cultures of the Catholic high schools visited through mandatory religious curricula. Faith communities are built through a variety of activities, such as liturgies, retreats, and interactions of faculty and students. The third dimension of service is not required of students in most of the schools visited. Only The Abbey School and Maryhaven have mandated programs, perhaps because administrators in these two schools feel that their students, generally from more affluent families, have a greater need to become aware of the exigencies of others.

In the other four schools, Christian service is seen as the voluntary outflowing of religious expression developed through the curriculum and faith community. Many students in these four schools, after becoming involved in service projects, experience a sense of fulfillment at having helped others in their need.

2. Religious leaders exist in other positions besides the top level. The principal is not always the sole religious leader of a school. Several campus ministers stand out as persons with strong visions of what the religious life of the school should be. Both Sister Rita Jean at Northside and George Connell of St. Michael's are recognized by their peers and students as religious leaders on campus. This comes in part from their daily involvement in religious activities, but also derives from their convictions of the importance of their work, their obvious dedication, and their ability to influence others.

#### Recommendations

1. Strong religious cultures assume many different forms in Catholic high schools. Some, such as that at The Abbey School, stress the need for selfless service to others and the development of Christian leadership. Others, like Annunciation, emphasize an awareness of the mission efforts of the Church throughout the world. Still others, such as

St. Michael's and Gibbons, stress Christian community. Because different strong religious cultures exist, Catholic high schools take on great importance in the total mission of the Catholic Church in their ability to develop dedicated young Catholics, committed to different values. Therefore, it is important to ensure the future of such schools in order to provide the nucleus of educated, active, adult Catholics in parishes of the 1990s and into the 21st century. Catholic educational teachers and administrators need to demonstrate the importance of Catholic high schools to Church officials and members in order to gain their moral and financial support.

2. Administrators of Catholic schools need to become aware of the importance of developing cultural elements and methods which enhance and strengthen the religious culture of their schools. This is especially important as more lay administrators without previous religious training are hired in Catholic high schools. The two lay principals in this study had been members of religious congregations with administrative experience in other Catholic high schools. Consequently, they are conversant with the religious cultures of Catholic high schools. Future lay administrators without similar backgrounds need to receive training in methods of developing and strengthening the religious cultures of Catholic high schools in order to

maintain and deepen them.

3. Similarly, teachers in Catholic schools need learn about the elements of strong religious cultures. Such studies should include background on the nature of Catholic education, differences between public and Catholic schools in emphasis and culture, theological and spiritual training, and methods of promoting religious values and culture. In this way, situations similar to that at Maryhaven can be avoided.

#### Areas for Future Research

This study which looked at the religious cultures of six Catholic high schools on the west coast can serve as a model for future research on Catholic high schools. Since religious values, curriculum, and programs form such integral parts of the overall Catholic school culture, it was difficult for the researcher to separate elements of religious culture from those of the overall school culture. However, those elements are precisely the attributes which set the Catholic religious culture apart from strong cultures in other schools. It is the opinion of the researcher that future studies continue to examine strong religious cultures in Catholic high schools. At the same time, however, studies should also continue on the connection between religious cultures and strong Catholic

high school cultures in general.

In order better to understand religious cultures of Catholic high schools throughout the United States, the researcher recommends that ethnographic studies of Catholic high schools be conducted in other regions of the country. Such researchers would be able to determine whether there are subtle regional differences in strong Catholic school cultures.

The researcher recommends that case studies be made of individual schools reputed to have strong religious cultures. Such studies would furnish educators with indepth, longitudinal descriptions of specific, strong religious cultures, thus deepening Catholic educators' knowledge of religious school culture.

One area not investigated in this research is the relationship between family backgrounds and the strength of the school religious culture. Study of the nature, focus, practice, and depth of the Catholic religion among families of students would provide some clue as to why some schools are more successful in developing strong religious cultures than others.

Once a clearer picture of the nature of strong religious cultures of Catholic high schools is gained through additional ethnographic studies, it should be possible to carry out quantitative studies of religious

school cultures. Research using Likert scales could indicate the relative importance of various factors in developing and maintaining religious cultures. In this manner, factors relating to culture could be quantitatively compared to determine which are most influential in maintaining or strengthening the overall religious culture of a school. The religious cultures of schools could thus be quantitatively compared.

Since there are considerable differences between schools on different levels, the researcher recommends that ethnographic studies be conducted of the religious cultures of Catholic elementary schools. Such studies would provide comparisons and contrasts on a large segment of Catholic schools which this present study did not attempt.

The concept of Gemeinschaft investigated by Muckerman (1981) bears striking resemblance to the characteristics of schools with strong religious cultures. The researcher recommends that additional research be conducted to establish the correlation between the factors of commitment, community, consensus, and exceptionality and strong religious culture. In this way, a unified theory of religious culture might be developed.



### Concluding Remarks

This study examined six west coast Catholic high schools with reputations for having strong religious cultures. The researcher undertook this research because of his deep interest in Catholic education extending over a span of 26 years as a Catholic school teacher and administrator. The topic of this research arose from an interest in discovering what makes Catholic schools different from other schools. As an administrator, the researcher was interested in determining what practices and procedures are used in schools to enhance their religious cultures.

It was most gratifying to the researcher to discover that almost all of the six schools in this study lived up to their reputations of having strong religious cultures. Catholic high schools provide not only rigorous academic education, but also possess quality religious environments. They do an excellent job of preparing young people religiously for future life. They truly are the most effective means available to the Church today for the religious education of young people.

Catholic high school communities in large part enjoy vigorous faith lives in which devoted adults, both religious and lay, make concerted efforts to deepen their own

religious lives so that they might be better role models of adult Christian living to students. Knowing that the vast majority of teachers and administrators in Catholic high schools view this aspect as integral to their positions is personally most inspiring to the researcher.

As Catholic high schools move forward into the 21st century, it becomes obvious that religious leaders such as Gideon Barnard and Tom Nedding must be the models for future Catholic school administrators. Such educational leaders are needed now more than in the past to draw parents, teachers, and students beyond the present point to a greater realization of their common aspirations. Their clear vision, their ability to inspire, and their capability to carry out the missions of their schools should inspire other school administrators to emulate their transformational leadership.

Sixteen hundred years ago, St. Augustine received the gift of faith, was converted to the Catholic faith in an instant, and spent the next 43 years trying to transform people in northern Africa into better followers of Christ. Those processes of religious conversion and subsequent transformation of individuals and institutions are as necessary in the 20th century as in the 4th. Catholic high schools must continually undergo transformation if they are to become more effective centers of Christian growth for

adults and young people. This research may provide some small impetus to help teachers and administrators in this ongoing process.

## APPENDIX A

## Interview Guide - Principal

1. Perhaps a good way to begin is by talking about the school's history. Can you give me a brief historical sketch of the school?

2. What is your vision for this school, your long-range goals and expectations?

3. Who works here? What is the composition of your staff? Probe for the lay/religious, male/female composition.

4. How has the staffing for this school remained the same or changed over the past ten years?

5. How so you think the staffing of this school will change over the next ten years?

6. What is the relationship with the religious order that provides staffing for the school?

7. Who provides direction and momentum in religious areas at this school? You, the school board, the campus ministers, religion department chairperson?

8. How are funds, materials, and time and other support mechanisms allocated? How high a priority do religious activities get in scheduling, assignment of teachers, dispersing of recognition?

9. What is your background in general, in religious education? How long have you been at this school? How would you rate your knowledge and understanding of church teaching? Have you read the church documents on education (e.g., To Teach as Jesus Did, Sharing the Light of Faith, The Catholic School, Lay Catholics in Schools)?

10. How is the religion program monitored and by whom?

Thematic Issue: How does faculty view its role? Is it broader than just teaching? Is there a moral character development dimension to their role? Do they view it as ministry?

1. What do you look for in hiring staff? What kind of person do you look for when you hire a staff member? Do you discuss with faculty his or her specific religious witness to other staff members, faculty, and students? If a faculty member is not in active agreement with a ministerial approach to teaching or discipline, would he/she be

rehired?

2. Why do people come to teach here? Do they see their work as ministry or just a teaching job? Does the faculty and staff leave religious affairs to the religion department and/or campus ministry?

3. Do staff members give themselves time during the day or week for prayer? Are there opportunities for faculty retreats? Are there opportunities for spiritual direction and counseling for faculty?

4. Is any type of religious inservice given to faculty?

5. How are faculty members challenged with the concerns of the gospel in the everyday affairs of the school?

Thematic Issue: Catholic theology is made relevant in the modern Catholic school through the notions of evangelization and pre-evangelization rather than through indoctrination. All students, Catholic and non-Catholic, are encouraged to think morally about society, the nature of life, and their personal responsibilities.

1. How do you make Catholicism relevant to kids today? (Note: if the school has a substantial non-Catholic population, make a specific probe on relevance to this subpopulation). How are students challenged with the concerns of the gospel in the everyday affairs of the school?

2. How does the structure of the religious program and other religious activities (liturgies, retreats, religious counseling) reflect this relevance?

3. Has the structure of the religion program and other religious activities changed in recent years?

4. What is the emphasis in the school's religion program and other religious activities? What is it that you want the students to take away from the program? How much priority is given to scheduling of school-wide liturgies and prayer services to help students see their ministerial role in the school community?

5. How do you meet the spiritual needs of Catholics and non-Catholic students in your school?

6. What sort of opportunities are provided to students for service projects to the larger community?

7. Are gospel values explicitly considered in the disciplinary practices of the school? Are students made accountable for their actions so that they grow in the acceptance of personal responsibility? Are school chaplains consulted on disciplinary matters?

8. In the application of rules and regulations, is a spirit of compassion, fairness and flexibility demonstrated?

9. Do the admission policies encourage the attendance and provide financial assistance to students from a variety of economic and social backgrounds?

10. How is a student's experience like what he/she might have in the local public school? How is it different? What is unique about a student's experience at this school?

11. What sort of a climate exists for development of students spiritually and emotionally?

## APPENDIX B

## Interview Guide - Chaplain/Religion Department Chairperson

1. How do you make Catholicism and religious practice relevant to kids today? What are the special methods you use? How well do they work?

2. If there is a large non-Catholic population, how do you make Catholic teaching relevant to the kids? Are certain elements of Catholic teaching stressed and others underplayed? How does your curriculum reflect your school population and their religious preferences?

3. Could you describe the school's sacramental program (liturgies, penance services, prayer groups, retreats and the like)? Is it adequate for the school population? Are more chaplains and campus ministers needed? How is the Church's teaching on morality and sexuality carried out in the school?

4. What are the school's goals for the religious development of the students? Do faculty and administrators agree with and support these goals? Do you?

5. How do you know that you are/are not doing a good job?

6. How do students respond to the religion program both in the classroom and in other religious activities?

7. What do the students (and graduates) report as their peak religious experiences? Did these occur in classrooms or in other settings? Does the school shape the religious environment to increase the possibility of such events?

8. How do parents respond to the religious program? Is there much interest? Do parents challenge textbooks, teachers, guest speakers? Are there regular and special programs on religious education and developmental psychology for parents?

9. What is the relationship between your school and the feeder parishes? Is there any competition for the time and loyalty of students? Are there any other sources of tension between the school community and the parish communities? How is this resolved?

10. Is there an intrinsic countercultural element in the religion program -- teaching social justice and increased responsibility for the marginal person in society to youngsters who come from middle class and upwardly mobile families? How do you handle the resulting tension?

11. With so many children coming from families that have experienced divorce and remarriage and in which family practices may run counter to church teachings in the area of birth control and perhaps even abortion, do the students experience any conflict between these concerns and the teachings of the church?

12. What are your expectations for the students who graduate from this school? What do you hope they will be like?

13. What is the greatest lack in the religious sphere that you notice among the students here? What do you do to satisfy this deficit?

14. Who provides direction and momentum in religious areas at this school? Principal, the school board, the campus ministers, religion department chairperson?

15. How are funds, materials, and time and other support mechanisms allocated? How high a priority do religious activities get in scheduling, assignment of teachers, dispersing of recognition?

16. How is the religion program monitored, and by whom?

17. Are there opportunities for students and faculty to become involved in Christian service projects to the larger community?

18. Are you consulted on disciplinary matters? Are gospel values explicitly considered in the disciplinary practices of the school?

19. Are you given opportunities to discuss their specific religious witness with faculty members, individually or in a group? Do faculty members consider themselves to be witnessing to all persons in the school community? Are faculty members challenged with the concerns of the gospel in the everyday affairs of the school?



## APPENDIX C

## Interview Guide- Teacher

1. Who provides direction and momentum in religious areas at this school? Principal, school board, the campus ministers, religion department chairperson?

2. How are funds, materials, time and other support mechanisms allocated? How high a priority do religious activities get in scheduling, assignment of teachers, dispersing of recognition?

3. What kind of influence does the principal have on the religious goals of the school?

Thematic issue: Catholic school faculty see their role as broader than just providing instruction in some content areas. As members of a Christian community, they are concerned about the moral character development of each individual.

4. Is any direction given by the school administration on the specific religious witness expected of faculty members? Do administrators ever not rehire a teacher because he/she is not in active agreement with a ministerial approach to teaching or discipline?

5. Do department chairpersons discuss at department meetings ways in which their department can specifically strengthen the Christian atmosphere and spirit of the school?

6. In the process of curriculum development, do academic departments look for ways in which the curriculum can enhance and strengthen the ministerial dimension of the school?

7. Do faculty members consider themselves to be ministering to all persons in the school community?

8. Do faculty members have an opportunity to participate in days of recollection and renewal? Are there opportunities for spiritual counseling for staff and students?

Thematic issue: Catholic theology is made relevant in the modern Catholic school through the notions of evangelization and pre-evangelization rather than through indoctrination. All students, Catholic and non-Catholic, are encouraged to think morally about society, the nature of life, and their personal responsibilities.

9. How do you make Catholicism relevant to kids today? (Note: if the school has a substantial non-Catholic population, make a specific probe on relevance to this subpopulation.)

10. How does the structure of the religious program and other religious activities (liturgies, retreats) reflect this relevance?

11. Has the structure of the religion program and other religious activities changed in recent years?

12. What is the emphasis in the school's religion program and other religious activities? Does the religion department and campus ministry have any priority in the allocation of funds, personnel, scheduling, and resources? What is it that you want the students to take away from the program?

13. How do you meet the spiritual needs of Catholics and non-Catholics in your school?

14. How is a student's experience here like what he/she might have in the local public school? How is it different?

15. What is unique about a student's experience at this school?

Thematic Issue: Is there a sense of responsibility among teachers for students' "full" development and sense of ministry?

16. I have found that working with kids can be rewarding but also tough at times. What is it like for you? Does the administration ever challenge you with the concerns of the gospel in the everyday affairs of the school?

17. What should students who graduate from this school have gotten out of their experiences here?

18. Think about a group of students for whom you might say, "I'm proud of them. We did a good job!" What are those students like?

19. Are gospel values explicitly considered in the disciplinary practices of the school?

20. Do you think administrators and teachers demonstrate a spirit of compassion, fairness and flexibility in the application of rules and regulations?

## APPENDIX D

## Interview Guide - Students

1. Do you think a spirit of compassion, fairness and flexibility is shown by teachers and administrators in the application of rules and regulations?

2. Are opportunities to be of service to the larger community provided to students? If so, what do students get out of such experiences?

3. Are gospel values explicitly considered in the disciplinary practices of the school? Do you think students are made accountable for their actions?

4. When you were admitted to the school, was there any discussion with you and/or your parents of the religious nature of the school and what the school hoped to accomplish religiously?

5. Are students ever challenged with the concerns of the gospel in the everyday affairs of the school?

6. How high a priority do you think the school puts on religious ideals?

7. Have there been any discussions by administrators or faculty of the religious witness students should give?

8. Do you think this school made Catholicism relevant to you and your friends? How does the structure of the religious program and other religious activities reflect this relevance? How do students respond to the religious program both in the classroom and in other religious activities?

9. What do you think the emphasis has been in the school's religious program and other religious activities? What do you think you've taken away from the program?

10. Do you think your religious needs have been met by the school? What do you think your peak religious experience in the school has been? Did this occur in the classroom or in another setting? Have there been any opportunities to develop solid patterns of prayer in your personal life?

11. How have your experiences been similar to/different from what you would have gotten in the local public school? What is unique about a student's experience at this school?

12. How do your parents feel about the religious program of the school?

13. What is the relationship between your school and your home parish? Is there any competition for your time and loyalty?

14. What do you think a graduate of this school should be like?

15. What do you think is the greatest lack in the religious program of the school?

16. Has there been any opportunity for students to get spiritual counseling from faculty? What do you look for in a teacher in the way of example and guidance in religious matters? Do you think your teachers show that example?

17. Do the activities of the Student Council help students become more aware of their need to help others and work together?

## Appendix E

## Example of a Typical Teacher Interview

Brief introduction, explanation of the purpose of the research, that conversation will be recorded, promise of anonymity.

Q: How long have been at Northside?

A: This is my seventh year at Northside High School.

Q: Where did you go to college?

A: I graduated from Berkeley and I got my Master's at San Francisco State.

Q: Did you go to a Catholic high school?

A: I did not go to a Catholic high school, I went to a public school.

Q: From what you have experienced here and your previous experience in public schools, what would you say is the major thing that a student would find different about their experiences here as opposed to being in a public school?

A: For me the thing I like most about Northside is the Christian attitude here and the spirit of community and the idea that kids and faculty here think of this place almost as family. As a matter of fact I have a boy who goes here now; he's a junior and I have a girl coming next year and I have a third one who is in a Catholic grammar school. That's the main thing, that spirit of - I call it the spirit of Christianity that you sense here and feel.

Q: Do you get a break on tuition as a faculty member?

A: Yes I do.

Q: Do mind telling me what that break is?

A: Well, I pay all the fees but the tuition is taken care of.

Q: Who do you think gives the overall direction and momentum to the whole school as far as the religious tone of the school is concerned?

A: It definitely comes from the principal and also Sister Rita Jean, who is the head of the Campus Ministry. I think we have a real good campus ministry program and the kids I talk to who go on the retreats are very, very impressed. It's a good Christian atmosphere.

Q: Kids nowadays have a lot of things to distract them, MTV, movies and a whole gambit of things. Trying to make

Catholicism relevant to kids sometimes is a difficulty. How do you think Northside goes about that? Trying to be relevant to kids today?

A: Of course, kids who go here have the same problems and temptations that kids in public school have. Personally, in my role, I teach two classes and I always approach most of the problems that we face in the classroom or the concepts we cover in the classroom we relate to, I try to relate to the students, "How does this particular thing effect you?" or "How would you handle this type of a problem?" I'm always referring to the types of morality and value that a Christian Catholic would have. Of course I use an inductive method and I try to draw these things out of a kid.

Q: What class do you teach?

A: I teach World History and this year I'm also teaching Civics which is 90% seniors and I also occasionally teach freshmen class. And in my dealings as a coach, of course you can really crystalize these values and attitudes when you are in the middle of competition and the intensity there. I tell all my assistant coaches there are so many opportunities to show the example of how these kinds of things that are being taught can be used. I think that most of our coaches take that approach.

Q: You mentioned the campus ministry program as doing a good job in retreats in particular. What else in the campus ministry do you think is outstanding and in what ways does it effect the kids?

A: They have a lot of different drives; they have a food drive at Christmastime to collect food for families who need it. Easter time we have our Mission collection. The thing that I like most about all the drives here that they are based on the idea that's it's voluntary. You're not really making any kind of a Christian commitment if it's something that's forced on you so that approach is taken to try to educate the kids that it is a moral obligation that they should have but they have to make the choice and I like that approach. I like that attitude. We have Masses here. We had one the last day before Christmas vacation, we had one the day before Thanksgiving, we have one the last day before Easter and these are voluntary Masses at the end of school. And I'm always impressed at the number of kids that go. There are a large number of kids that go to those things.

Q: If you dealt with a group of kids that were at the edge or verge of graduation or had just graduated, and you thought, "These are kids we really can be proud of." What characteristics would they have?

A: One of the biggest things with kids that are either on the verge of graduating or have just left and come back is their attitude of friendliness. A lot of times kids in their sophomore or junior year think, "I can't wait to get out of here." By their senior year first semester they have that attitude and then as it gets closer they start thinking, "This is the end." Their attitude changes a little bit. When they graduate I've never run across any student that I've talked to here who did not feel they were going to miss the school. I've never run across any student here who either graduated or a senior that when I see them outside the school situations did not come up and say, "Hi" to me and is friendly. I really have a genuine feeling of friendship with kids even outside the school. I see a lot of them because I live here in the valley and there are certain places [that] you go to [where] you always see students from the school; that's one of the things that impresses about the students.

Q: What do you think students have gotten out of their experiences here at Northside?

A: Well I really feel first of all they get a very good education here. On a more personal note I feel that they do get a feeling of community. They have a sense of family when they leave here. And that's one of the things I see in kids when they come back - they're always asking about kids in their class they haven't seen. A lot of times a lot of them get together on their own after wards. They do have that sense of community. The ones that I've dealt with personally, I seen in church; my parish is locally here, and they're still going to church when they leave school. A lot of times they're on their own, so you know it's not a situation where they're forced to go or feel they're obligated to because of other people.

Q: Tying in with that, sometimes parishes complain that they never see the kids while they're in high school because they're so wrapped up with the school. Do you think that is a valid complaint or do you think that exists in this area?

A: It probably does to an extent, not because of things that are done here. They get involved in their high school. About 85% of the kids from my parish do come to Northside so I see them a lot. I see them at some of their sporting events, I see them at church all the time. I'm not too familiar with any of the teen programs that they have over there. But I do know of some kids who work in the volunteer program over there. Yes I do see a lot of them over there.

Q: Speaking about working with various things, one of the things the bishops stressed in their various documents on Catholic education, is the idea of Christian Service as part of the education process of students. Do you think the kids here get much involved in Christian Service, both within the school and without?

A: Yes, I do. The first thing that comes to mind is around Halloween time, we have a dance for handicapped kids. I'm always amazed at the number of kids that volunteer to get involved in that. It's quite an experience. I've chaperoned a few, I've come to a few even though I didn't have to chaperone and the experience that is moving to me is to watch our kids when these handicapped kids come in. Most of them are retarded kids and they're a little hesitant at first - they don't know how to react. But within an hour they're out there dancing with these kids, they're talking to them, and they enjoy it. And most of those kids, after that experience, want to come back and do it again next year because it's a very positive experience for them. I know myself, in my history classes, I have assignments where they have to do community service. It's a new thing for them, in the classroom, to have that requirement, so they're always a little shocked, and their first reaction is, "Oh no, here we go, another one." But on the whole, when they're done, they say they are glad I asked them to do it. I give them some options and leave open some things [so that if] they have an idea of something they want to do, they can come and check with me. They do enjoy it once they get involved. And then we have kids who work in the nursing home next door. They put in sometimes 2 or 3 days a week. I see a lot of that community service.

Q: Moving to a different area, Northside has a fairly large faculty - about 70 plus staff. With the majority of the faculty being lay, do you think faculty feels they have a responsibility in any way for religious development of kids or involvement in the campus ministry program of the school or things associated with that?

A: On the whole, yes. I think most of the teachers here are here because they have a commitment to Catholic education; there are times, such as retreats, [which] will get in the way of the classroom because they're going to go for a couple of days. I've never run across a teacher who felt that the retreats didn't come first or any kind of program that the campus ministry runs. And most of the ones I know personally, they do have a personal commitment to Catholic education. I think that's why they're here.

Q: A lot of faculty, nowadays like yourself, have not gone to Catholic college or even Catholic high school in some



cases. Do you think in the orientation process, for instance, for teachers, for new teachers, or in the ongoing orientation every year for faculty, is there any type of effort made to make them aware of what the religious goals of the school are and to try to deepen their own personal spiritual development?

A: With new teachers they are all given a copy of our goals and our philosophy here at Northside. Father Baer does an orientation with them, going over that with them. Early in the year we always have a retreat, strictly for faculty and administrators, and we have periodically through the year, when we have our faculty meetings. About three times a year we have just a religious oriented breakfast, we do readings, we talk about what we're about here and what makes us different as a Catholic school as opposed to a public school. There's a lot of orientation in that direction.

Q: As I understand, your school emblem is the Redskins. Does the school have a motto or a slogan?

A: No, not really. No, we don't have a motto here.

Q: Different Catholic schools seem to emphasize different values, one school might emphasize fairness, and justice and being honest. Do think Northside tries to stress any particular value or values in dealing with families and students?

A: I can't say any particular one that is emphasized other than [others]; I would guess, probably the most important thing is to not state it but just by the character of the school that we do emphasize the idea [of] the spirit of community here and I would say that's more of a process of how we go about our daily existence here rather than something that's stated.

Q: Sometimes schools are judged not so much by what they actually do but how they appear to the public. Which seems to be more important here, what's actually going on or putting on a front for publics that you have to attract?

A: Do you mean from our standpoint or from the public's standpoint? How we perceive it?

Q: Yes. How would you perceive that?

A: I think it is definitely what we do here. I think it is much more important than how we are perceived, although I feel how we are perceived is important in terms of being able to attain the goals we are striving for.

Q: Do you think the perception and the actuality match up?

A: They do, pretty closely. But what we really do, a lot of people aren't aware of how good a school this is,

although they do think this is a good school.

Q: Who do the kids look up to? Who are their heroes? Among the other kids or faculty?

A: It's interesting, we were just talking about this, a couple of coaches, how the football players at a lot of schools are looked up to as a role models, and they're not here which I perceive as a healthy attitude. I don't think, although sports are important here, they're not the most important things. Right now I'm referring to the attitude of the kids. It's not the most important thing in their life which is the way I think it should be. In terms of the heroes here on campus, there are a number of teachers I feel that have that reputation. Sister Rita Jean is one of the people that kids will come to when they have problems and they respect her opinion very, very much. Outside of school, there are some kids here who look up to some of the rock stars, naturally, but I cannot think of a particular entertainer whose name is very common around here right now.

Q: In the course of a school year, are there any particular religious ceremonies that seem to be a regular pattern? For instance, some schools have a Junior Ring Mass when the rings are blessed?

A: We have that. We have a Mass for the juniors when they get their rings. Each class has a class Mass once a year. Everyone of our athletic teams at the beginning of the year will have a retreat, usually on campus, and included in that will be a Mass. Of course we have the masses we mentioned before, Christmas, Thanksgiving and Easter.

Q: Can you think of any stories that epitomize what North-side stands for? Things that might have happened, some particular kid doing something?

A: One comes to mind to me last year, because I was involved in it. I coached the volleyball team here and last year we had a very good team and this one young lady was one of our better players. She inadvertently was in violation of one of the rules. It happened out of ignorance. But the consequences could be very, very damaging. We would have forfeited all of our games and she would have become ineligible for the year. And yet she came and reported it to me. In fact that's what happened, we forfeited all of our games at that point and she was ineligible for the rest of the year. Even after that, she told me, "You know, I thought about it. I probably could have played, if I had kept my mouth shut. The team would not have suffered and I could have still played. But I still feel that I did the right thing." I would have loved to have see that published in the papers. Because you hear a lot

of things, in sports, that are negative; and to me, even though this girl did something that was in violation of the rules, she did the right thing and I was very, very impressed with that. That's something that will stick in my mind for a long time.

- Q: As I said before, trying to define or describe what the culture of a place is, is sometimes difficult and very often use metaphors. Can you think of a metaphor that might describe Northside?
- A: I guess one of the first things that comes to mind would be a maze. I don't want to categorize our kids with rats. A lot of mice running through a maze all going in different directions not knowing exactly where they are going but all more or less trying to attain a certain goal. I guess that would be the best one I could think of to describe.
- Q: Can you think of anything else that might give me a better picture of Northside and what the school is trying to accomplish?
- A: One of the things that I always look at that impresses me is when I'm on yard duty. I've always felt that when you look at kids outside of classroom, you can get a feel for a school. If you watch the kids, here at lunch time, and between passing periods, I think you get that sense of the spirit of community, the friendliness that prevails in the school here. If I were tell somebody if you wanted just one thing to do to find out what the school is like, you might observe the kids when they're not in the classroom.
- Q: Are the number of boys and girls approximately equal?
- A: It's pretty close, but we have more girls than boys.

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