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A STUDY TO EXAMINE CATHOLIC CULTURAL IDENTITY: THE VOICES OF 4TH/5TH GRADE STUDENTS

By

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ABSTRACT

A STUDY TO EXAMINE THE CATHOLIC IDENTITY OF THE 4TH/5TH GRADE STUDENT

By

Michael G. Marshall

The purpose of this study was to explore what particular features of a Catholic school experience enhanced the Catholic cultural identity of a 4th/5th grade student in an urban Catholic elementary school. This study is a phenomenological ethnography using a constructivist approach. The population of this study included a purposeful sampling of 4th/5th grade students, their families, and 4th/5th grade teachers from four urban Catholic elementary schools. The decision to use 4th/5th grade students was initially prompted by the fact that a Catholic youth between the ages of 10 and 12 has been included in two key events in the Roman Catholic Church sacramental program involving both the home and the school.

Another deciding factor was the stage-development analytical lenses of the theorists used to begin the study: Fowler's (1981) faith development, Kohlberg's (1969) moral development, and Egan's (1979) educational development. Each uses a stage-like development style similar to work done by Piaget and Erikson. Queries about the universality of adolescent and adult stage development work of both Kohlberg and Fowler were taken into consideration. Since this study was concerned with the early stages of faith and moral development, these queries were not seen as affecting this exploration.

Data for this study was gathered through face-to-face

taped interviews with the selected students (3), their parents (1), and 4th/5th grade teachers (1) from the four Catholic elementary schools. Included in each of the student interviews were a series of moral dilemmas. At the end of the first student interview, the student was given a disposable camera with instructions for taking pictures of persons, places or things that defines, for them, things that are *Catholic*. These pictures were titled and captioned during the second student interview.

Instruction in religious truths and practices and its integration into the totality of the lives of the students are integral to Catholic schools and are what distinguishes them from other schools. There is a crucial need for Catholic school teachers and Catholic school leadership to understand what is meant by Catholic cultural identity. For Catholic families, if they expect the Catholic school experience to enhance the faith-based Catholic cultural identity initiated in the home, there's no guarantee that it will happen.

This study, from the voices of the students, found the Catholic school experience lacking in its ability to enhance the Catholic cultural identity of a 4th/5th grade student in an urban Catholic elementary school.

DEDICATION

To my parents, my first teachers

Frank Marshall
Rita M. Marshall (in memoriam)

and

To my professional inspiration

Sister Marcella Houdek, HM
celebrating over 50 years in religious service
to God and community

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My companions on this journey...

'O 'oe ku'u kumu punahele, kumu Maenette. Kaulana kou mana'o ma ko'u pu'uwai. Mahalo nui loa no kou kokua.

Maenette K. P. Benham, Chair of both my Guidance and Dissertation Committees, advocate, friend

Paul Gualtieri, strength for the journey, friend

Dan Marshall, brother, mentor, friend

Joan Marshall Florig, sister, soulmate, friend

Francesco J. Marshall, brother, companion, friend

and the network of friends and colleagues who provided additional love and support.

Thank You

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LIST OF SYMBOLS OR ABBREVIATIONS

NCCB.....National Conference of Catholic Bishops

NCEA.....National Catholic Educational Association

ERL.....Electronic Reference Library

ERIC.....Educational Research Information Collection

ICEL.....Institute for Catholic Educational Leadership

CCE.....Congregation for Catholic Education

Chapter 1: Introduction

> From the first moment that a student sets foot in a Catholic school, he or she ought to have the impression of entering a new environment, one illuminated by the light of faith and having its own unique characteristics, an environment permeated with the gospel spirit of love and freedom. (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1988, p. 3)

> A Catholic school will not remain Catholic for long without attention to its identity. A Catholic school without an identity does not become neutral: it comes under the influence of the current community ideology or nationalism or secularism or faddism. Its mind and its heart then become those of a different community. Today more than ever before, unless a particular Catholic school is considering the principles that give it its Catholic identity and is trying to live by them, it does not deserve to stay in existence. (Buetow, 1988, p. 310)

The concept of Catholic cultural identity being the result of Catholic school attendance is what differentiates the Catholic school from the neighborhood public school. Being a part of a living community of faith, a community with its own distinctive rituals and structures, and its own patterns of individual and collective life, makes the Catholic school experience synonymous with Catholic cultural identity development. Distinctive practices, structures, attitudes, and ideas that increasingly have come to mark Catholic cultural identity, is what connects the individual, through the Catholic school experience, to a community or countless other believers who have experienced a long and complex history reaching back over two thousand years.

> Capturing the essence of a Catholic school means being able to define and identify the signs which

> mark the school as Catholic. It means being able to describe and see in practice the Catholic identity of the school and, most of all, understanding the deep underlying significance of those practices. It means being able to explain and demonstrate a living answer to the question: "How is this school Catholic?" (Ford, 1998, p. vii)

The answer to the question that Ford poses, "How is this school Catholic?" is implicit in the mission and philosophy of a Catholic school and is often employed by school administrators as an integral tool in the recruitment of new students. Its mission, which implicitly captures the essence of Catholic schooling, is transmitted to parents, diocesan and Catholic community leaders, and the general public. For example, the mission statement of one local Catholic school reads:

> We, as members of the Saint Pius Parish Community, are called by God to practice our faith and share our love for one another through the sacraments and celebration of the Holy Eucharist.
>
> As followers and disciples of Jesus Christ, it is our vision to live the word of God by promoting peace and justice, serving the needs of our community, educating our youth and adults in the ways of our faith, and joining with them in worship and prayer. (Parent/Student handbook, p. 2)

In this particular mission statement, Catholic schooling means that those who enter this Catholic school, whether adult or child, will experience an atmosphere created and maintained by adherence to a Catholic culture. Such a culture includes specific, positive ideas relevant to gospel values, the teachings of Jesus Christ, and the nurturance of community. The dimensions of Christianity are integrated throughout the curriculum not only to support the mission of

the school, but also to support the mission of the family; the earliest and most persistent influence on the child's life. The staff of a Catholic school provides an arena of subsequent experiences, behaviors, value judgments, and life decisions that will mirror the early foundations established by the family. As expressed in the mission statement, the Catholic school enters into a solemn agreement--a covenant--with the family.

Generally, the consensus of Catholic school research asserts that since the late nineteenth century the Catholic school has played an important part in creating, nurturing, and sustaining Catholic cultural identity. That is, being in a Catholic school is a visibly different experience than being in a public school, however, over the years that visible difference has changed. When I first started my formal school experience in a Catholic elementary school, the sister-teachers were dressed in religious garb called habits that covered everything but their faces and hands. Religious pictures and statuary were visible in every classroom and hallway. The American flag displayed in classrooms was the only apparent similarity between the public school and my Catholic school. As a child, I was comfortable with the Catholic school environment because my home also had similar Catholic artifacts.

As a youth growing up in a Catholic household in the 1950s and 1960s, I knew, without looking at a calendar, the beginning of school was near when the priest's Sunday homily was about Catholic children attending a Catholic school. This message was directed to the parents of all school-aged children. There seemed to be serious question concerning the

faith-lives of any Catholic parents who chose not to send their child(ren) to the parish Catholic elementary school or the local Catholic high school. For as long as I can remember, as a student in Catholic schools, as a teacher in Catholic elementary schools, and, finally, as an administrator in Catholic elementary schools, the marketing of Catholic schools has been aimed at adults; parents, grandparents or guardians responsible for the religious upbringing of children or grandchildren. There is a need to hear more from the children as to how they feel about and understand their Catholic school experience and how it relates to their Catholic cultural identity. Feedback from the children would better inform the adults as to what it is that Catholic schooling is doing well, and what it might be lacking in Catholic cultural identity formation.

Coupled with existing information and research, marketing the Catholic cultural identity of the Catholic school, which would now include information gathered from the students themselves, would be more accurate. The purpose of this study is to explore what particular features of a Catholic school experience enhanced the Catholic cultural identity of a 4th/5th grade student in an urban Catholic elementary school. Given this criteria, the proposed research question is: How does faith and moral and cultural identity interact to frame a Catholic cultural identity, in particular, among 4th/5th grade students in an urban Catholic elementary school?

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to explore what features of the Catholic school experience enhance the Catholic cultural identity of 4th/5th grade student in an urban Catholic elementary school. In the rich complex tradition of Catholicism, emphasis will be placed on those distinctive practices, structures, attitudes, and ideas that increasingly mark Catholic identity. In order to determine the degree to which the Catholic school experience enhances the Catholic cultural identity of such students, this research will also look at family and peer influence. Additionally, a broad variety of literature has been reviewed to assist the researcher to make assessments. Included in this literature is historical information about Catholic education (pre and post Second Vatican Council), and faith and moral development.

Significance and Need

What exactly is "Catholic Cultural Identity" and how does the Catholic school experience build this Catholic cultural identity? Both in America and in Rome, The Catholic Church has defined Catholic cultural identity in a variety of pastoral documents (See: National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB), 1972: To Teach As Jesus Did).

> Catholic education is an expression of the mission entrusted by Jesus to the Church He founded. Through education the Church seeks to prepare its members to proclaim the Good News and to Translate this proclamation into action. Since the Christian vocation is a call to transform oneself and society

> with God's help, the educational efforts of the Church must encompass the twin purposes of personal sanctification and social reform in light of Christian values. (p. 3)
>
> Thus one crucial measure of the success or failure of the educational ministry is how well it enables humanity to hear the message of hope contained in the Gospel, to base their love and service of God upon this message, to achieve a vital personal relationship with Christ, and to share the Gospel's realistic view of the human condition which recognizes the fact of evil and personal sin while affirming hope. (p. 3)

Dr. Robert J. Kealey, executive director of the Department of Elementary Schools of the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA), provides a more user friendly definition in a January, 1996 *Momentum* article.

> The Catholic identity of or Catholic schools resides in the people who compose the school community. If the administrators, clergy, faculty, staff, students, parents, and parishioners manifest the presence of Jesus within themselves, then a truly vibrant Catholic school community exists. As teachers we acknowledge that Jesus resides within us and we reflect to our students this presence of Jesus on earth. Our students come to know Jesus because we manifest Him. At the same time, we see in our students and all others the presence of Jesus. By baptism we became children of God and brothers and sisters in Christ. The living out of the true meaning of these words makes our schools Catholic. (p. 10)

Making sense of these definitions of Catholic cultural identity requires a constant and consistent attempt at personalizing them and determining how to live from Catholic doctrine, messages, and teachings on daily life.

In 1972, the NCCB issued a pastoral document entitled <u>To Teach As Jesus Did</u>. This was the first post-Vatican II document to specifically address the educational ministry of

the Roman Catholic Church in the United States. This pastoral document defined the educational mission of the Church as three-fold and interlocking:"...the message revealed by God (*didache*) which the church proclaims; fellowship in the life of the Holy Spirit (*koinonia*); and service to the Christian community and the entire human community (*diakonia*)" (p. 4, #14). This document, a message from the bishops, reminded parish catechists and teachers that children go to Catholic schools in order to learn how to live according to the divine model, Jesus Christ. Hence, Catholic school principals have been challenged to develop and maintain Catholic cultural identity in their buildings (Ristau and Haney, Eds., 1997, As We Teach and Learn: Recognizing Our Catholic Identity). Likewise, Catholic school teachers have been trained to develop moral/religious teachings within their classrooms (Shimabukuro, 1998, A Call to Reflection: A Teacher's Guide to Catholic Identity for the 21st Century).

In essence, what occurs in Catholic schools are studies and tasks that are sacred because of their humanizing potential. According to Church doctrine, when studies humanize they divinize. Children go to a Catholic school to learn to live according to the divine model, Jesus Christ. This message, born of the spirit of Vatican II, was to bring Catholic schools into the 21st century yet maintain the pastoral commitments of Catholic doctrine: "The vitality and firm purpose generated by the 1972 bishops' pastoral continues to animate and guide Catholic education today" (McDermott, 1997, *Momentum*, p. 63).

In 1991, the NCEA convened a National Congress on Catholic schools in Washington, D.C. The purpose of the

Congress was to initiate conversations that would shift the focus of Catholic identity development from the rituals and observances of Latin Masses and fish on Fridays toward an approach that sought to infuse gospel values into curriculum and instruction. The outcome of these conversations would result in a set of strategies for Catholic education and encourage the expansion of Catholic schools across the United States. It would strengthen the networking between national strategies and local action.

> The purpose of the Congress can be described in terms of three broad goals. To communicate the story of academic and religious effectiveness of Catholic schools to a national audience that includes the whole Catholic community, as well as the broader social and potential community. To celebrate the success of Catholic schools in the United States and broaden support for the continuation and expansion of Catholic schooling in the future. To convene an assembly of key leaders in Catholic schooling as well as appropriate representatives of researchers, business and public officials in order to create strategies for the future of the schools. These strategies address five themes:
>
> The Catholic Identity of Catholic Schools; Leadership of and on Behalf of Catholic Schools; The Catholic School and Society; Catholic School Governance and Finance; and Political Action, Public Policy and Catholic schools. (NCEA, 1991, p. 1)

Critical to the development of the Catholic school system has been the understanding of the goals and purposes of the Catholic school by adult leaders and teachers. While it is reasonable to say that the market is an adult population, I wonder if what is marketed in Catholic elementary education is in actuality being realized by the students. The intent of this research, then, is to encourage the sharing of information and insights into how the features

of a Catholic school, the actions and symbols which mark the school as Catholic, are perceived by its students. How do they see the Catholic school experience contributing to their Catholic cultural identity? What factors/indicators within the purview of the Catholic school experience enhances their Catholic cultural identity? I hope to begin to address these questions by exploring the Catholic school experience of 4th/5th grade students in four urban Catholic elementary schools in the state of Michigan.

Context and Background

Prior to Vatican II, most Catholic elementary schools were staffed by religious sister-teachers working for less than minimum wage whose presence provided both sign and symbol of the Catholic cultural identity of the school. Because of the presence of the sister-teachers, the continuation of the religious education, which was begun in the home, was taken for granted and rarely questioned. The exodus of many of these same religious women after Vatican II financially crippled Catholic education. The sister-teachers were replaced by laity who needed to be paid a just wage. As a result of the "lay" element, the extension of Catholic education between home and school became ambiguous (Dolan, 1992).

Due to this shift in religious teaching coupled with other factors that included charging a nominal fee for instruction, Catholic education soon began to flounder. With parish congregations shrinking, some parishes found it difficult to remain fiscally responsible for the parish

school, especially when tuition collection and related school fees were unable to cover the anticipated budget costs. Families still provided the initial religious education in the home and most parishes were now offering weekly religious education programs for children not attending Catholic school. With the chasm between Catholic education and non-Catholic education becoming less and less evident, the original purpose for the parish school seemed to become less important.

As Catholic schools approached the new millennium, the Congregation for Catholic Education (CCE) issued a document which focused on the strength of the Catholic cultural identity of the Catholic school.

> The complexity of the modern world makes it all the more necessary to increase awareness of the ecclesial identity of the Catholic school. It is from its Catholic identity that the school derives its original characteristics and its 'structure' as a genuine instrument of the Church, a place of real and specific pastoral ministry. The Catholic school participates in the evangelizing mission of the Church and is the privileged environment in which Christian education is carried out. (#11, 1997, p. 41)

The presence of a Catholic cultural identity, a recurring theme in other Church documents on education, is identified by three topics: (a) the integration throughout the curriculum of religious truth and values with the lives and cultures of the students; (b) the promotion of the spiritual and religious formation and transformation of students; and (c) the instilling of an appreciation for Christian service in students.

The NCEA, the only national Catholic organization for

educators, has recently published two pieces on Catholic identity. The first entitled, As We Teach and Learn: Recognizing Our Catholic Identity (1997), assesses the Catholicity of the school. The document consists of a program comprised of an assessment and six study modules presented to and implemented by school teams over a one-year period. Additionally, each module includes its own action plan and evaluation forms to be used by school teams implementing the program. These forms help teams to outline their objectives and tasks, and assess their progress over time.

> The program has been designed to be used in a variety of ways, following a timeline chosen by the participants. It is intended to help the faculty celebrate the already visible signs of Catholicity and actively create within the fabric of the school an even deeper commitment to the lived tradition of the Gospel. (Ristau and Haney, 1997, p. viii)

After completing the assessment of the overall program, the school team would decide which module(s) of the scope and sequence fit their particular school need(s). Specific study modules are designed for each of the six characteristics examined in the assessment. Areas addressed in the assessment which appear to be areas of strength would be supported by listing the activities, behaviors, and events which clearly show successful classroom and school-wide implementation. Throughout the school year during regular staff meetings, continued discussion would cite specific ways to maintain these areas of strength while increasing an awareness of them within the various school "publics." The assessment of the overall school program would also surface areas of challenge which would then be addressed at regular staff meetings. The

school team is responsible for classroom and school-wide implementation and would begin to address these areas of challenge by listing the activities, the events, and the behaviors which would exemplify these areas. The school team would then draw up a plan of action for the desired outcomes.

Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry and Practice (March, 1999) published an article describing a new program specifically designed to assist Catholic school administrators with ways to enhance the Catholic climate in their schools. This leadership program, *Enhancing Our Catholic School Identity*, is structured specifically for Catholic K-12 principals. The ultimate goal is "to enable Catholic school leaders to celebrate and enhance their ability to foster a Catholic identity for their school" (McNiff, 1999, p. 353), and it is based on the premise that principals are the key to any schools success. Four critical elements were defined as paramount for program success: (a) prayer leadership; (b) commitment to Catholic social teaching; (c) openness to enhancing one's own knowledge of the Catholic faith; and (d) skills to provide effective staff development program. An experiential program of two-day workshops over the course of two years should encourage principals to sharpen their leadership skills and deepen their faith commitment to the gospel values embedded in the philosophy of the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church.

A second NCEA publication on Catholic identity, A Call to Reflection: A Teacher's Guide to Catholic Identity for the 21st Century (1998), challenges the Catholic school teacher to examine closely his or he own Catholic cultural identity. Clarification of Catholic cultural identity among Catholic

school teachers is one of:

> ...the greatest challenges facing Catholic schools today. It is an issue of critical importance, affecting the future of Catholic education globally. Confusion on behalf of its members divides a school and creates areas of 'hidden' curricula that sabotage Gospel-driven educational goals. there is an urgency today to nurture our students into healthy, faith-filled, peacemaking adults who will not only function in, but also will provide stability and morality to, a technologically driven 21st century society, which will only continue to be marked by innovation, change, and instability. (Shimabukuro, 1998, p. 1)

The assumption here is that the Catholic cultural identity of the school is greatly influenced by the Catholic cultural identity of those who work there. This report presented a reflective tool based on five thematic areas believed to be the most relevant for Catholic educators "depicting the teacher as a community builder who is additionally committed to his or her ongoing personal spiritual/religious formation and professional development and to the spiritual/religious formation and human development of his or her students" (Shimabukuro, 1998, p. 7).

These five thematic areas are:

1. *Teacher as community builder*. As community builders, Shimabukuro calls teachers to create safe, growth-conductive, potentially transformative, learning environments, in which students will risk the expression of their feelings as well as their higher-order thinking. When this is accomplished, Shimabukuro believes that the classroom will simulate a family atmosphere in which each student can experience a

sense of belonging (p. 17). According to Shimabukuro, brain-based research on human learning (Caine & Geoffrey, 1991, and Goleman, 1995) has clearly established the relationship between optimal student performance and such an environment (p. 17).

2. *Teacher as committed to lifelong spiritual growth.* As is evidenced in her research of the Church documents on education, Shimabukuro cites the classic indicator of a Catholic school as having faculty who view themselves not only as professional educators but also as ministers of the Catholic cultural identity of the schools (p. 27). To this end it becomes important that Catholic educators reflect on their commonalities of belief, exploring the Catholic faith dimension that distinctively defines each person's spirituality.

3. *Teacher as committed to professional development.* Shimabukuro believes that for the Catholic educator, professional competence consists in a combination of spiritual and human formation (p. 36). She continues with how the blend and balance of the teacher's implicit synthesis with continual renewal and updating in the field of education constitutes the Catholic school teacher's ongoing, holistic, formational commitment (p. 36).

4. *Teacher as committed to students' spiritual development.* Shimabukuro feels that authentic involvement, integrating meaningful religious instruction into the personal experience of the individual student, as opposed to the rote learning of doctrine and the rote performance of rituals, becomes the desired *modus operandi* of the post-Vatican II Christian (p. 48). Catholic educators are called

to tell the story of Christian faith, which includes its scriptures, creeds, doctrines, theologies, sacraments, rituals, and so on. Beyond telling the story, Catholic educators are called to educate the very being of their students. The story transforms into vision in the lives of the students.

5. *Teacher as committed to students' human development.* Shimabukuro writes that Catholic pedagogy demands that religious truth and values be interwoven throughout the curriculum, forming the foundation of all instruction (p. 61). Traditional assessment methods address the logical-mathematical and linguistic areas, but, in order to assess the other areas of cognition, alternative assessment methods must be employed (p. 61). To teach to the *whole* child requires a teacher who is ministerial, who individualizes instruction to the needs of each child.

The cultural identity of a Catholic school finds its roots in the spiritual commitment of each teacher. Teaching in a Catholic school is often considered to be a vocation. Modeling Catholic Christian values to his or her students on a daily basis is intrinsic to the cultural identity of the Catholic school. Therefore, reflective practice on the part of the Catholic school teacher that explores a personal Catholic faith dimension, helps define each person's spiritual commitment to Catholic education. For example, within the Diocese of Lansing, each Catholic school is asked to provide a day of retreat for the school staff. It is to be a professional development day with a religious theme, which will enable the adult community within the school to focus in on some spiritual aspect of their ministry. Oftentimes a

keynote speaker will be brought in for a presentation and a series of workshop activities. The retreat day would usually end with a Mass celebrated together by all participants.

While infusing one's teaching with Catholic values is important, teachers in Catholic schools keep abreast of current innovative teaching strategies and adapt and update their knowledge in psychology, pedagogy, and the intellectual sciences. Current professional development also includes the areas of computer technology, the Internet, and distance learning, as well as alternative assessment methods, such as portfolios, product and performance-based assessments, and other qualitative evaluation methods.

Teaching to the different learning styles of students and challenging them to higher level thinking skills are just two examples of how religious instruction can stimulate the imagination of the Catholic school student, because "It is through the use of the imagination that students are able to conceive of, and relate to, the divine" (Shimabukuro, 1998, p. 50). For example, encouraging students to use their imaginations through storytelling, art activities, creative writing, moral dilemmas, and drama are ways in which students can be stimulated through an instruction that promotes higher level thinking skills and imagination. Challenging student thinking beyond the recall and comprehension levels into thinking levels of application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation is the goal of the Catholic school teacher who requires students to take ownership of concepts that become relevant to their lives.

The Catholic school teacher is called to teach the whole child and minister to his or her students by integration

religious truths and values throughout the curriculum. In addition, the Catholic school teacher must locate ways of assessing students in order to encourage Catholic doctrine learning. Traditional paper and pencil assessments are not always the most appropriate form of spiritual or academic assessment. For example, performance assessment might be better suited for those students with a flair for the dramatic or a vocal or instrumental presentation of a song to complement the life story of a composer. These are ways by which to challenge students in their assessment of doctrinal learning. The challenge to the Catholic school teacher, beyond transmitting information to students, is to be able to adequately assess each student using a number of assessment types. This individualized instruction helps to meet the needs of *each* child.

Everything that the Catholic educator does in a school takes place within the structure of an educational community, made up of contacts and the collaboration among all of the various groups of students, parents, teachers, and non-teaching staff. Together they are responsible for making the school an instrument for integral formation. Although it is not exhaustive, this concept of the scholarly institution as an educational community, together with a more widespread awareness of this concept, is one of the most enriching developments for the contemporary school.

The Catholic educator exercises his or her professionalism as a member of one of the constitutive elements of this community. The professional structure itself offers an excellent opportunity to live and bring to life in the students the communitarian dimension of the human person.

Every human being is called to live in community as a social being and as a member of the People of God. Therefore, the educational community of a school is itself a "school." It teaches one how to be a member of the wider social communities, and when the educational community is at the same time a Christian community, it then offers a great opportunity for the teachers to provide the students with a living example of what it means to be a member of the community-the Church.

M. Scott Peck, in his book The Different Drum: Community Making and Peace (1987), defines *community* as,

> A group of individuals who have learned how to communicate honestly with each other, whose relationships go deeper than their masks of composure, and who have developed some significant commitment to ;rejoice together, mourn together,' and to 'delight in each other, making others' conditions [their] own.' (p. 59)

As a community builder, a Catholic school teacher is called to create a safe environment for his or her students; an environment that is conducive to personal growth; an environment for learning that is potentially transformative and in which students can express their feelings and thinking freely. The goal of a Catholic school teacher is to build a family atmosphere in the classroom that belongs to every student. This is what reconnects the Catholic school to the Catholic family.

Catholic school teachers have a responsibility to tell the story of the Catholic Christian tradition to their students. Within that story is included the scriptures, the creeds, doctrines, theologies, sacraments, signs, symbols,

rituals, and so on. At their disposal, the Catholic school teacher has available advanced teaching strategies such as cooperative learning and conflict-resolution models, as will as a variety of technologies to accomplish these goals. However, these methodologies can never substitute for the personal Catholic cultural identity of the Catholic school teacher. Teacher enthusiasm translates into student engagement.

While students benefit through character development, the family unit often becomes stronger through the influence the Catholic school experience has on a student. A Catholic school influences identity development, values, and perspectives through an implicit curriculum of its ethos, structure, and style.

> Catholics in the United States possessed a distinctive ethos, a value system, that set them apart from their Protestant and Jewish neighbors. As immigrants, they also brought with them specific ethnic heritages, and parents zealously sought to transmit such cultures and traditions to the children of the New World. This desire to pass values and tradition on to future generations is a central concern of every culture. New England Puritans had the same aspiration, and so did Jewish immigrants in New York and Cincinnati. The way a people pass their culture on from generation to generation is through education. (Dolan, 1992, p. 241)

The family forms the earliest and most enduring influence on the child's way of life. Subsequent experiences, behavior, value judgments, and life decisions will mirror the early foundations established by the family. The tenets of Catholicism integrated throughout the Catholic school experience will strengthen the family by offering the student the seeds to grow into an integrated, self-realizing,

responsible adult. The school, like the child and the family, might draw from this exploration in multiple ways. This researcher believes the mission of the Catholic school, the marketing of the Catholic school, and the teaching process in the Catholic school are three areas of importance.

Examining the development of Catholic cultural identity through the Catholic school experience from a student perspective would be of benefit to many groups involved in our sacred educative process. The student becomes part of a sacred lineage whose ancestors created certain basic elements and certain basic themes that, today, advance the spiritual development of nearly one-third of the world's population (*Newsweek*, March 29, 1999). The sense of joining such a large community, of becoming part of a global family, becomes integral to the Catholic school experience from the very beginning.

> The Catholic school sees itself as a community that respects the dignity of each person, where members are free to question within a commitment to genuine dialogue, and where an ethos of caring infuses social encounters. the common ground established here orders and gives meaning to much of daily life for both faculty and students. (Bryk, Lee & Holland, 1993, p. 299)

In Catholicism, nothing surpasses the Hebrew Scripture's teaching that human beings were created "in the image of God." Catholic educators see the dignity of the human person as the origin of the very right to an education. Therefore, the significance of the concept of the dignity of the student for Catholic pedagogy will show in many areas. Hence, the significance of the Catholic school experience for the student is evidenced in the distinctive characteristics of

Catholicism itself, and the characteristics reflected in the whole curriculum of the Catholic school.

The preceding documents encourage attention, but there is a lack of research that determines a difference. As the former administrator of an urban parochial Catholic elementary school whose budget was always driven by tuition based on enrollment, I will always be open to new, innovative, and creative ways to market the Catholic schools to families in the community. To make marketing sharper and truer, it is essential to know if, in fact, Catholic cultural identity is being developed. If Catholic schools are supposed to be creating and strengthening young people's Catholic cultural identity, I began to wonder if, indeed, any of the students in any local Catholic elementary schools could articulate their Catholic cultural identity. Could they explain how their school activities helped them to frame their Catholic cultural identity?

Summary

The special mission of Catholic schools can be expressed in three interrelated features i.e., gospel values, the teachings of Jesus Christ, and the nurturance of community (Grace, p. 74). Asking students to articulate their Catholic school experience provides an additional lens through which to corroborate a Catholic school's mission statement.

> Current educational literature speaks of schools as communities of learners. The concept-community of learners, highlights the realization that students learn best when adults model behaviors significant to the community. Among their most treasured

> values, communities of learners name respect for and service to others, cooperative behaviors, creative and critical thinking and striving to achieve one's personal best. Adults in the community are life-long learners who guide and encourage students in their educational journey. The adage, '"What you do speaks so loudly I cannot hear what you are saying"' pervades the atmosphere in a community of learners. In a Catholic school, not only can teachers and students form a community of learners, but also they can intertwine their lives at a deeper level and recognize they are a community of faith. It is the faith dimension of the community that gives a Catholic school its unique culture. (Winchek and O'Malley, *The Faith Community*, p. 1)

In marketing a Catholic school, an effort is made to portray the Catholic school as a caring, concerned community devoted to developing the whole person whose purpose is put forth in the mission and philosophy of the school. Parents and guardians are told that they can expect their children to receive an education in virtuous thought and conduct that has all but disappeared from the curricula of state supported schools (Day, p. 165). This research could benefit Catholic school marketing practices.

The Catholic school teacher represents the mission and philosophy of the Catholic school to the students and the larger public. The Catholic school teacher personifies, in addition to synthesizing, the integration of faith and culture and faith and life.

> Our fundamental responsibility as Catholic educators is the nurturing of a profound faith in the lives of our students. Our Catholic schools should be environments where evangelization is woven into the very fabric of our daily experiences. As we offer quality education to prepare our students to be contributing and honorable citizens of a world community, so also we have a responsibility to prepare them to become contributing members of a faith community. Although

> faith is not culture, faith needs culture to incarnate itself. Our faith imbues us with a particular prophetic vision to transform our culture, in accord with gospel values. (Zukowski, *Faith Development*, p. 1)

The ability or lack of ability of a 4th/5th grade student to articulate in word or picture what it is that makes the Catholic school experience different, could make this research important as a starting topic for staff development possibilities that would reflect the sacred dimension of the Catholic school teacher.

Finally, the Catholic Church will be impacted by this research because the Catholic Church is the model of the faith community that the school should be. American Catholics are living in a period of transition. One model of church is passing away and another is coming to life. Since the new has not yet replaced the old, conflict and division are very real problems. The challenge of the future will be to empower the new generation of Catholics with the ability to shape what American Catholicism will be in the years ahead. The Catholic school experience could be the source of that empowerment.

> The major value of Catholic schools is embodied in the tradition of thought, rituals, mores, and organized practices that form these schools. From this perspective, Catholic education represents an invitation to students both to reflect on a systematic body of thought and to immerse themselves in a communal life that seeks to live out its basic principles. The aim of this type of schooling is to nurture in students the feelings, experiences, and reflections that can help them apprehend their relations to all that is around them-both the material world and the social world, both those who have come before and those who will come after. (Bryk. Lee & Holland, 1993, p. 335)

Delimitations of the Study

1. This study is not a comparison of public and parochial education.

2. This study is not a study of Catholic school curriculum and instruction.

3. This study is not a comparison of Catholic cultural identity in different regions: urban, suburban, rural; and across different age groups.

4. Although the influence of family and peers might be referred to, this study will not focus directly on the impact of family or peers concerning identity development and formation.

5. This study does not generalize to a larger population of Catholic schools.

Assumptions

Examining the narratives of young people from this perspective assumes that, developmentally, young people enter and leave faith, moral, and educational stages at different times, thereby assuming that individual responses and individual stories will differ. this research study is based on the following assumptions:

1. The life experiences of 4th/5th grade students in an urban Catholic elementary school will produce a variety of stories as unique as each individual student.

2. The degree or extent to which a 4th/5th grade student in an urban Catholic elementary school was exposed to a religious or spiritual environment in their early child

development in the home will affect the degree or extent to which the Catholic school experience will have on the Catholic cultural identity of the student.

3. When asked to describe or tell a story about Catholic cultural identity, a 4th/5th grade student will use 'props' (photos, artifacts, memorabilia, etc.) more often and more comfortably than they will vocabulary for explanation.

4. A 4th/5th grade student in an urban Catholic elementary school from a Catholic home will not, necessarily, have a stronger Catholic cultural identity because of his or her Catholic school experience.

5. The Catholic cultural identity of the 4th/5th grade teacher in an urban Catholic elementary school has an influence on the Catholic cultural identity of the 4th/5th grade student in an urban Catholic elementary school.

A Catholic school experience has been a part of most of my life. Having attended Catholic schools for all of my school experiences-elementary, secondary, and undergraduate-and having worked professionally within the Catholic school system for the past twenty-five years, I bring to this study a cultural history rich in both pre and post Vatican II religiosity. My personal experiences in the parochial school system, working with parents and teachers within that system, as well as the students, will enable me to help maintain the parameters of this study during data collection.

Historically, Catholic Christians have needed visible signs and symbols to remind them of their solemn agreement with God. A prime example of this is as old as the Israelites who followed a pillar of cloud during the day and a pillar of fire at night while they made their way through the desert in

search of the Promised Land. More recently we have the reported appearance of the Virgin Mary at Medjugorje in Bosnia. An outward sign or symbol is perceived as proof that a relationship with God is still valid. I believe that, for some participants in the Catholic school experience, the same will be true. Unless there is a visible showing of sign or symbol, the Catholic school experience is not much better than a non-Catholic school experience.

A pre-Vatican II Catholic school experience was ripe with sign, symbol, rite, and ritual. The sister-teachers were wearing religious garb that left only their hands and faces visible to the students and their classrooms were filled with statues, religious pictures, and other religious artifacts that presented students with reminders and examples of how they were to live their lives.

The post-Vatican II Catholic school experience has a mere fraction of the signs and symbols. Many of the religious women and men were now dressed like their non-religious male and female faculty members, and the multitude of visible religious artifacts, once broken or lost, were rarely replaced. The school experience that was once identified as *Catholic*, was now a school experience with a Catholic cultural identity being promoted by the post-Vatican II Roman Catholic Church.

I believe that this study will surface rich descriptions that will examine the multi-faceted constructs of Catholic cultural identity. I also believe that the strength or weakness of the family and teacher cultural history will determine the strength or weakness of the features of the Catholic school experience. This will make an impact on the

Catholic cultural identity of the 4th/5th grade student. I also hope to discover how articulate a 4th/5th grade student is able to be when talking about an implicit element of his or her nature.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework used in this research will be constructivist based on the premise that as a child develops, persons affecting that development will bring to their charge personal life experiences from which have surfaced identities shaped from their own life experience decisions. The development of identity, therefore, is complex and dynamic. How students develop cognitive skills and affective knowing will be based upon the connections they make between what each student knows and what is made available to them. A goal of the constructivist is to understand the complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it. Constructivist interpretation sees particular actors, in particular places, at particular times, fashion meaning out of events and phenomena through prolonged, complex processes of social interaction involving history, language, and action. For the constructivist, objective truth and knowledge is the result of perspective. Knowledge and truth are created, not discovered.

Constructivist thought agrees that the responsibility of society is to pass on its wisdom, knowledge, values, and skills to each succeeding generation (Clark, 1997, p. 14). Infused in the experience of learning is the inevitability that individuals interpret what they experience by using

frameworks that are preexisting. They thereby construct self and the world through the meaning of lived experience. Van Manen (1996) supports this thinking in his views on a phenomenological research approach when he states, "The point of phenomenological research is to 'borrow' other people's experiences and their reflections on their experiences in order to better be able to come to an understanding of the deeper meaning or significance of an aspect of the human experience, in the context of the whole human experience" (p. 62).

In light of this constructivist perspective, the purpose of this study was to explore what particular features of a Catholic school experience enhanced the Catholic cultural identity of a 4th/5th grade student in an urban Catholic elementary school. As a starting point, this research has drawn from the stage development theories of Fowler (1981), Egan (1979), and Kohlberg (1969). Each of these uses stage development work similar to work done by Piaget and Erikson. Collectively, these concepts suggest that moral identity is not static but is framed dynamically through multiple relationships.

Fowler (1981) believes that faith at the natural level is a human universal, a feature of all people, whether members of primitive or advanced cultures, whether religious or unbeliever. Faith, then, has a cognitive dimension, one that is formulated in doctrine and given intellectual acknowledgement; an affective and relational dimension, realized existentially in trust, fidelity and love; and an actional dimension, the concrete living out of the faith in one's daily life. In this framework, faith is an activity of

the head, heart, and hands.

Emerging within the process of human development are capacities for faith. How these capacities are activated and grow depends to a large extent on how one is welcomed into the world and what kinds of environments one develops in. Faith is also shaped by initiatives from beyond us and other people, initiatives of spirit or grace. How these latter initiatives are either recognized and imaged or unperceived and ignored, powerfully affects the shape of faith in our lives (Fowler, 1981).

In seven stage-like developmentally related styles of faith (see Table 1.1), Fowler presents a theory of faith which is interactive and social, requiring community, language, ritual, and care. According to Fowler (1981), the seven stages include:

1. Stage 0-(0-4 years): *Undifferentiated Faith.* the seeds of trust, courage, hope, and love are fused in an undifferentiated way and contend with sensed threats of abandonment, inconsistencies and deprivations in an infant's environment (p. 121).

2. Stage 1-(pre-school): *Intuitive-Projective Faith.* The fantasy-filled, imitative phase in which the child can be powerfully and permanently influenced by examples, moods, actions, and stories of the visible faith of primally related adults (p. 133).

3. Stage 2-(grade school): *Mythic-Literal Faith.* The stage in which the person begins to take on for him or herself the stories, beliefs, and observances that symbolize belonging to his or her community (p. 149).

4. Stage 3-(after age 12): *Synthetic-Conventional Faith.*

A person's experience of the world now extends beyond the family. Faith must synthesize values and information; it must provide a basis for identity and outlook (p. 172).

5. Stage 4-(17-30 years): *Individuative-Reflective Faith*. The late adolescent or adult must begin to take seriously the burden of responsibility for his or her own commitments, lifestyle, beliefs, and attitudes (p. 182).

6. Stage 5-(rare before age 30): *Conjunctive Faith*. Involves the integration into self and outlook of much that was suppressed or unrecognized in the interest of a stage-4 self-certainty and conscious cognitive and affective adaptation to reality (p. 197).

7. Stage 6-(later life; a rare stage): *Universalizing Faith*. A disciplined, activist incarnation-a making real and tangible-of the imperatives of absolute love and justice of which stage-5 has partial apprehensions. The self at stage-6 engages in spending and being spent for the transformation of present reality in the direction of a transcendent actuality (p. 199).

Influenced by the human development work of Jean Piaget, Lawrence Kohlberg, and Erik Erikson, Fowler's faith stages are not to be looked upon as an achievement scale for evaluative purposes, but rather for correlative purposes of how time, experience, challenge, and nurture are required for growth in faith.

Also influenced by the human development work of Jean Piaget (1931, 1958, 1965) and Erik Erickson (1963) has been Kieran Egan (1979) in his theory of educational development. The main claim Egan makes is that at each stage one makes sense of the world and experiences it in significantly

different ways, and that these differences require that knowledge be organized differently to be most accessible and educationally effective at each stage. From the defining characteristics of the stages are derived principles for organizing learning and teaching (Egan, 1979, p. 7).

Egan (1979) states that a theory, basically, is a thing to think with, an intellectual tool made from distinctions that conform with the phenomena it is about. He strengthens his definition by affirming the value of a theory by how well it conforms with the applicable matter. He affirms how well it helps to make sense of it, and how well it guides practice, observation, and research in refining and revising categories and distinctions to conform more closely with the relevant phenomena. Egan presents four stages of educational development (see Table 1.1) defining how sense is made of the world and personal experience, and how the significant ways in which the world is experienced requires that knowledge be organized differently at each stage to be most accessible and educationally effective. Egan's stages, and partial explanations, include the following:

1. *The Mythic Stage* (4-10 years): At this stage, a young person's thinking shares important features with the kind of thinking evident in the stories of myth-using people: intellectual security by providing absolute accounts of why things are the way they are, and by fixing the meaning of events by relating them to sacred models. People in this stage lack a sense of otherness-concepts of historical time, physical regularities, logical relationships, causality, and geographical space. There is also a lack of a clear sense of the world as autonomous and objective. Characteristically in

this stage, myth stories tend to be articulated on binary oppositions. Successful learning becomes a process of projecting what young children know best onto the world and absorbing the world to their basically emotional and moral conceptual categories (p. 11-12).

2. *The Romantic Stage* (8-15 years): Instead of projecting binary opposites from within, the romantic mind searches outside itself to the limits of the world for external binary opposites within which reality exists. At the Romantic Stage. perception focuses on the extremes, on the most fascinating bits and pieces, on vivid true stories, on dramatic events and ideas, on bizarre facts, on heroes and heroines, and on some particular areas in great detail. With the development of a sense of an autonomous world comes the reciprocal perception of a self separate from it (p. 28-29).

3. *The Philosophic Stage* (14-20 years): Transition into this stage is marked by the realization that all the bits and pieces experienced in the Romantic Stage are interconnected to form a single unit, and that the student is a part of that unit and is determined by their place in the unit. Abstract general schemes come into focus as sources of truth and knowledge explain the richness and complexity of reality (p. 50).

4. *The Ironic Stage* (19-adulthood): The ironic mind is interested in itself only as a part of the world's particularity and to understand in what ways the mid's methods of imposing order on, or making sense of, the world interferes with what is actually real and true about it (p. 84).

Educational development is a process naturally unfolding

in a supportive environment primarily made up of knowledge because knowledge is the fuel of the process of educational development. Without knowledge there is no education; with little knowledge there is little education (p. 156). An advanced stage of educational development can only be reached by passing through prior and requisite stages. This belief in stages that are hierarchical, sequential, and invariant also characterizes the path of development in the moral judgment work of Lawrence Kohlberg.

Kohlberg (1969, 1971, 1981) had proposed a comprehensive scheme for developmental and comparative research on moral understanding. The scheme builds upon the work of Piaget ([1932] 1965) by identifying three major levels in the attainment of moral understanding and dividing each level into two stages. There are moral philosophers (Kagan and Lamb [Eds.], 1987) who believe Kohlberg's theory to be weak and limited even though the original theory was reformulated (Kohlberg, Levine, and Hewer 1983). With these criticisms in mind, this researcher chose to use Kohlberg's lower stages as a place to begin.

Life experiences left Lawrence Kohlberg (1969) wondering if others were as unprepared to deal with moral issues in any consistent or rational manner as he was. From his work in higher education emerged six stage-like positions in the development of moral reasoning (see Table 1.1). These stages include:

Level I: *Preconventional Morality* (age 4-10): Moral value resides in a person's own needs and wants.

Stage 1: Obedience and Punishment Orientation. Individual's moral judgment is motivated by a need to avoid

punishment.

Stage 2: Instrumental-Relativist Orientation. Individuals moral judgment is motivated by a need to satisfy own desires.

Level II: *Conventional Morality* (age 10-13): Moral values reside in performing good or right roles, in maintaining the convention order, and in pleasing others.

Stage 3: "Good Boy/Nice Girl" Orientation. Individual's moral judgment is motivated by a need to avoid rejection, disaffection, or disapproval from others.

Stage 4: Law and Order Orientation. Individual's moral judgment is motivated by the need not to be criticized by a true authority figure.

Level III: *Postconventional Morality* (adolescence-adulthood): Moral values reside in principles, separate from those who enforce them, and are part of the person's identification with the enforcing group. Most people never reach this last level.

Stage 5: Legalistic Orientation. Individual's moral judgment is motivated by community respect for all, respecting social order and living under legally determined laws.

Stage 6: Universal, Ethical Orientation. Individual's moral judgment is motivated by one's own conscience (p. 77-78).

Kohlberg and his associates studied how individuals structure their experiences of and judgments about the social world. Their findings concluded that moral reasoning develops through a succession of stages, and even though the sequence of these stages is invariant and universal, the higher stages

are more adequate than the earlier ones. This research will examine how the person is likely to reason about moral dilemmas in Kohlberg's different stages.

Table 1.1 Theorists' Matrix

Fowler	**Kohlberg**	**Egan**
Stage 0: *Primal Faith* (0-4 years) Basic trust, derived from a loving relationship with a nurturing parent, is the strength to be achieved,		
Stage 1: *Intuitive-Projective Faith* (preschoolers) Social awareness is confined to the family, and any adult is an authority figure. Understanding God will be largely from their relationship to their parents.	*Pre-Conventional* (early childhood) *Stage 1*: Concern about self. Fear of punishment dominates motives. Obedience to a powerful authority. Actions are judged in terms of their physical consequences.	*The Mythic Stage* (4-10 years) Myth provides absolute accounts of why things are the way they are and by fixing the meanings of events by relating them to sacred models. One of myth's functions is to obliterate history, to assert that nothing has changed in the world since the sacred beginning, thus providing a kind of eternally valid charter for things as they are. Children's imaginative life colors and charges their environment with a meaning
Stage 2: *Mythic-Literal Faith* (grade school) The concept of fairness looms large in a person's way of faith knowledge at this stage. Simple stories about good and	*Stage 2*: The basic motive is to satisfy my own needs. I do not consider the needs of the other person, unless I think it will benefit me to do so.	

evil hold a great attraction at this stage.		derived from within.
Stage 3: *Synthetic-Conventional Faith* (after age 12) This is the conformist stage. Right and wrong are understood as a matter of expectations of others.	*Conventional* (pre-adolescence) *Stage 3*: Concern about groups of people and conformity to group norms. Living up to what is expected by people close to you or what people generally expect of people in the role of son, brother, friend, etc. Motive is to be accepted.	*The Romantic Stage* (8-15 years) Children must forge a new relationship and connections with the autonomous world and so achieve some method of dealing with its threatening alienness, and, they have to develop a sense of their distinct identity.
Stage 4: *Individuative-Reflective Faith* (17-30 years) Individuality; objective reflections on different points of view; and the person I am and can become.	*Stage 4*: Honor and duty come from keeping the rules of the society. The focus is on preserving the society, to keep it going as to avoid breakdown of the system.	*The Philosophic Stage* (14-20 years) Students turn inward, as it were, and conduct a general survey of the real world; they begin to chart a mental map of its general features. This is not a process of expansion outwards along lines of content associations; rather, it is a closer charting of the context within which the student exists. It is a closer approach *toward* self.
Stage 5: *Conjunctive Faith* (rare before age 30) Knowledge is open to an affective sense of the world and God which goes to levels of awareness well beyond the capacity of the intellect.	*Post Conventional* (adult) *Stage 5*: A sense of obligation to law because of one's social contract to make and abide by laws for welfare of all and for the protection of all people's rights. A feeling of contractual commitment freely entered upon, to work, friends, and family obligations.	
Stage 6: *Universalizing Faith* (later in life) What shines forth is a special grace	*Stage 6*: The belief	*The Ironic Stage* (19-adulthood) Students' interest in the world is no longer determined by the requirements of their immature egos,

that makes a person a living, breathing representation of the God who is always at work transforming the world and people's lives.	as a rational person in the validity of universal moral principles, and a sense of personal commitment to them. Principles are universal principles for the dignity of people as individuals.	and knowledge may by pursued, unfettered by the various constraints of immaturity, for its own sake.

Conceptual Framework Model

> From a sociological perspective, socialization is not only a matter of adaptation and internalization but also a process of appropriation, reinvention, and reproduction. Central to this view of socialization is the appreciation of the importance of collective, communal activity-how children negotiate, share, and create culture with adults and each other. (Corsaro, 1997, p. 18)

To best illustrate this idea of children collectively producing peer cultures and contributing to the reproduction of the wider society, Corsaro (1997) uses a common garden spider construction, the orb web, where the radii or spokes of the model represent a range of locales or fields that make up various social institutions (e.g., family, economic, cultural, educational, religious, etc.) upon which children weave their webs; the hub, or center of the web is the family of origin, which serves as a nexus of all cultural institutions for children. The web spirals represent movement through distinct peer cultures which are created by each generation of children in a given society. His notion of interpretive reproduction (p. 18) is meant to capture the innovative and creative aspects of children's participation in society as well as children's ability to actively

contribute to cultural production and change.

Cultural routines and language are important elements of interpretive reproduction. The habitual, taken-for-granted character of routines serve as anchors of security and shared understanding. These anchors enable children to deal with the unexpected and the problematic while remaining comfortable in the confines of daily life. Language and its use are central to cultural participation thereby being instrumental in creating and maintaining concrete routines. Children attempt to interpret and make sense of their culture in order to participate in it. In attempting to make sense of the adult world, children collectively produce their own peer worlds and cultures. They embed them in the web or experiences they weave with others throughout their lives, making them part of their life histories within a given culture.

This model will enable the researcher to take the 4th/5th grade student from the center or hub of their web, through two distinct peer cultures: preschool and preadolescence, and see how the social institutions of family, religion, and the Catholic school experience has impacted their Catholic cultural identity. Because this model stresses routines and language, any elements determined harmful to development in those areas would provide tension to this model. Lack of childhood routines or lack of adult-child interactions or lack of social interactions could prohibit a 4th/5th grade student from fully understanding the research.

Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to explore what particular features of a Catholic school experience enhance the Catholic cultural identity of a 4th/5th grade student in an urban Catholic elementary school. Given this, the proposed research question is: What elements of the Catholic school experience enhance or inhibit the development of a Catholic cultural identity among 4th/5th grade students? To respond to this query, the following sub-questions are proposed:

1. How do 4th/5th grade Catholic school students define their particular Catholic cultural identity? If there are differences, what accounts for the differences? If there are similarities, what accounts for the similarities?

2. What elements of the Catholic school experience do 4th/5th grade Catholic school students identify as essential to their Catholic cultural identity formation?

3. What other aspects of the student's life do they identify as impacting their Catholic cultural identity (e.g., family, peers,media, church attendance, parish events, etc)?

4. What can we learn? What salient themes emerge from their stories about Catholic schools and the formation of Catholic cultural identity that would be useful for marketing, curriculum, and instruction?

Chapter 2: Review of Related Literature

Introduction

> The paradigm of 'becoming a Catholic' is given amplification by the refraction of educational reality through the lenses of strategically located icons and religious artifacts which wrap the students in an ideological miasma heavily laden with Catholic significance and meaning. (McLaren, p. 180, 1993)

The purpose of this study was to explore what particular features of a Catholic school experience enhanced the Catholic cultural identity of a 4th/5th grade student in an urban Catholic elementary school. Using the history of the Catholic school experience as well as faith, moral, and educational development theories, this study will examine the factors that both enhance and hinder this process. To better understand this problem, research and professional literature from faith, moral, and educational development will be reviewed.

The marketing of the Catholic school experience has oftentimes been based on the difference between the atmosphere of the Catholic school and that of the non-Catholic school. This difference can be referred to as the Catholic identity of the school. As dioceses, national Catholic educational associations, and the Roman Catholic Church itself publish documents on creating and maintaining Catholic identity in the school, tensions naturally surface when Catholic identity is reported to be missing from a Catholic school. The intent of the researcher then is to link the findings of this research study with other current associated research; to offer new interpretations and

insights derived from relevant studies; and, finally, to provide an evaluation reference by which the results of this study can be measured against the findings from other similar studies.

Historical Perspective/Context

The American Catholic school experience emerged as part of the zealous missionary effort to convert a continent to Christianity. Oftentimes, begun as a shoestring operation in a damp church basement or a log cabin room where s single instructor taught the basic four R's to a group of children, these Spanish, French, and English missionaries preached the gospel message to Native Americans and colonists in what is now the United States. Where Spanish and French missionaries focused on Native American conversion, the English priests focused on sustaining the faith of their compatriots in the New World (Walch, 1996).

In broad strokes, the development of Catholic schools can be divided into three periods. The first period, spanning the period from colonial times until approximately 1830, represents the birth of a new Church in a new nation. The second period, from 1830 through 1960, saw Catholic schools expanding rapidly in response to immigration and confronting divisive issues that shaped the formal system and gave it a distinctly American character. The third period, from 1960 to the present, has been described as the *Catholic moment*,during which Catholics have become part of the mainstream of American political, social, and economic life, and Catholic social ethics have become a vibrant voice on the national

scene (Bryk, Lee & Holland, 1993).

From colonial times until 1830

Because Catholicism was a prohibited religion in all the English colonies except Maryland and Pennsylvania, colonial Catholics kept a low profile. The majority of Catholic children received their education at home. Occasional visits by traveling schoolmasters were opportunities to make improvements to their home schooling. Rare visits by missionary priests were times to secure religious instruction. In the face of such overwhelming hatred and legal restrictions, colonial Catholics made little effort to establish their own schools. For the most part, Catholic education in the colony remained informal throughout the eighteenth century because these small Catholic communities could not afford to support both schools and churches.

The American Revolution diminished colonial era anti-Catholicism. As colonies passed laws dropping legal restrictions on the practice of Catholicism, Catholics responded by joining their Protestant compatriots in the fight for independence. With the end of the war came the uncertainty of whether prewar legal restrictions on the practice of Catholicism would be reinstated. Catholics desired to be accepted in the dominant Protestant culture in all things but religious beliefs. The appointment of John Carroll as first Bishop of the United States was to be the bridge between the new nation and Rome, likewise, helping Americans understand Catholicism.

With the acceptance of the practice of Catholicism in the colonies, European Catholic immigrants came to the New

World in large numbers reinforcing the American view that Catholics were foreigners. Americanizing these new foreign-born Catholics without compromising their Catholic faith was a complicated task that Bishop Carroll felt could be accomplished through the establishment of Catholic schools or some similar social institution. His feelings were not matched by those early Catholic colonials. When Carroll outlined his plan for funding, building, and running a Catholic school as specified in the laws which govern the Roman Catholic Church, the laity rebelled. They saw no reason to consult the parish priest about educational matters concerning their children. This conflict would prove to be the most significant in the American church in the years before the Civil War (Walch, 1996).

Catholics in Philadelphia established the first parochial school in 1783 based on the guidelines created by Bishop John Carroll. St. Mary's School was a model of collaboration between pastor and parishioners where the pastor understood that he did not have the power to unilaterally make decisions. In spite of this successful collaboration, German immigrant parishioners broke away from St. Mary's to establish their own cultural parish and school, Holy Trinity, where school classes were held in the basement of the church until funds could be raised to build a school. Philadelphia Catholics would support these two parish schools until the arrival of large numbers of Irish and German immigrants in the mid-nineteenth century. In other quickly developing cities in the early years of the nineteenth century, less is known about Catholic education. One thing that is known is that large Catholic populations in New York

and Boston were not as successful as Philadelphia Catholics in establishing and maintaining Catholic schools (Walch, 1996).

Although Catholic parochial schools had trouble grounding themselves in colonial culture, Catholic education did emerge in the form of the college-seminary school which Roman Catholic bishops felt was most beneficial since they also served as a recruiting ground for future priests. Seminarians worked as unpaid teachers at the college and part of the college's collected tuition was directed toward seminarian schooling. Successful college-seminary schools, such as Georgetown University, which educated the Catholic colonial male aristocracy, flourished under Jesuit leadership in the English colonies. The Jesuits are seen as responsible for the formation of Catholic and post secondary education in America (Bryk, Lee & Holland, 1993).

The Jesuits specified a curriculum for secondary and post secondary education which was patterned after Renaissance humanism. This method of teaching by classes and grade levels spanned approximately seven years of instruction. Jean Baptiste de la Salle, the founder of the Christian Brothers teaching order, first established curriculum and method for elementary schools.

> First printed in 1720, the Conduct of Schools specified a curriculum of the 4R's: reading, 'riting, 'rithmetic, and religion with whole-class recitation as a favored method. As was generally true in colonial schools, Catholic elementary schools stressed the importance of religious education. Instruction in secular subjects, however, had a great deal in common with Protestant schools. (Bryk, Lee & Holland, 1993, p. 19)

During this colonial period, Catholic elementary schools were very similar to Protestant neighborhood schools, both developed along the lines of perceived needs within the community.

Whereas the college-seminary training was the appropriate education for young men, the European-style academy, founded by female religious, took on this role for young colonial women. The Ursuline Sisters from France founded the first female academy in the United States in 1727 in New Orleans. The early academies taught the four R's as well as French, owing to the influence of the Ursulines, and other subjects considered proper for an elite young woman's domestic education, such as drawing, music, and needlework. By the 1830s the curriculum had expanded to provide a broader classical education including Latin, algebra and geometry, chemistry and physics, geography, natural history, and oral philosophy (Bryk, Lee & Holland, 1993, p. 21).

Like their Protestant counterparts, the Catholic academies were founded primarily for religious and moral reasons and depended on the contributions and hard work of the women religious who staffed them. By the turn of the century, these communities of women religious, originally European missionaries themselves, would welcome new locally founded orders who would also dedicate themselves to Catholic education.

1830-1960

> Although the great waves of Catholic immigration did not begin until the middle of the nineteenth century, the number of Catholic immigrants that had arrived in the United States by 1830, especially in the cities of the Northeast, was perceived as a

> threat by the Anglo-Saxon Protestant majority. (Bryk, Lee & Holland, 1993, p. 23)

In most New York City Catholic parishes, some sort of schooling was offered in the parish. More often than not, it was in the basement of the church in cramped, crowded rooms. Like today, the major problems facing these parish schools were financial problems which threatened to close some of them. New York City Catholics petitioned the city's Common Council for financial aid and campaigned for almost two years before their petition was denied. Undaunted, they decided to build their own schools. The Irish-born Bishop of New York, John Hughes, championed the cause recruiting religious women and Christian Brothers to teach in the schools which would be built in 75 percent of the parishes in the city, instructing about one third of the Catholic school population.

Boston offered a striking contrast to New York. By the mid-nineteenth century, close to half the city's population was Catholic, with a large Irish Catholic contingent. Like New York, the Boston public schools cultivated a Protestant ethic that was offensive to Catholics. Anti-Catholic feelings permeated the community resulting in unforgettable incidents such as the convent burning in Charleston in 1834 and the Eliot School case in 1859 which ultimately brought an end to forced recitation of anything contrary to a person's religious beliefs (Dolan, 1992). Such feelings resulted in the Catholic Church leadership in Boston moving more toward building churches than building schools. Following the example set by the Boston churches, most New England diocese left the building of schools to aggressive Catholic educators, of which there were very few.

Cincinnati offered a striking contrast to Boston. As in New York, the Bishop of Cincinnati, John Purcell, spearheaded the Catholic school movement throughout his fifty-year tenure as bishop. In promoting the growth of Catholic schools in his diocese, Purcell, unlike Hughes in New York, tried working with the Cincinnati public schools to achieve some compromise to help foster acceptance. Unsuccessful in all his attempts with the public schools, Purcell turned his determination and energies toward building a Catholic school system emerging as the Midwest champion of Catholic schools.

The growth of Catholic schools in less developed regions of the country differed measurably from that in places like New York and Cincinnati. Usually, a priest or a schoolmaster would organize a school in a small town in a one-room building that depended on the teacher for its in-session and out-of-session days. It was at this time that the dependence of religious orders of women became essential to the development of Catholic education, whether in the large cities or in the small frontier towns. Giving primary attention to the establishment of the female academy, the sisters became involved in a variety of parish and diocesan activities before undertaking the operation of the parochial schools. Throughout their tenure in Catholic education, these teaching sisters would endure serf status, having fewer rights and privileges than priests, religious brothers or even lay people in the parish. Bishops, possessing the ultimate authority in their diocese, oftentimes interfered with religious community affairs and local pastors, their own superintendent of education for their parish, would do what they pleased in the school. All bishops and pastors did not

act in this manner, but those that didn't were in the minority.

The melding of the public school with the Catholic school in these early frontier towns was common because the definitions of these schools were evolving with the regions. It was not uncommon to find the local Catholic school designated as the local public school or the local public school having secular classes as well as sacred classes, all being taught by Catholic teachers. Local and federal funding for these Catholic public schools varied from region to region until this symbiotic existence came under the emerging, more clearly defined, boundary lines of separation.

America had decided that formal schooling was the answer to the growing mass of unruly foreigners and the doubts about their moral fiber. The common school, as envisioned by Horace Mann, would be the vehicle making education available to all children ensuring that children were being educated together-in-common. Mann's humanistic education would guarantee a harmonious community in the midst of its growing diversity. Catholics were not opposed to publicly supported schools. The common school of Horace Mann, though, was to be a school where the Protestant Bible, Protestant hymns, and anti-Catholic texts were the norm. The nondenominational school was a Protestant school.

> In addition to the Bible, common school advocates depended on the moralistic schoolbooks of William Holmes McGuffey. The popularity of these schoolbooks was understandable because McGuffey never forgot that the Bible was the keystone of the common school curriculum. As historian Timothy L. Smith notes, McGuffey's Readers were handbooks of common morality, testaments to the Protestant virtues which half a century of experience had

> elevated into the culture-religion of the new nation. (Walch, 1996, p.27)

The American way of life was marked by Protestant signs and symbols. Catholic deference to the view that American education was a moral enterprise was equivalent to faith denial. It was basic conflict between the ideology of the common school and Roman Catholicism that would lead to the development of the Catholic school system.

> Throughout most of the nineteenth century, the American bishops made repeated efforts at accommodation with the new public system. However, as Catholics continued to encounter hostility and anti-Catholic rhetoric in supposedly nonsectarian public schools the movement toward a separate system gradually grew. (Bryk, Lee & Holland, 1993, p. 25)

In the 1830s the family was still viewed as the primary educator and would remain so throughout the next decade. Catholic newspapers and pamphlets were the main means of religious education and were used by the bishops as a means of building unanimity of opinion within the Catholic community. A main concern to the American bishops at this time was textbook material that was offensive to Catholics. Though oftentimes discussed, an alternative to the public school system would have an extensive gestation period in the womb of the American Catholic Church. It would take the American bishops another 55 years before issuing a mandate to parish pastors to build a Catholic school near every Catholic church and to issue a decree to Catholic parents to send their children to these Catholic schools because of the dangers inherent in the public school system. Until the 1960s, these decrees which came out of the Third Plenary

Council of Baltimore in 1884, though never fully realized, held high the aim of Catholic education: "every Catholic student in a Catholic school" (Bryk, Lee & Holland, p. 25).

The first decree of the Council stated bluntly that a parish school must be built near every Catholic church. The second decree provided for the removal of parish pastors who were "gravely negligent" in erecting parish schools. The third decree promised spiritual "punishment" for any parish that failed to support their pastor's effort to build a school. A final stressed that "all Catholic parents are bound to send their children to parochial schools unless, at home or in other Catholic schools, they provide sufficiently and fully for their Christian education." The implementation of the four decrees was reserved for the bishops themselves (Walch, p. 61).

The spirit of the third Baltimore Council's decree to create a separate school system was more easily understood than the actual task of creating a working model. Throughout the nineteenth century, there never was a total commitment to the parochial school system, either on the part of the bishops or on the part of the people. Not only was there an external Protestant threat, but, more importantly, the internal quarrels among the ethnically diverse American Catholics could quickly and easily derail any plans to adjust the emerging public school system. Continued anti-Catholic prejudice, whether in an explicit form such as church and convent burnings, passing laws that overtly discriminated against Catholic schools or prejudice against hiring Catholic schoolteachers, helped strengthen the Catholic commitment to establish separate schools.

Leadership in the American Catholic Church, at this time, had a strong English-Irish bent (Bryk, Lee & Holland, 1993), starting with John Carroll and extending to later leaders such as James Cardinal Gibbons of Baltimore and Archbishop John Ireland of Minneapolis. These men sought to build upon a belief in the commonalities between Catholicism and American values while maintaining cordial relations with American institutions like the common schools.

The Americanists claimed that, since there were obvious differences between American and European Catholics, the Church in the United States should incorporate the American ideals into itself. This meant that there should be separation of church and state; that religious pluralism should be tolerated; and that the Church should be remodeled along democratic lines. The latter meant that in the Church there should be freedoms analogous to those enjoyed in America's liberal democracy (e.g., active participation, personal initiative, and open communication); and that the Church should protect individual consciences in preference to ideas such as loyalty, obedience, and uniformity. Gibbons and Ireland advocated these positions because they desired to enhance the identity and mission of the church in a pluralistic society. Americans would never venerate-much less join-a church that did not respect and foster the American ideals of liberty and justice (McCarthy, 1994, p. 48).

Bishops Gibbons and Ireland espoused a vision of American Catholicism where religious ideals were blended with culture rather than separated from it. They firmly believed that to maintain a presence, the American Catholic Church must recognize change as essential. The Roman Catholic Church

was not always in total agreement with the leadership of the American Catholics. The views of Gibbons and Ireland allowed for a collaborativeness between American Catholics and Protestants. The conservative Roman Catholic church taught that a good Catholic was to *pay*, *pray*, and *obey*. the response to the American dispute would be in the form of the two papal pronouncements, one on how the Church should be organized and should function (*Testem Benevoletiae*, 1889), and the other stating that cordial relations with the modern world was not necessary because the modern world was the problem (*Pascendi Dominici Gregis*, 1907). In these documents, Pope Leo XIII firmly reestablished ecclesial authority.

By rejecting "Americanism" and "modernism," Church conservatives felt that they now had support for establishing ethnic schools. For some, fear of separatism and the possible rise of divisive ethnic politics could threaten democracy. Immigrants wanted their children to learn the English language and American ways of life. They also knew that they had to prove their Americanism over and over again. The ethnic Catholic school could provide them with a connection to their European past, preserve their Catholic values, and facilitate their assimilation into American public life.

> The parochial school at this period served to slow up the process of acculturation, to make it less of a traumatic experience-less of a complete, almost instantaneous break with the European past [as was the case in public schools of that time] and all it stood for. The children in the Catholic schools were 'Americanized'-but by teachers of their own race and religion, who clung in great part to the old ways, only slowly adapting to the new. (Bryk, Lee & Holland, 1993, p. 28)

The social standing of immigrant Catholics in later years, as

evidenced in studies by Andrew Greeley and Peter Rossi (1996), would attest to the wisdom of this educational philosophy.

Catholic immigrants comprised the majority of immigrants who entered the United States during the three decade period prior to World War I. With large numbers of these immigrants ethnically clustering, in some places creating overcrowded urban slums, anti-Catholic bigotry emerged from an already existing xenophobic fear surrounding America's entrance into the war. The papal pronouncements of Pope Leo XIII fueled concern about docile, obedient Catholics taking orders from Rome (Bryk, Lee & Holland, 1993, p. 28) and parochial schools were touted in the print media as destroyers of American patriotism. The Catholic hierarchy responded with a national defense of Catholic schools.

> In 1922 the council's (National Catholic Welfare Council) executive secretary, James H. Ryan, wrote a systematic apologetic for Catholic schooling. Noting that the first American schools were religious schools-both Protestant and Catholic-Ryan recalled that tax-supported public schools dated only from the 1850s. As a result, he argued, public schools had no legitimate claim "to be considered the only true American system of education." Through such statements, Catholics reminded the nation that democracy was a religious ideal and aggressively argued Catholicism embraced the essence of the ideal. (Bryk, Lee & Holland, 1993, p. 29)

The American Catholic Church answered the external threat to Catholic education by consolidating all Catholic institutions, particularly Catholic schools. Ethnic schools became more American and organizational structures like the Catholic Educational Association were founded in 1904. This association, known today as the National Catholic Educational

Association (NCEA), was charged with the task of helping Catholic educators discuss the basic issues surrounding operation and improvement of Catholics schools. Near the end of the nineteenth century, as the demands for Catholic schooling escalated for beyond capacity, the bishops took a more active role in opening schools. They focused on diocesan high schools which would accept students of parishes from across the diocese. They established school boards which were to help coordinate the activities of these new institutions. In 1920 these school boards were replaced with a superintendent of schools who was appointed by, and directly responsible to, the bishop. These changes were meant to establish credibility in the Catholic school within the changing forces of American life, especially movement in education. They were to provide a balance where the secular side of the Catholic school was to be as strong as the sacred side of the Catholic school.

Catholic school academic curriculum, most notable on the secondary level, in some cases mirrored the public initiative. In other cases the curriculum demonstrated a sharp rejection of the prevailing culture. The academic curriculum found in the earlier boys prep schools and in girls academies was replaced with one having a more comprehensive educational philosophy. The need for commercial or vocational courses was more pragmatic than knowing a Latin or Greek vocabulary. Critics argued for the moral and aesthetic value of the classics as well as the value of classical humanism to all students. Understanding self, society, and God was central to Catholic educational philosophy, and, although the base of people to be educated

had been expanded, the purpose should not deviate from the central moral aims of schooling. Immigrant parents realized the value of education as a vehicle for social mobility and Catholic educators were in full agreement. The classical curriculum was the curriculum for the attainment of status. Catholic educators were urged to point out to parents the greater earning power of those students who finished high school. An academic education in high school, followed by college, paved the way for social position, the professions, and Catholic leadership in society (Bryk, Lee & Holland, 1993, p. 31).

A papal pronouncement of Pope Pius XI in 1929, *Divini Illius Magistri*, supported the classical curriculum in education. Cautioning against errors of pragmatism in the curriculum, and hastily abandoning the old ways, Pope Pius XII strongly affirmed the teaching of Latin as well as voicing his support of single-sex rather than coeducational schooling. Thus continued Catholicism's uneasy relationship to secular society. Debates would continue, but fundamental principles were not to be conceded.

The Catholic school system had fully evolved by the end of the 1920s. Ethnic parishes continued into the 1950s with English becoming the language of the parish in a majority of places. The autonomy of the local parish and the diversity of the ethnic parishes, as well as obstacles pertaining to the hiring and firing of teachers and the use of common textbooks across the system, would challenge the systemization of Catholic schools. The strength of the traditional private academy as *the place* for secondary education would retard the growth of the Catholic high school. Further clarification of

the role of the Catholic high school would be needed before Catholic schools, in general, could come into their own.

> The question of why Catholics established schools to begin with deserves an answer. First and foremost, Catholic lay people put a primary value on the need for religious instruction. Parents wanted to pass on their religious culture to their children, and the principal way this was being done--in the late nineteenth century--was through the schools. Family and church had not abdicated this responsibility, but after mid-century the school increasingly became the primary institution in the religious education of children. For most Protestants, a Sunday school fulfilled this role. For others, the German Lutherans being the best example, separate parochial schools were necessary. So, too, with Catholics. Thus, the school became an essential part of the Church's evangelization program. The shift from the primacy of informal religious education in the family to formal religious instruction in the school was critical to the development of a Catholic school system. (Dolan, 1992, p. 276)

1960 to the Present

Through two world wars and nuclear destruction, Catholic schools continued to prosper reaching a peak in 1965, when approximately 12 percent of all American elementary and secondary students were enrolled in Catholic schools. The validation of American Catholics came with the election of John Fitzgerald Kennedy, a Roman Catholic, as President of the United States in 1960. Strangely out of place in the limelight, the American Catholic Church was now positioned for the critical examination of every Church institution and practice prompted by the Second Vatican Council.

Vatican Council II was the twenty-first ecumenical council of the Roman Catholic Church, the first being held in Nicea in 325 and the twentieth, Vatican I, being held in Rome

from 1869 to 1870. this ecumenical council called together the ranking prelates of the worldwide Christian churches to discuss matters pertaining to unity. Vatican II, whose purpose was to renew life in the Church, reform its institutions, and to explore ways and means of promoting unity among all Christian communities, was announced in January, 1959, by Pope John XXIII. It was announced on the day which had been established for the purpose of praying for Christian unity. The seventeen cardinals in attendance at the time of the announcement sat silent and motionless like statues. Response from Vatican officials was mixed. Some feared for the loss of some of their privileges while others wondered if the council was really necessary considering the current vigor and power of the institutional Church. Still others expressed serious doubt for the proposed council, citing the fact that former councils were usually followed by times of serious doubt and confusion (McCarthy, 1994).

Pope John XXIII's goal for Vatican II was to modernize the Church and to involve it in the concerns of the world, especially those efforts that would strengthen unity and peace. His ultimate goal was the unification of all Christians. Toward this end, Pope John XXIII used the word *aggiornamento*.

> *Aggiornamento* meant the Church had to change to meet the needs of the times, that is, the changes taking place outside of itself. *Aggiornamento* looked to the needs and legitimate demands of the people. It was not a simpleminded rejection of all that was old and a breezy acceptance of everything new, but rather a disengagement from the limitations of the past and from a culture no longer viable. *Aggiornamento* denoted critical involvement in the new culture without denying its evils and its need for transformation. (McCarthy,

1994, p. 63)

Aggiornamento became the guiding principle of Vatican II as the Council discussed developments taking place in history that Christians should not fear; the struggle of colonial people to determine their own future, the effort of workers to obtain their socioeconomic rights, and the quest of women for equality in domestic and public life.

Vatican Council II brought together the largest collection of church and religious leaders ever assembled in one place. Besides twenty-seven hundred bishops from around the world, also present were ninety superiors of religious communities, and fifteen women from as many countries. Also on hand were some four hundred theological experts, thirty-nine representatives from other Christian communities, and some eighty-five ambassadors from different countries (McCarthy, 1994). The end result of all their efforts could be described as revolutionary because it affected every aspect of Catholic life. Vatican II has been aptly described as a paradigm shift from medievalism to postmodernity in the images of the Church and its relationship with the world (Bryk, Lee & Holland, 1993).

The outcome of Vatican Council II still reverberates within the walls of the institutional Roman Catholic Church. The American Catholic Church continues to experience aftershocks more than a quarter-century later. Changes in doctrine and liturgical practices mandated by Vatican II seemed to transform Catholicism into a new religion. American Catholic schools would watch as central symbols such as statues and sister-teachers dressed in religious garb would

largely disappear; teaching staffs would become increasingly lay people rather than religious; and the traditional religious education curriculum would change. Most notably would be the decline in student enrollment. Once educating one in every eight students enrolled in school and turning away tens of thousands more because of lack of space, money and teachers, the system which at one time was bursting at the seems would, twenty-five years after reaching peak enrollment of 12 percent of the school-age population, decline to only 5.4 percent by 1990 (Bryk, Lee & Holland, 1993, p. 33).

Closely linked to the decline in student enrollment was the ever-present financial problems experienced not only on a parish level, but also on a diocesan level. Within the parish, replacing the vanishing religious sisters with lay personnel was costly. Lay teachers demanded a just wage and benefits for their service, unlike the sister-teachers whose salaries were determined by the local pastor and whose benefits were assumed by the religious order. This financial imbalance was offset by drastically raising tuition and fees for students enrolled in the Catholic school. In some areas, tuition costs quadrupled over a ten-year period of time. As the Church moved into the global arena which was decreed by Vatican II, the number of social missions within the diocese increased just as religious vocations decreased. This caused financial strains on the diocesan coffers. Diocesan support could not be seen as a possible solution to the school problem.

Curricular issues in American Catholic schools were addressed by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops

(NCCB) in their 1972 issuance of the document *To Teach a Jesus Did*. This document stated a threefold educational ministry for Catholic schools: to teach the message of hope contained in the gospel; to build community not simply a a concept to be taught, but as a reality to be lived; and service to all mankind which flows from a sense of Christian community (Bryk, Lee & Holland, 1993). Schools were to be the instruments of social justice that would be reflected in their unique educational mission and philosophy. Ultimately, Catholic schools faced issues on segregation. Forced busing plans increased the interest in urban Catholic schools, and increased enrollments would help their serious financial difficulties, but the bishops would not risk Catholic schools becoming a safety net for racists or separatists. Neglecting the urban poor to serve only a more affluent suburban clientele would be counter-witness to gospel values.

Standing firm in their commitment to disadvantaged communities, the American bishops embraced the educational philosophy of participation not only in one's solitary community, but also in the community in which one loves. this commitment was verified in the first post-council document on schools which came from Rome. The 1997 document, *The Catholic School*, stressed the importance of Catholic schools in the mission of the Church as redefined by Vatican II. As a community, the Catholic school mirrors the mission of the Church in building the kingdom of God. Functioning in this way, the Catholic school, as an agent for religious formation, leaves behind the transmission of facts and invites students to engage in a critical reflection on the personal life of Christ, and how it plays a central role in

education and to the individual as s/he discerns their place in the world. Each encounter in the Catholic school-structure, policy, daily life-is a teachable moment that can shape the life of the student.

Catholic schools entered an extended period of uncertainty in the 80s. With enrollment still on the decline, and financial problems still a major concern, Catholic schools emerged with a new identity. No longer the haven for immigrant children, Catholic schools now mirrored the commitment of some parents to the education of their children. Many Catholic schools had closed and very few new ones were being built, but sacrifices were being made to maintain the presence of the Catholic school in the community based on the foundation of parental commitment (Walch, 1996).

Rooted within the history of the Catholic school are the theological guidelines for parents as the primary educators of their children (Second Vatican Council, 1965). Subsequent Church documents (John Paul II, 1988; National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1988; Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977; and the United States Catholic Conference, 1976) identified the Catholic school as a formation agency of special significance. It supported the family and society in promoting the holistic formation of children. The development of the parochial school as a keystone of Catholic institutional life, where children acquire the basic learning skills needed in society, has had a major influence in shaping the Catholic ethos.

McCormack (1999) believes that children make their first conclusions about self-worth, competence, acceptability, and of their importance to others from their experience of the

home environment. Children first learn from their parents to be accountable for themselves and to act responsibly toward others. Parents teach through word and example that effort is more important than results, and that learning from a process has a value in itself, apart from the product. Parents demonstrate that mistakes can become stepping stones to improvement and, therefore, need not be considered failure. Parents also convey that they are made in the image of God and are called to make appropriate life-giving choices at home, at school, and in private. Parents teach accountability for choices, behaviors, and actions or inactions. Identity is formed step-by-step, building block by building block, just like habits (McCormack, 1999, p.3). A child's sense of identity, which will carry him or her through their adult life, is established through parenting practices and contributed to in the interaction, classroom practices, and teaching strategies of the school experience.

Research and Inquiry about Student's Catholic Identity

This researcher used a network of colleagues, university professors, university and seminary libraries, professional organizations, and the Internet for understanding the range of the study, and the major contributions in the field. My initial search included a review of personal library resources, recommended course readings, and reading lists from related departments at Michigan State University. Specific needs and interests have narrowed these resources to what is considered here.

The Institute for Catholic Educational Leadership (ICEL) at the University of San Francisco enabled the researcher to

review Catholic school dissertations from 1966 to the present. To generate possible sources, the researcher used keywords and phrases in a variety of combinations: Catholic, identity, Catholic identity, preadolescent, 4th/5th grade student, ethnography, Catholic school, teacher, family, spiritual formation, and faith development. These same keywords and phrases were also used in searching dissertation abstracts, First Search, the Electronic Reference Library (ERL), and the Educational Research Information Collection (ERIC) data bases. A mixed variety of sources have aided the researcher in better understanding the scope of Catholic identity and the Catholic school experience. Many studies in related areas have been done. However, none of them look at Catholic cultural identity and the Catholic school experience through the voices of 4th/5th grade students in an urban Catholic elementary school. For this reason additional research is needed for understanding how the features of the Catholic school experience enhance the Catholic cultural identity of a 4th/5th grade student in an urban Catholic elementary school.

A similar, but not significant, study related to Catholic identity was done by Cummings (1996) and was initiated as a result of the NCEA National Congress on Catholic Education (1991) which recognized the significance of Catholic identity for Catholic schools as its most important issue. This study used a researcher-designed questionnaire based on Roman and American Catholic Church documents on Catholic schools. Questionnaires were grouped under four main headings: *Community*, *Message*, *Worship*, and *Service*. The purpose of the study was to ascertain whether

the increased religious diversity in a Catholic secondary school student population had an impact on the school's Catholic identity as perceived by their administrator, faculty members, and high school seniors. The findings suggest that in a secondary school with more than a 25% non-Catholic population, the Gospel message of Community was perceived as part of the hidden curriculum; that Worship was perceived to ritualize values and beliefs not held by the community; and, that Service was perceived merely as a graduation requirement.

A study looking at Catholic identity in elementary schools (Blecksmith, 1996) determined the characteristics of Catholic identity through an examination of Church documents on education. It attempted to determine to what extent Community, Message, Worship, and Service were present in Catholic elementary schools today. A survey was developed and mailed to principals as well as first, third, and eighth grade teachers. A telephone interview with 10% of those surveyed was also conducted. The survey revealed that shared perceptions between administrator and faculty would most likely be present in effective Catholic schools which possess a strong school culture.

Two studies have used elementary students as participants (Biller, 1985 and Shamoo, 1985), but both have been studies of a quantitative nature. Based on these findings, the researcher suggests a qualitative study that particularly focuses on the features of the Catholic school experience which enhance the Catholic cultural identity of the 4th/5th grade student in an urban Catholic elementary school. A study of this nature requires foundational

information regarding the faith development, the moral development, and the educational development of children.

Faith Development

The faith development model of James W. Fowler (1981) asserts that individuals have the ability to move through seven distinct stages of faith and moral development during their lifetime. Since the students to be interviewed are still in grade school, this study will focus on the first three of the seven stages: Infancy and Undifferentiated Faith, Intuitive-Projective Faith, and Mythic-Literal Faith. Fowler makes his presentation using the immense richness found in the words of Jean Piaget, Lawrence Kohlberg, and Erik Erikson.

> I believe faith is a human universal. We are endowed at birth with nascent capacities for faith. How these capacities are activated and grow depends to a large extent on how we are welcomed into the world and what kinds of environments we grow in. Faith is interactive and social; it requires community, language, ritual, and nurture. Faith is also shaped by initiatives from beyond us and other people, initiatives of spirit or grace. How these latter initiatives are recognized and imaged, or unperceived and ignored, powerfully affects the shape of the faith of our lives. (Fowler, 1981, p. xiii)

For Fowler, faith is the way of seeing ourselves in relation to others against a background of shared meaning and purpose. Not always religious in nature, faith helps a person find meaning, purpose, and priority within the big picture. At birth, the first experiences of faith are marked by a consistency in providing for one's needs as well as making a valued place in others' lives which is demonstrated by

loyalty and dependability (Coles, 1990, p. 4-6). What is brought to the care and nurture of the child reflects the values and beliefs of the parent or parents. Fowler (1981) states that as love, attachment, and dependence bind the new one into the family, he or she begins to form a disposition of shared trust and loyalty to the family's faith ethos, thus establishing a covenantal pattern of faith as relational. Diagramed as a triadic shape, a covenantal pattern rests on a base line representing a two-way flow between self and others of love, mutual trust, and loyalty. Above the baseline, at the point of the triad, is a representation of shared centers of value and power invested in by both self and others (Coles, 1990, p. 17).

> We invest or devote ourselves because the other to which we commit has, for us, an intrinsic excellence or worth and because it promises to confer value on us. We value that which seems of transcendent worth and in relation to which our lives have worth. (Coles, 1990, p. 18)

For Fowler, commitments and trust shape identities enabling one to become part of that which is loved and trusted. Sustaining these identities are covenantal patterns of faith as relation. Lasting human relationships exhibit this triadic form tacitly more often than explicitly.

Faith, for Fowler, is also an imaginative process awakened and sharpened by interactions that make up the "stuff" of our lives. Faith, which binds people to centers of value and power and in its triadic joining of communities of shared trusts and loyalties, gives form and content to the imaging of an alternative environment, God (Archer, 1999, p. 28 and Collins, 1999, p. 8). Images symbols, rituals, and

conceptual representations become an active way of learning in the language and common life of people in communities. When asked what we think or know, according to Fowler, we call up images and set about scanning files, questioning what we know. The result is a narration that transforms the nascent images into shared images. Never exhausting the content of the nascent image, faith cannot form the shared image of the ultimate environment. Belief is made up of the forms faith shapes expressing, celebrating, and living in relation to the ultimate environment imaged both now and in the past. Faith, as imagination, composes a felt image of an ultimate environment (Archer, 1999, p. 28).

Fowler's Stages of Faith Development

1. Stage 0-(0-4 years): Primal Faith; The Incorporative Self; Nursed Faith; and Foundation Faith.

This pre-stage (not empirically verifiable) owes much to Erik Erikson's understanding of the first age in the life cycle where basic trust, derived from a loving relationship with a nurturing parent, is the strength to be achieved.

2. Stage 1-(pre-schoolers): Intuitive-Projective Faith; The Impulse Self; Chaotic Faith; Unordered Faith; and Impressionistic Faith.

This stage of faith development can first be noticed in pre-school children. The "episodic" and "impressionistic" world of children at this stage is made up of images (not stories). Social awareness is confined to the family and any adult is an authority figure. Children's understanding of God

will be largely from their own relationship to their parents who are often perceived as the biggest, most powerful people they know in the world. God is a "Big Daddy" in the sky.

3. Stage 2-(grade school): Mythic-Literal Faith; The Imperial Self; and Ordering Faith.

The concept of fairness looms large in a person's way of faith knowledge at this faith stage: fairness is understood, not in any abstract way, but concretely as a way of knowing what to expect from others and a way of bringing order into one's world. One discovers that there will be times when others are not always fair and that we, ourselves, are not always fair, but God is seen as *always* being fair.

Stage-2 is also the era of the story: "Is this story *true?*" is an often asked question. It is important to note, however, that the stories children tell at this stage are stories in life, not about life. Stories where the meanings are *trapped* in the narrative because there is not yet the readiness to draw from them conclusions about a general order of meaning of life. Simple stories about good and evil hold great attraction (Fowler, 1981, p. 137). From their personal experiences people accumulate stories to tell because stories help digest one's experiences. Stories tell what happens to people. Remembered experiences form a set of stories that can constitute a world view and characterize one's beliefs. If a personal worldview is unknown, stories can remind and illustrate an opinion of some aspect of the world (Shank, 1990, p. 29).

In addressing the sociology of childhood, William Corsaro (1997) focuses more on children's relations with

peers than with adults. His coverage of children's cultures ends with the transition to adolescence. Furthermore, Corsaro offers an interpretive perspective to the sociology of childhood which he contrasts with more traditional socialization or outcome approaches to children and to their development. In this perspective he notes that a central intellectual role model for him was Shirley Brice Heath (1983, 1989, 1990), whose ethnographic work with children and families, radiates with rigor, compassion, and integrity. Most recently, Corsaro has been inspired and challenged by the theoretical views and writings of Candy Goodwin (1985, 1990), Jens Qvortrup (1991, 1993a, 1993b, 1994a, 1994b), and Barrie Thorne (1986, 1987, 1993) on children and childhood.

> As children venture out from the family, they are aimed in specific directions, are prepared for interaction with distinct interpersonal and emotional orientations, and are armed with particular cultural resources that are all derived from earlier experiences in their families. (Corsaro, 1997, p. 97)

Faith development and moral development, while independent, are affected by cognitive operations as well as their mutual interactions. Children try to understand not only what is happening to them, but why; and in doing so, they call upon the religious life they have experienced and the spiritual values they have received, as well as other sources of potential explanations (Coles, 1990). Desires, hopes, dreams, and ambitions, as well as deep despair, sometimes finds connections-in a an idiosyncratic way-to biblical stories or to religiously sanctioned notions of right and wrong or to rituals such as prayer and meditation.

Links between faith and moral development are stronger in the early stages of development and weaker towards the higher stages (Francis, Kay & Campbell, 1996). Religious communities attempt to transmit their heritage to the younger generation, including their faith, morals, rituals, and their community's worldview, lifestyle, and values. The aim of religious education extends beyond merely communicating knowledge about religion, to the socialization of students in terms of commitment to faith, acceptance of religious rules of behavior, and adoption of the worldview of the religion (p. 423). Accordingly, this kind of faith and moral education may play an important part in the transmission of the religious ethos.

Moral Development

> My research and that of others indicates that the development of moral character is in large part a sequential progressive growth of basic principles of moral reasoning and their application to action. (Kohlberg, 1971, p. 69)

Strongly influenced by the work of Piaget, Kohlberg (1969) focuses on an active knowing subject interacting with a dynamic environment. The now famous *Heinz* dilemma, originating from Kohlberg's work, has proven an especially good research vehicle, permitting the elicitation of different ways of justifying moral judgments concerning relations between life, law, punishment, and conscience. Heinz's wife is dying of cancer that only a newly discovered drug, which Heinz cannot afford, may cure. Heinz's dilemma is whether to try to save his wife's life by stealing the drug

or to obey the law and let his wife die. The outstanding feature of many young children's moral judgment is their attention to the concrete or literal aspects of an *act*, rather than to the intentions of the *actor* (Gibbs, 1977). This tendency of young children to focus on an immediate or literal action justifying their moral judgment is primarily observed in their judgment of the behavior of others.

By school age, Kohlberg points out, children will usually begin to evidence in their justifications a less literal understanding of interpersonal moral behavior and exhibit more of a pragmatic nature. This pragmatism shifts at a preadolescent period to justification based on shared interpersonal values. One stage of thought does not merely replace another. Instead, a new stage transforms the old one and incorporates its main elements into the new thought pattern (Fenton, 1977). People can understand moral arguments at their own stage, at all the stages beneath their own, and sometimes at one and, occasionally, two stages above their own. They generally prefer the highest stage of thought that they can comprehend.

Kohlberg carries over into ethics the Piagetian concern to harness empirical psychological inquiry for dealing with philosophical issues. He does this while taking a rational look at how, in different stages, persons structure their experiences of, and judgments about, the social world. this study will use Kohlberg's *Level A: Pre-Conventional Morality*, and the two stages embedded within the Level, to begin to explore a child's moral development. The first stage is characterized by unquestioned obedience to rules and authority in order to avoid punishment. The physical

consequences of an action determine whether it is right or wrong. This stage takes an egocentric point of view-the interests of others are not considered. The second stage is characterized by serving one's own needs and occasionally the needs of others. *You scratch my back and I'll scratch yours.* To be *right* means following the rules when it is in *my* interest, and also what is *fair.* It is a more or less equal exchange-a deal-an agreement. At this stage, we can separate our own interests and points of view from those of authorities and others (Kohlberg, 1969).

Research states that deliberate attempts to facilitate stage change through educational programs based on the discussion of moral dilemmas has been successful in elementary schools, junior and senior high schools, and on the college level (Fenton, 1977). However, the relationship of moral thought to moral action is not as simple as it appears. In light of this, one needs to link faith and moral development to a philosophical construct of a child's educational development. Knowing how to engage students' interest in specific things of value should be much the same as knowing how best to help students learn specific things of value. The awareness of students' interest in, and ability to learn specific things as they change during the course of development, should affect the ideas or experiences contained in the school experience.

Educational Development

Kieran Egan (1979) desired to create a theory of educational development which organized differently the

knowledge needed to make sense of the world. He created a four-stage approach based, in part, on data generated by Piaget and Erikson. This research will look at Stages 1 and 2 of this theory.

> What we need in education is a different kind of theory, one which focuses on the educational aspects of development, learning, and motivation and which directly yields principles for engaging children in learning, for unit and lesson planning, and for curriculum organizing. It is this kind of theory that this book offers--a new and comprehensive theory of educational development from earliest years to maturity. (Egan, 1979, p. 6)

Egan distinguishes four main stages of educational development claiming that at each stage people make sense of the world and experience in significantly different ways. He claims that these differences require knowledge to be organized differently in order to be most accessible and educationally effective at each stage. From the defining characteristics of the stages are derived principles for organizing learning and teaching.

Stages of Educational Development

1. Stage 1-(4-10 years): The Mythic Stage

This first stage of educational development is called mythic because young children's thinking shares important features with the kind of thinking evident in the stories of myth-using people (Egan, 1979, p. 11): (a) a main function of myth is to provide its users with intellectual security; (b) myth stories, as well as children, lack what has been generally called a sense of otherness-concepts of historical time, physical regularities, logical relationships,

causality, and geographical space; (c) myth lacks a clear sense of the world as autonomous and objective; and (d) myth stories tend to be articulated as binary oppositions.

At this stage, learning involves making sense of the unknown outside world in terms of the known world within. Effective teaching at this stage provides access to the outside world through organized knowledge known in terms that children can use and absorb. Myth or fairy stories derive their power from being reflections of those characteristics of children's thinking that enable them to project mental images onto the world and absorb the world to them with ease and flexibility (Egan, 1979, p. 27). The passage from the mythic stage coincides with the perception that the world is autonomous; that it is separate and fundamentally different from the child.

2. Stage 2-(8-15 years): The Romantic Stage

The Romantic Stage is characterized by the development of rudimentary but serviceable concepts of *otherness*; concepts of historical time, geographical space, physical regularities, logical relationships, and causality. The world outside of the person has lost the security known as the extension of one's self and is filled with strange things, alien laws, and mysteriously threatening situations. With the development of the autonomous world comes the reciprocal perception of the separate self.

Within this stage is the development of a fascination with extremes of what exists and what is known. *The Guinness Book of World Records* becomes a favorite read. Knowledge becomes engaging when it is different from anything the

student has come to know up to this stage. The student's search for limits during this stage can produce obsessive hobbies and pastimes. The Romantic Stage is characterized by how it constantly pushes against limits, enabling students to explore the reality of the world by first making contact with its most extreme limits and then working inward (Egan, 1979, p. 47).

Egan created this theory of educational development out of a sense of the ineffectualness he felt with existing educational research that veiled education in non-educational theories and paradigms which directed attention away from educational issues. Educational development is a process fueled by knowledge in an environment where the proper fulfillment and satisfaction of one stage leads to the next. The subsequent stages build on, elaborate, and develop from the previous ones, gathering from them any benefits and enriching perceptions, and whatever sense is made of the world and human experience (Egan, 1979, p. 92).

Summary

Just as parents are responsible for the beginnings of their children's natural lives, so they are responsible for their children's introduction into the life of faith, moral, and educational development. The Roman Catholic Church supports the primacy of parents in the education of their children, but that primacy also means that Catholic parents bear the primary responsibility in handing on Catholic faith and tradition to their children. Involvement in complex religious acculturation and education can be part of the

natural child development process beginning with the modeling of a faith life by the parent. For religion to have a personal meaning, to be relevant and effective, children must be taught how to *live* their faith. This can be accomplished by showing them how to live their faith every day in such ways as performing simple acts of kindness and sharing. They can choose to be more honest and tolerant when other options are more tempting. It is accepted thinking that through the practice of virtuous behavior children can become open to forming a close relationship with God.

The Catholic school experience should be an extension of the faith life that began with those initial faith life experiences in the home. The mission of the Catholic school becomes effective when it educates holistically, reaching the inner lives of the children in effective ways, motivating them to be concerned about their behavior and effort at school. Everyone connected to a Catholic school experience, both at the home and at the school, works to support the effort to build and maintain a Catholic cultural identity in every student by committing themselves to instruct, to model, to encourage, and to praise toward that end.

> Assuming that the attainment of academic excellence can be much the same in the Catholic and the non-Catholic school, what should the distinctive and unique contributions of the Catholic school be to its students? What should the differences be in the young people who have been educated in Catholic schools when compared to those who have been schooled elsewhere? In light of the central significance the Catholic religion has in the mission of the Catholic school, these questions can be rephrased to ask: What will be noteworthy in the lives and the demeanor of Catholic school graduates who have been taught to love God, to cherish and practice their Catholic faith, and encouraged to lead Christian lives? (Cronin, 1999, p. 1)

The unique gift for children from the Catholic school experience should be the love of their religion and a Christ-like identity that enables them to live their lives in accord with truth and goodness.

James Fowler (1981), Kieran Egan (1979), and Lawrence Kohlberg (1969) believe that various forms of personal development happen in stages that are necessary steps for the total development of the person. In defining these various stages, these theorists enable someone to be placed and identified within the stage framework. People being uniquely individual, placement and identity are likewise. Movement through the stages is controlled by the individual and his or her life experiences. A Catholic school experience is a life experience for many children. Within the Catholic school experience is the claim that integrated throughout is an identity element based on the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church that enhances the ability of the student in the Catholic school to strengthen a Catholic identity salience. This researcher believes that a Catholic identity salience can be created and strengthened through various life experiences, one of which need *not* be a Catholic school experience. Therefore, what features of the Catholic school experience enhance, or not, the Catholic cultural identity of a 4th/5th grade student in an urban Catholic elementary school?

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore what features of a Catholic school experience enhanced the Catholic cultural identity of a 4th/5th grade student in an urban Catholic elementary school. The analytical lenses that guided the analysis of this study included James Fowler's (1981) seven stages of faith development, Kieran Egan's (1979) four stages of educational development, and Lawrence Kohlberg's (1969) six stages of moral reasoning development, as well as the cultural identity work of Robert Coles (1986,1990) and Gini Shimabukuro (1998). The methodology used in conducting this study is explained in this chapter and is accompanied by a rationale for the choice of methods. The setting in which the study was carried out is defined, followed by a description of the population and the sample-selection criteria. The processes of data collection and analysis are discussed.

Rationale and Approach

Given the nature of this study, one that will focus on the individual lived experiences of 4th/5th grade students in an urban Catholic elementary school, this study used a qualitative approach incorporating the four methods qualitative researchers typically rely on for gathering information: (a) participation in the setting, (b) direct observation, (c) in-depth interviewing, and (d) analyzing

documents and material culture (Marshall and Rossman, 1999). Based on these and other characteristics of qualitative research (Marshall and Rossman, 1999, p. 3), this study hoped to gain a better understanding of the complexities of the human experience of faith development in 4th/5th grade students in an urban Catholic elementary school.

A constructivist approach was woven throughout this qualitative study. Constructivism is a theory of knowledge and learning that defines knowledge as temporary, developmental, socially and culturally mediated, and thus, non-objective (Brooks & Brooks, 1993). Learning from a constructivist perspective is understood as a self-regulated process of resolving inner cognitive conflicts that often become apparent through concrete experience, collaborative discourse, and reflection (Brooks & Brooks, 1993, p. vii). Participants brought prior experiences in faith and moral and educational development to the research setting allowing the researcher to de-construct, through the various characteristics of qualitative research, these experiences to better understand the influence of the Catholic school experience on the nurturing of a personal Catholic cultural identity.

The strategy used to better understand all the information, observations, interviews, theories, and patterns that emerged during the fieldwork to produce the essence of the culture was ethnography (Fetterman, 1998). Ethnography allowed a holistic outlook on the research in order to gain a rich, descriptive, comprehensive, and complete picture of the participants. Describing the culture of a Catholic school through the expressions of core beliefs, values, traditions, symbols, and patterns of behavior which provide meaning to

the school community and which help shape the lives of students, teachers, and parents, reflected the multilayered and interrelated context of the way things are done in a Catholic school.

A primary goal of the Catholic school experience is to blend faith and culture. The ideas, beliefs, and knowledge that characterized the Catholic school experience was best illuminated through a cognitive ethnography where participants were able to define their reality, speak to the sub-categories of their existence, and define their symbols (Fetterman, 1998, p. 17). Defining this cultural experience through the ethnographic approach of examining what the research hears and sees within the framework of the multilayered and interrelated context of the participants' view, contributed to the holistic outlook of gaining a comprehensive and complete picture of the group. Ethnography is concerned with making sense of social life. An ethnographic approach to viewing the rich cultural symbols and rituals of a Catholic school experience, focusing on the expression and representation of emergent experience and meaning in discreet microscopic social settings, opened doors to understanding critical cultural knowledge as well as helping to frame, classify, and categorize collected behavior (Fetterman, 1998, p. 27).

Population and Sample

The population included in this research was a purposeful sampling of eight 4th/5th grade students from four urban Catholic elementary schools each having a diverse

student population. The schools had a rich cultural history within the Roman Catholic Church school tradition of serving their parish and local communities, and each had a predominantly white student population with a Black, Hispanic, Asian, and Multi-Racial student population also present, but in a minority capacity. All the schools were in urban settings with student populations ranging from less than 100 students to more than 300 students.

Student participation included a balance of race and gender. Criteria for student selection incorporated: 1) identity as a 4th/5th grade student enrolled in an urban Catholic elementary school; 2) a religious affiliation as a Roman Catholic; and 3) identified as a 4th/5th grade student enrolled in an urban Catholic elementary school for a minimum of two years, excluding Kindergarten. I proposed to begin with two students, one male and one female, from each of the following ethnicities: African American, Caucasian, Asian American and Hispanic. This selection would help the researcher better understand potential confounding conditions due to cultural and religious affiliation. The use of a diverse participant population better enabled the researcher to define and/or understand the phenomenon of cultural meanings as determined by the participants. Not being able to number among the participants two Asian American students, the resulting participants were: two Caucasian students, one male and one female, three African American students, one male and two female, and three Hispanic students, one male and two females.

The decision to use 4th/5th grade students was initially prompted by the fact that a Catholic youth between the ages

of 10 and 12 has been involved in two key events in Roman Catholic Church sacramental preparation programs involving both the home and the school. A Sacrament in the Roman Catholic Church is one of seven rites of the historical Christian Church considered to have been instituted or observed by Jesus Christ as a testament to inner grace or as a channel that mediates grace. Theologically speaking, grace is divine love and protection bestowed freely upon mankind (American Heritage Dictionary, 1979). Being unaware of all the sacramental preparations that preceded their Baptisms, 4th/5th grade students would have been actively involved in both their First Eucharist and First Reconciliation preparation. These two Sacraments of Initiation, as proclaimed by the Roman Catholic Church, have distinct programs where parents and students are guided through a series of doctrinal reflections and activities in preparation for proper mental and emotional reception of these sacraments.

The other deciding factor for using 4th/5th grade students was the stage-development analytical lenses of Piaget (1967), Erickson (1963), Kohlberg (1969), Fowler (1981), and Egan (1979). All these theorists use this period of life as a distinctive stage of childhood development beginning at about the time a person enters elementary school and terminating with the beginnings of adolescence.

Data Collection Tools

Data for this research study was gathered through:

1) face-to-face interviews with students selected, their

parents and 4th/5th grade teachers;

2) student document analysis: writings and still photographs; and

3) student observation during the interview process.

Interviews

In education, children's perspectives as relevant and insightful in learning more about aspects of their worlds, especially where educational policy and programmatic decisions are concerned, are absent from inquiry (Marshall and Rossman, 1989). In over three decades of talking to children, Robert Coles (1990) has always believed that if he talked to enough children who were willing to share their thoughts and feelings and express ideas, he would feel a bit more informed. For Coles, each child becomes an authority, and all the meetings become occasions for a teacher (the child) to offer, gradually, a lesson. Karen Gallas (1998) has also spent time talking to children drawing from them a better understanding of ways in which children collectively develop their social world.

There were three student interviews that took place over a three/four week period. During the initial student interview, *A Day in the Life of -N-*, the student did scroll writing in response to a series of questions that guided them through a day in their life. The purpose of this interview was to better understand the Catholic cultural influences through information elicited from a school day wherein the student experienced a particular Catholic school ritual, an example being attendance at a weekday Mass. Preparation for attendance at this particular ritual was then compared to

weekend preparation for attendance at the worship of their choice.

Student responses to the questions of this initial interview process helped the researcher understand the perception of a Catholic cultural identity the student had and how s/he was best able to verbalize the phenomena. the participating students were also asked a series of moral dilemmas coinciding to daily experiences. The purpose was to elicit connections between these oral dilemmas and their Catholic cultural identity.

> Religions are known, of course, for their insistence on upholding various moral principles and standards, for the reinforcement they offer to their adherents' consciences and to the culture of various nations. But less evident are the strategies boys and girls devise to accommodate a secular and familial morality, on the one hand, and the religious morality they hear espoused in churches, mosques, and synagogues. The task for those boys and girls is to weave together a particular version of a morality both personal and yet tied to a religious tradition, and then ponder their moral successes and failures and, consequently, their prospects as human beings who will someday die. (Coles, 1990, p. 109)

The inclusion of moral dilemmas at each student interview provided evidence of the tapestry of Catholic cultural identity with secular and familial morality.

The second student interview, *A Picture is Worth One Thousand Words*, focused on what the student saw, via still photographs, as those tangibles that they defined as being Catholic. The captions and the titles of the pictures enabled the researcher to better understand which symbols nurtured the Catholic cultural identity of the student.

The third student interview, *What I Did at School Today*,

focused on how the student was able to integrate faith and school academic culture. Using a student artifact/project produced as a result of a definite conceptual goal of the classroom teacher, the researcher better understood how the student was able to strengthen Catholic identity through classroom activities.

McLaren (1993), McLaughlin, O'Keefe and O'Keefe (1996), and Bryk, Lee and Holland (1993) speak to the importance of teachers and parents in understanding students. To understand more completely the part the student plays in the study, and ultimately to put the whole situation into perspective, the researcher compared information sources to test the quality of the information of the information gleaned from the student participants (Fetterman, 1998). Many teachers are as concerned about the kind of person that each student becomes as they are about how much a student knows. Parents, as first teachers, offer themselves as guides, educators, and models so that their children can develop in healthy ways (Buetow, 1988). In the brief meeting with the parent(s)/guardian(s) of a participating student, questions were asked that pertained to the early faith. oral, and educational development of the student. Some questions were directly related to Roman Catholic Church documents on faith and moral development. The researcher hoped to glean from these parent interviews an understanding of the early developmental experiences of the student prior to entering school, as well as understanding the overall environment in the home as it might affect the Catholic identity of the student.

During the single teacher interview, the teachers were asked questions that enabled the researcher to better

understand the Catholic school experience itself. Questions about school and classroom atmosphere, as well as questions directly related to Roman Catholic Church documents on the Catholic school and the teacher in the Catholic school, surfaced ideas, beliefs, and knowledge that characterized this particular group of people.

Scroll writing

During the first student interview, a series of questions for the student produced a scroll of a day in their life. The purpose of this scroll was to gather information from the selected students about the existence of the sacred in their daily routine which helped the researcher better understand the Catholic cultural identity experiences of the participants. This process of self-construction engaged the students in reflective writing, possible story-telling narratives, and face-to-face interactions which provided means for communication evaluation.

Still-photographs

Through images taken by children, we are given a glimpse into their view on their lives (Hubbard, 1990). Collier and Collier (1986) argue that photographs enhance interviews by interpreting experiences and inviting open expression, while maintaining concrete and explicit reference points. They add that participants are more relaxed and tell their stories more spontaneously when the focus is not on them but, rather, on the photographs at issue. Taking pictures of their worlds allows children to show their realities to the researcher while the interview process allows them time to tell about the experiences. The enjoyment of actively participating in a

project and gaining a momento of their participation (copies of their pictures) also helps to enhance rapport with participants which in turn contributes to the trustworthiness of the study (Weiser, 1988).

Included in the first student interview was the distribution of a disposable camera and instructions for taking pictures of persons, places or things that defined, for the student, things that are *Catholic*. These pictures were used during the second student interview. Once students had returned the cameras and the pictures had been developed, the second student interview took place approximately 7-10 days after the first interview. During the second student interview, the students were asked questions about their pictures that elicited information about the thought process used during the taking of the picture and how the picture was faith related.

Faith and moral dilemmas

The extensive interviews of Coles and Kohlberg, listening to children think out loud about moral dilemmas, enabled them to hear how children understood and used various moral values and perspectives thus enabling them to assess their level of moral development (Stonehouse, 1998). The ability or inability to put oneself in the shoes of another greatly influences moral reasoning. Moral development requires the ability to take the perspective and understand the point of view of an ever-expanding number of people (Stonehouse, 1998, p. 100). By the age of the student participants in this study, solutions to moral dilemmas should reflect an equal exchange mentality demonstrating

their inability to take the perspective of others who are unlike themselves, and, who have experienced situations unlike their own. Moral dilemmas selected mirrored experiences of people like themselves who were in situations that they, too, might have experienced.

Student project

Instructions were given during the second student interview that served to explain the needed artifact/project for the third, and final, student interview. This interview took place approximately one week after the second student interview had been completed. During this interview the student was asked questions about the artifact/project that elicited information connecting the intended integration of sacred values into the academic curriculum by the teacher.

Parent and teacher interviews

For the parent interviews, the researcher asked a series of questions related to the faith and moral development of the student in the home. The researcher also asked the parent to respond to statements taken from documents of the Roman Catholic Church. Interviewing the teacher included questions about the integration of faith and orals throughout their curriculum as well as responding to statements taken from from documents of the Roman Catholic Church.

Data Analysis

Data analysis for this study falls into six phases: (a) organizing the data; (b) generating categories, themes, and patterns; (c) coding the data; (d) testing the emergent

understandings; (e) searching for alternative explanations; and (f) writing the report (Marshall and Rossman, 1989). Each phase of the data analysis required ongoing data reduction to help manage collected data and data interpretation to bring meaning and insight to participant information. Data analysis was conducted as an activity simultaneously with data collection, data interpretation, and narrative report writing engaging the attention of the researcher who tried to make sense of it all piece by piece.

Reading and listening to the information collected from each student participant during the three interview sessions, reading and listening to the parent/guardian interview information and reading and listening to the teacher interview information and including as observation data, enabled the researcher to begin to select and isolate pieces of information from all the data. The researcher attempted to identify patterns of belief, recurring themes, language or salient themes that linked people and settings together (Marshall and Rossman, 1989).

As categories of information emerged from the collected data on each individual participant, a coding scheme was used to mark passages in the data. Codes took the form of, but were not limited to, key words, colored dots or numbers where each analytical lens and Roman Catholic Church documents were marked. Unusual or useful quotes that could be used later in the qualitative story were also coded. The researcher understood that as data was coded, new understandings changed the original coding plan.

As themes and categories emerged from the data, the researcher remained cognizant of evaluating the likelihood of

developing understandings and searching for negative instances of patterns incorporating these into larger constructs, as necessary (Marshall and Rossman, 1989). Alternative explanations were always searched for and explored thereby strengthening the most likely explanation put forth in the narrative which would then reflect the interpretive act of the researcher.

Emerging themes and categories within individual student data enabled the researcher to create a diagram--a cultural portrait (Figure 4.1)--that took on a triadic shape. In the interaction of student and parent, student and school, and student and community there evidence of a bond of trust and loyalty as each student would explore the environment to be received and welcomed by those who care for them.

In this study, student placement on stage framework was a process that began with approximate chronological age of the student participants. Students in grades 4/5 would, therefore, be placed in stage-2 Mythic-Literal (Fowler, 1981), stage-3 Conventional (Kohlberg, 1969), and Mythic (Egan, 1979) with demonstrated characteristics resulting in movement to either one stage above or one stage below the chronological entry. Final placement (Figure 4.2) was based on data analysis where a student's account of faith or moral development might show some elements of a particular stage. Student data might also hint at constructions that a student would encounter as a key structuring characteristic of a later stage. On the whole, however, the modes of faith for student participants remained with chronological placement unless otherwise noted.

Verification of the Findings

Having grown up in a Catholic home, having attended Catholic elementary and secondary schools, and having worked in Catholic elementary education since graduating from a Catholic college, the researcher brings a strong bias to this study. To better enable a truer picture of the data, the findings have been made available for comment to both sacred and secular readers for verification accuracy. My advisor at Michigan State University and a professor in the College of Education at the Penn State University have read transcriptions. The editor of a Catholic publishing company and the Executive Director of the Elementary Division of the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) have read the transcriptions for accuracy. All readers have provided input on the transcriptions which have challenged the researcher to deeper thinking about the data. The researcher believes that the vigilance of those who have read the transcriptions have enabled the data to support the general conclusions.

Use of Tables and Figures

To better facilitate the unfolding of the inquiry, one Table (2.1) and two Figures (4.1 and 4.2) within the text contribute to making sense of the data. Table 2.1, *Stages of Human Development*, places the faith. moral, and educational development stage models side by side for convenience of reference and comparison.

Figures 4.1 and 4.2 represent visual demonstrations of

data analysis. Figure 4.1 illustrates three prominent developmental indicators for each of the student participants based on individual data analysis. These individual triangles are visual representations of important aspects for personal development as well as graphic presentations of data. These same triangles were created, then referenced, for Chapter 4 text. Figure 4.2 is a chart created as an attempt to place each student participant on the stage development continuum of each developmental theorist. This chart was also referenced in writing Chapter analysis.

Confidential and Ethical Concerns

Letters of participation were procured from each participant in this study. Sample letters are found in Appendix A. The identities of all the participants were protected throughout the entire data collection process. The cassette tapes from all the interviews were transcribed by the researcher and were coded according to either participant school association or grade level association.

Conducting research within one's own profession is a concern of the researcher. Though some believe that its impact would be greater if practitioners were themselves involved in the research process, that involvement would likely change the research and make it more practically relevant and be more motivated to draw on it as a result of being involved (Atkinson and Hammersley, 1994). Conflicts between the roles or researcher and practitioner could slant the research through subject manipulation or other personal, religious or professional biases. Knowing that a research

project which explores a personal, implicit characteristic based on rituals and symbols that are oftentimes undefinable can be disheartening. This researcher did his best to maintain propriety within the study.

Limitations of the Study

The nature of this study and the size of the number of participants in this study limit this study in generalizability and validity to a larger population.

Chapter 4 - Presentation of the Findings

The Catholic cultural identity of a Catholic school has often been cited as the difference between a Catholic school experience and a non-Catholic school experience. The National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) has published numerous articles and documents in support and nurturance of this marketable characteristic. The uniqueness of the Catholic school experience is found in the integration of the message of Christ in an atmosphere of freedom, love dignity, and respect (Congregation of Catholic Education, 1988).

According to Church documents, children should make their first conclusions about who they are as Catholics, as well as define self-concepts of competence, acceptability, and their importance to others, from their experiences in the home environment. They first learn from their parents to be accountable to themselves and then to act responsibly towards

others. Catholic doctrine concludes that parents teach through word and example. Parents demonstrate that mistakes can become stepping stones to improvements and, therefore, need not be considered as failures. Parents convey to their children that they are made in the image of God. As such, they are called to make appropriate life-giving choices at home, at school, and privately. Parents teach accountability for each child's choices, behaviors, and actions or inactions. The child's identity, then, is formed step-by-step, building block by building block, just like the habits of the parents who establish the faith foundation of a child's Catholic identity.

Assuming that the cultural distinctiveness of the Catholic school experience is made evident through the integration of Roman Catholic tenets throughout the curriculum, teachers in Catholic schools contribute to this growth--the Catholic cultural identity--when their interactions, classroom practices, and teaching strategies provide students with exercises that strengthen their religious foundation (McCracken, 1999). This researcher hopes to better understand what features within the atmosphere of the Catholic school experience are created, maintained, and nurtured by the adult Catholic school community, and which are actually transferred to those who occupy the student desks. Theories of faith development (Fowler, 1981), moral development (Kohlberg, 1969), and educational development (Egan, 1979) were used as the beginning lenses through which to view data collected from interviews with 4th/5th grade students in urban Catholic elementary schools, their parent(s), and teachers. Additionally, document analysis of

student work in both writing and photography was considered.

A student comes to a Catholic school experience with prior knowledge in faith, moral, and educational development based on their own home and their own church experiences. To understand how students may make sense of their in-school learning experiences, and how the nature of those experiences create identity, this researcher viewed learning from a constructivist perspective. That is to say that learning is a self-regulatory process of struggling with the tension between existing personal models of the world and discrepant new insights. It is constructing new representations and models of reality and meaning-making ventures with culturally developed tools and symbols, and further negotiating such meaning through cooperative social activity, discourse, and debate (Fosnot, 1996).

Catholic Cultural Identity in the Home

The interweaving of the lives of the children's and parents' world clearly enriches the children's lives as well as the lives of their parents. We find our identity and true selves in relationship with others (Kohlberg, 1983, Corsaro, 1997, Fowler, 1981, and Donovan, 1997). The Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky (1978) believed that every function in the child's development appeared twice: first on the social level--between people, and later on at the individual level--within the child. By this, Vygotsky meant that all of our psychological and social skills are always acquired from our interactions with others. We first develop and use such skills at the interpersonal level before internalizing them

at the individual level (Corsaro, 1997).

When asked to take part in this study, all families were offered flexibility in both where the interview would take place as well as the time of the interview. One parent interview took place in the office of the researcher because it was more convenient for the parents. All other parent interviews took place in their homes. Parents were asked to meet with the researcher one time for approximately one hour. Within the framework of the interview questions, four themes emerged: (1) Prayers, rituals and symbols in the home; (2) Why choose a Catholic school?; (3) The child's role in the Catholic cultural identity of the parent; and (4) The differences in a Catholic school experience.

Prayers, rituals, and symbols in the home

What was made very evident in all the parent interviews was the role of the mother in early prayer experiences. A prayer before meals and praying before the child went to bed were first experiences when the mother taught a specific prayer or set of prayers to the child. The 4th grade Hispanic girl's mother also has a specific prayer which is recited every time she gets in the car to drive anywhere. Other examples of when specific prayers were taught: during a storm for safety; when specific problems needed to be solved; for those who are sick or who have died; and for spiritual guidance.

Vygotsky's function theory is evident in stories from a 5th grade Caucasian boy and his parents. Their interactions are the foundations from which individual skills have been internalized. The 5th grade Caucasian boy was present during

his parents' interview. When his mother told a story about how she taught him to pray, she also related how she uses the same procedure with the toddlers she babysits. During this interview, the student interrupted his mother adding how *he* now reminds his parents to pray before eating and how *he* helps teach the sign of the cross to his mother's charges. With this interruption he demonstrates revisiting a lived experience, using it as a lens to establish himself as an authority on initial prayer experiences in his home. His learning takes place from observing and recording the events and stories of real people. This also is apparent in the conclusions raised by Shirley Brice Heath (1983) in relating her experiences in both the Trackton and Roadville communities where, exploring the layers of culture in both communities, she systematically documented how early home experiences shaped patterns of talk and behavior.

The 5th grade Caucasian boy also provides an example where, within the life of the child, there are often multiple and competing memberships: churches, clubs, neighborhoods, public and private affairs--all demanding different rules and rituals. The responsibility of the individual lies in learning how to negotiate among the many different ways of gaining knowledge in each of these memberships (Finders, 1992). His father, during the parent interview, stated that:

> We go to church every week, and if we're not at home over the weekend, we still make sure we go to church wherever we are. And we do a lot at our church; [student's name]'s an altar server and my wife and I volunteer to help whenever we can. We even go to coffee and donuts every Sunday after the 10:00 a.m. Mass.

The 5th grade Caucasian boy's faith development--his

understanding of God and rules for membership--appears to be largely based on his relationship with his parents. Further proof of this relationship surfaces when he is presented with the first set of moral dilemmas. He makes the comment that "dad and Jesus always do the right thing," and when given a camera to take pictures of thosethings that, to him, are *Catholic*, he takes his first picture of his father.

Based on collected data, this researcher believes this 5th grade Caucasian boy exhibits constructs of a stage-1 faith development as defined by Fowler (1981). His involvement in his church and in the church community mirrors the involvement that his parents have in their church and church community. The interweaving of his life with the lives of his parents through their involvement with scouting, is another example of the strong influence his parents have on his current stage of faith development.

Both the 5th grade Caucasian boy and the 4th grade African-American girl have mothers who are converts to Catholicism. The boy's parents have a common thread in their life-long involvement in Scouts and his father's commitment to his faith was stronger than his mother's and she easily accepted a recommendation to convert to Catholicism. The girl's parents have a common thread in their military experiences. Her mother told the story of how she came from a family of many religions and her father came from a family of one religious faith. It was decided by his mother ands father that *their* family would be a family of the same faith, therefore, the 4th grade African-American girl's mother converted to Catholicism.

The use of storytelling in the self-construction (Miller

and Moore 1989) plays an important role in the social construction of self throughout one's life span. In reflecting upon lived experiences, the 4th grade African-American girl and her parents made use of stories that enabled them to communicate what they were thinking and how their perceptions compared with others in their environments. This was similar to how the 5th grade Caucasian boy used stories to establish his authority about an event. Miller and Moore (1989) also state that narratives of personal experience can provide access to culturally specific images of self as well as to the ways in which those images are conveyed and evaluated. Since these narrative accounts typically employ a range of evaluative devices to convey their point or significance, narratives of personal experience may be particularly useful as a means of gaining access to implicit propositions about one's self.

A story told by the 4th grade African-American girl's mother centered around her daughter's First Communion preparation:

> One of the changes I noticed in [student's name]'s spirituality was during her First Communion sacramental preparation. She wanted to be the best Christian she could be. I told her that now was the point in her life when she could make that transition. She really wanted to understand the Eucharist, the bread and wine. Her father and I told her that the bread and wine was something that wasn't a toy to be played with. It was real. Because we had talked to her about it, she knew how we felt about the sacredness of the bread and wine. when she actually made her First Communion, receiving the bread and wine for the first time, I noticed a change in her because I knew that she understood that it was the Body and Blood of Jesus and she needed to be serious about it and she knew how her heart needed to be cleansed.

This sacramental preparation for First Communion is

representative of Fowler's constructions of faith. Within the stage-1 faith development, symbols and images of visible power and size are important. There is an appreciation for stories that represent the powers of good and evil in unambiguous fashion. These types of stories make it possible for children to symbolize the threatening urges and impulses that both fascinate and terrify them. They provide an identification with the vicarious triumphs of good over evil which stories can provide. Symbols or representations of the Diety, in this case water, wine, and bread, at this stage of development, creates the possibility of aligning powerful religious symbols and images with profound feelings of terror and guilt, as well as love and unity with God. Such possibilities give this stage the potential for forming deep-rooted and long-lasting emotional and imaginal orientations in faith (Fowler, 1987).

To this researcher, the 4th grade African-American girl demonstrates faith development constructs that characterize stage-2 development. Her involvement with her mother in the parish religious education program is a strong indicator of both family involvement and church community involvement in Catholic identity formation. Another area of identity formation for the 4th grade African-American girl is through her friends at school and her friends involved with her swimming experiences. At school, friends discuss problems and negotiate peace whenever possible. As part of a swim team, the hours spent in practice and competition provide bonding experiences that strengthen identity formation. She demonstrates her understanding of God through her relationship with her parents, yet she also appears to be

testing her ability to understand fairness within her relationships with her friends.

In stories told by both the 5th grade Caucasian boy and the 4th grade African-American girl, Catholicism's communal emphasis is shown in the involvement both families have in their respective parish communities. Such communal emphasis arises from the conviction that Catholics need to be 'church'--a Christian community that welcomes all for the sake of salvation. These families are examples of the Church's philosophy of education which aims not only at nurturing the intellectual faculties, but, also, includes the induction of children into the religious heritage that is a Christian birthright. At the core of this is the Church's belief in the centrality of community, the binding together of children, parents and guardians to constitute a culture of growth based on the Gospel (McClelland, 1993).

The stories that the 4th grade African-American girl tells and the stories the 5th grade Hispanic boy tells are the strongest cultural identity representations in this study. For girl's parents, as well as for the boy's mother, a parental desire for the child to learn to achieve and succeed in the white world is embedded in education--it is the master key with which to open every lock. Education is both the competition and the prize. Faith and family are the means for achieving the desired ends.

The 5th grade Hispanic boy's parents tendered a Hispanic cultural presence with its strong sense of family and church during their interview. This came through while talking about familial rites, rituals, and symbols that were not only generational ties but also served as the thread that bound

the family to a much larger local and global Hispanic heritage. Of the three Hispanic students participating in this study, the 5th grade Hispanic boy and his parents presented the strongest sense of cultural heritage as it relates to Catholic cultural identity. His family was the only Hispanic family interviewed which is actively involved in the local Hispanic Catholic parish and its activities. During the parent interview, his mother was the more verbal spokesperson when it came to talking about Catholicism and Hispanic Catholic rites, rituals, and symbols. Also, he is the only one of the three Hispanic students to mention having any home exposure to his ancestral language.

The research states the importance of the mother in faith development which could explain the absence of a strong Hispanic cultural presence in the lives of the 5th grade Hispanic girl and the 4th grade Hispanic girl. The 5th grade Hispanic girl's mother is not Hispanic. The 4th grade Hispanic girl's parents are both Hispanic, yet, her father, according to her mother, is not a *practicing* Catholic. The 4th grader's mother's responses to interview questions led this researcher to believe that she focuses her personal spiritual identity more on prayer, guilt, and reconciliation.

Of note here is that during the first student interview, the 5th grade Hispanic boy's father, who was present, mentioned reading Bible stories as part of his son's current bedtime ritual. When probed as to what his favorite stories were, the 5th grade Hispanic boy said that the stories about Moses and Sampson were his favorites. With this story, he positions himself within the parameters of both a stage-2 faith development and a first stage educational development.

Fowler (1981) and Egan (1979) make mention of a mythic quality in the faith and educational development of a child at this age. In this faith construction, God is seen in anthropomorphic terms on the order of a stern and powerful, but just parent or ruler. God rewards people when they do right; God punishes people when they do wrong (Fowler, p. 62). For Egan, educational meaning derives most clearly from basic binary distinctions. If something is to be clearly meaningful, it should be built on and elaborated from clear binary opposites (Egan, p. 13).

Two other specific Hispanic rituals mentioned by the 5th grade Hispanic boy's mother: *El Dia de Los Muertos*, and the use of the nine-day novena to the Blessed Virgin Mary where the rosary is prayed, identify Hispanic faith formation foundations. In Spanish-speaking countries, the use of the Memorial Altar is especially prevalent during the *Day of the Dead*, which is one of the most important religious holy days of the year. To the people of Mexico, where it is an honor and a duty to commemorate family members and friends that have died, this tradition can be traced back to the Aztec people.

The importance of the Virgin Mary to the Hispanic culture surpasses the notion of religious devotion. Mary is a symbol of Hispanic identity, an integral part of their history. The large number of sanctuaries and grottos, the millions of women who bear the name *Maria* or any other title of Our Lady, the number of statues and paintings that exist in almost every Hispanic home, all testify to the deep devotion to Our Lady that is part of the Latin American Catholic heritage (NCEA,1987).

The Hispanic heritage of the 5th grade boy's ancestors plays a major role in his Catholic cultural identity formation. The continuation of generations-old traditions within the family and his own involvement in the Hispanic parish life provides the values made possible through his Hispanic heritage. As a living community of faith, Catholicism also has distinctive cultural practices, structures, attitudes, and ideas that mark Catholic cultural identity in the culturally Catholic home.

Religious rituals used in the home differed from family to family. One family used no specific religious rituals in the home, their religious rituals were practiced in church. Other examples of family religious rituals were connected to the holidays: specific prayers used at Thanksgiving; Advent wreaths; singing *Happy Birthday Baby Jesus*; celebrating Las Posadas at Christmastime; and attending mass on Memorial Day. One parent, when asked about family symbols or rituals mentioned that, for her, the way she lives her life is symbolic of a religious ritual.

Why choose a Catholic school?

The intrinsic nature of the Catholic school experience--creating, maintaining, and perfecting the school's identity so that everything in the school supports its educative mission--is a communal responsibility. The 5th grade Caucasian boy's parents' feelings about how the parents, teachers, and parishioners are part of a collective ownership accountable for the way things are done in the Catholic school are evident in the following from his father:

The quality of the children is better at a Catholic

> school. The public school has to maintain this fiction that God doesn't exist and there can't be any mention of Him whatsoever, even in an historical or comparative discussion. There's no room for God. How idiotic. Oh, they'll talk about the Pilgrims, but not about why they came here. There's a certain kind of security in a Catholic school. The public schools are baby sitters. In a Catholic school, the kids get an education. The teachers can teach in a catholic school. A Catholic school provides a better social situation, students are not being exposed to the pathologies of the world. A Catholic school transcends the real world, they discuss spiritual issues, they have a world view that's beyond the narrow confines of the secular society. This allows [student's name] to understand that there are bigger things. He is an important person, but he is not the center of the universe. Other people are very important. Serving other people is very important. That's what's learned in a Catholic school.

While it is true that Catholic schools are schools *first*, their religious mission provides their guiding purpose. In this statement, the 5th grade Caucasian boy's father refer to, as does the 5th grade African-American boy's mother in her story, a core set of beliefs and values, prescribed by parents, teachers, and parishioners, that should emerge in a Catholic school experience. The 5th grade Caucasian boy's close relationship with his parents, especially his father, will align his use of human communication to tell the story of some of the perceived benefits of a Catholic school experience.

The 5th grade African-American boy's mother relates the importance she places on the core beliefs and values embedded in the Catholic school experience, and the role of the teacher in the school as cultural identity carrier.

> The Catholic school carries the religious development started in our home. Weekly Masses, school atmosphere, and religion classes, as well as daily reminders of who we are and who we represent, and how we should act, are things that the school

> does. It takes the responsibility to oversee what is not done at home. The school teaches about our faith. I think that's unfortunate because I don't take the initiative to teach [student's name] at home, even though I am a teacher for the weekly religious education classes at our parish. For me, the Catholic school is the main source for his faith development.

His mother understands the importance of Catholic teachings in both his home and his school. For example, while it is the school's orthodoxy of religious instruction, and the observance of Christian morals in the Catholic school that is obvious in this construct, the boy's mother realizes that it is the task of the whole educative community, all the cultural players, to ensure that a distinctive Christian educational environment is maintained in practice.

During the first student interview, the 4th grade African-American girl said that she likes to tell stories. As she tells them, she appeared to be reflecting on her ideas to better understand its content. During the parent interview, her mother also said she liked to tell stories. In the mother's story about her own parents' early relationship, the focus was on the academic achievements of her father. He went through Catholic schools prior to entering college and the military, yet there was no direct reference to any academic experience that could be labeled *Catholic*. All her schooling, prior to entering college and the military, was public education. Noteworthy in this story is what was *not* told in the story. The mother attributes her husband's strong academic skills to study skills. If the 4th grade African-American girl's father were to tell this same story this researcher wonders whether there would be mention of strong cultural identity carriers who were role models. Would he

make mention of core beliefs, values, symbols or rituals that played a role, not only in faith development, but academic development as well.

When asked about the process used to choose a school for their child, all of the parents said that, for them, there was no choice. These Catholic parents wanted their children to have the same kind of emotional security they had, or wish they had had. At least one parent from each set of parents interviewed had gone to a Catholic elementary school and had decided that their child was also going to attend a Catholic elementary school. Christian values, family traditions, spiritual presence, and discipline were specific reasons for their decisions. Though pleased with the Catholic elementary school experience, only one of the families interviewed was certain that their child would continue on to a Catholic secondary school. All the others were undecided at the time of the interview.

<u>The child's role in the Catholic cultural identity of the parents.</u>

When the parents were asked what their child contributed to their spiritual growth and development, half of them responded that their child reminded them to pray before meals or to pray for spiritual strength to help deal with a problem. Another source of spiritual development assistance mentioned by half of the parents was the sacramental preparation programs their child went through for First Eucharist and First Reconciliation. Since the format of both these programs have changed since the parents went through their own sacramental preparation, helping their child to

prepare for receiving the sacraments was, for them, a source of spiritual development and renewal. All of the parents made mention of the fact that when their child asks them questions about life or God, they feel a sense of spiritual development in their own process of answering the questions of their child.

The differences in a Catholic school experience.

Addressing the differences between the Catholic school experience and a public school experience surfaced responses as diverse as the parent population of the study. One parent watched and compared standardized test scores and found the Catholic schools doing better than the public. When this same parent compared the textbooks used by his Catholic school child with the textbooks used by a public school neighbor child in the same grade, the Catholic school was introducing concepts a year or two prior to the public school curriculum. Another parent spoke about the blending of rites and rituals with academics as the major difference she saw between the two school experiences. A third parent felt that the Catholic school experience would enable their child to see the bigger picture in life. Overall, for these parents, the benefits of a Catholic school experience outweighed the financial burden of tuition payments.

Catholic cultural identity in the Catholic school experience.

A total of eight students were part of this study. All the students were 4th/5th graders in an urban Catholic elementary school where the entire school would go to a morning Mass once a week. The researcher met a total of three

times with each student for approximately one hour. Because of a request made by a parent, one of the student interviews took place in the office of the researcher. The parents of the student were also in the office at the time of the interview. The majority of the remaining student interviews were completed in the home of the student or in the student's classroom. The first student interview focused on outlining a school day when the student's class would join the rest of the school at a morning Mass. The second student interview was constructed around still-photographs the student had taken between the first and second interviews. The third student interview dealt with a classroom project or assignment previously completed by the student.

When asked what was different about their school, four of the students responded, "It's Catholic." Identifiers included, but were not limited to, "uniforms," "rules to follow," "church on Friday," and "higher learning level." One of the students mentioned that she felt that the difference was in the teachers and that "people cared."

The morning routine of each of the students varied slightly. Getting ready for school, eating breakfast, and having short conversations with others in the house appeared to be the norm. With the exception of two, the students were driven to school by one of their parents. One student made mention of the fact that before the car was started to head to school, she and her mother said a prayer for a safe trip. The one student who rode a yellow school bus was in the habit of sitting with the same one or two friends each morning. Their topics of conversation would include what they had done from the time they got off the bus the previous afternoon to

the moment they stepped back onto the bus that morning. When asked if, on the morning when the student would be going to Mass, the car or the bus conversations included any mention of Mass, the majority of the students said that the only time Mass was mentioned in car or bus conversations was when one of them or one of their friends would be involved as an altar server or lector during the Mass.

For most of the students, on a Mass day, morning classroom routines were not any different than any other morning routine. Students entered the classroom, deposited their belongings in lockers and desks, and began working on an assignment that would be found on the blackboard. This was the procedure until it was time to go to church. One student did mention that her teacher read her the Scripture readings of the day. She would have a short discussion about their meanings so that the students could be prepared to answer any questions the priest might ask after the homily. The only other exception made was when the class was responsible for specific preparation in the Mass. On those mornings, those who were to be readers practiced in front of the class prior to leaving for church.

Back in the classroom after Mass, most of the students would be eating some sort of snack while others would be playing games or completing the assignment on the board. Unless for some disciplinary reason, the morning church experience was not reviewed or discussed as a teaching or learning tool. Only one student made mention of any form of consequence if their behavior or participation during Mass was unacceptable. This same student made a specific comment about the importance of participation in church because it

was important to her teacher. During the first student interview, most of the students were unable to relate the message of the readings from the last Mass they attended on a school day. The remainder of the school day, for all the students, followed a normal classroom schedule. At the end of the first student interview, after talking about what happens during their day, the students were asked to define their Catholic cultural identity. All the students asked for clarification. Without exception, not one of the students was able to define his/her Catholic cultural identity.

To prepare them for the second student interview, a disposable camera was introduced to each of them with directions for taking still-photographs of those persons, places or things that, to them, were Catholic. Once developed and mounted on tagboard, the students would be asked to put a title and a caption to each of the pictures to better explain their reasons for taking the picture. All the students included pictures of family members and friends. Two of the students took pictures only of their friends. Half the students included pictures of religious artifacts: statues, religious pictures, candles, and the Bible.

The still-photographs taken by the students revealed the importance of Catholic symbolic artifacts as also being essential to their Catholic cultural identity formation. The responsiveness of children to symbols and images in this stage awakens and shapes their religious convictions. For those students whose faith development is stage-2, the adults within the school community were of importance: the principal, the school secretary, teachers, the school custodian, and parent volunteers. Their understanding of God

was found in their relationships with the adults in their lives. On the other hand, for the 5th grade Hispanic girl, who appears to be in a transition stage, the other students in her classroom represent a large part of her understanding of God. Her capacity to construct the perspective of others enables her to construct God's perspective, too. Since adults, especially parents, play a prominent role in the faith development stages evidenced in this research, the role of the adult in the Catholic school also carries a similar role of importance. If a strong correlation between faith development experiences in the home and the school exists, spiritual identity formation, for the student, should progress naturally. Although all the students mentioned their friends and included still photographs of them, the 5th grade Hispanic girl, the 4th grade African-American girl and the 5th grade Caucasian boy seemed impacted more by their friends at school and in the neighborhood than the other students who appeared to still be rooted in a family-centered formation where adults shaped the direction of their lives.

Still-photographs taken by the students indicated a strong correlation between the symbolic Catholic artifacts of the parents and students and the Catholic school. The students were able to recognize Catholic artifacts in their schools because they were similar to ones found in the home. The still-photographs also indicated an awareness by the students of those places in the home and in the school which were *sacred spaces* because of Catholic artifact placement.

For the third student interview, each student was asked to produce or be able to talk about a classroom project or assignment where the teacher had specifically made mention of

the assignment or project as being Catholic focused. Since the teacher interviews had occurred prior to the student interviews, the researcher was able to make suggestions based on teacher interview generated projects and assignments. Only three of the students could produce a specific artifact that met the criteria. Half the students were unable to call to mind any specific project or assignment that they felt was Catholic focused. When probed about projects or assignments done in their religion classes, and with the researcher reminding them of projects and assignments the teachers had spoken of during the teacher interview, every student was able to talk about a specific project or assignment that was Catholic focused. Three moral dilemmas were included in each of the three student interviews. Once stated, the student was asked to respond to the given dilemmas. Situations were chosen that would emulate what children their own age might actually experience.

This study explored how the Catholic school experience enhanced or inhibited the Catholic cultural identity of 4th/5th grade students in an urban Catholic elementary school. Through data analysis, the researcher was able to create cultural portraits (Figure 4.1) and a student placement chart (Figure 4.2) that facilitated processing the data through some technique of inductive analysis. Based on placement, discussions about similarities and differences in particular Catholic identity development, the essentials to Catholic cultural identity development, and factors impacting Catholic cultural identity development, are possible.

In viewing Figure 4.2, there are obvious visual similarities and differences between the students, but it is

Figure 4.1 where those similarities and differences are truly evident. In all cases, the family is a major source of Catholic cultural identity. Parents continue to be strong Catholic cultural identity carriers in the lives of their children. The differences among the students can be noticed in both Figures 4.1 and 4.2 where, in Figure 4.1, three sources of developmental influence create a cultural portrait of each student. Figure 4.2 illustrates placement on developmental continuums based on the data analysis.

As indicated in Figure 4.1, the greatest differences between the participants can be seen in their scattered location within each of the three development continuums. Individual students, and their family origins, reflect part of that difference. Findings of the study led to the creation of these cultural portraits of each of the student participants. Aspects impacting their Catholic cultural identity are identified in these portraits. Although each student's family was different, the experience of *family* impacted the identity formation of all the students. The inclusion of extended family members such as grandparents or aunts and uncles, seemed to be either a benefit or a deterrent of the family impact on Catholic cultural identity formation. A second difference is reflected in other characteristics. Only one student participant, the 5th grade Hispanic boy, comes from a family that practices Catholicism through a series of cultural rites, rituals and symbols that have been passed from generation to generation. Though two other student participants share his cultural heritage, his parents, especially his mother, continue to practice culturally specific Catholic Hispanic traditions. The last

major difference from the data with regard to Catholic cultural identity appears to be the degree of parish involvement by the parents. The 5th grade Caucasian boy and the 4th grade African-American girl spoke about various parish activities which they were involved in with their parents. As indicated in Figure 4.2, 5th grade Caucasian boy and the 4th grade African-American girl were placed further ahead on the faith development continuum than most of the other student participants.

The ideas, beliefs, and knowledge that characterize the faith and moral development of the child prior to a Catholic school experience might best be illuminated through a cognitive ethnography where participants are able to define their reality, speak to the subcategories of their existence, and define their symbols (Fetterman, 1998). Defining this cultural experience through the ethnographic approach of examining what the researcher hears and sees within the framework of the multilayered and interrelated context of the participants' view, through the use of still photographs, contributes to the holistic look of gaining a comprehensive and complete picture of the student.

A symbol, as defined by Church documentation, is the primal and fully expressive representation in which one reality renders another present. The symbol is the reality in which a person attains knowledge of the being that expresses itself in the symbol. Thus a symbol allows what it symbolizes to be present insofar as the symbol is the vital and not merely arbitrary speaking forth of the reality it represents. Discussing the importance of visual symbols in Catholic education, Raymond F. Bronowicz (1982) writes:

> A school and any other institution is Catholic if its entire philosophy, thrust, and *modus operandi* reflect the life, mind, and teaching of Christ as handed down by the apostles and as preserved and explained by the Holy Catholic Church.
>
> If religious symbols do not make a school Catholic, then what purpose do they serve? At the very least, they serve as visual aids in the teaching of Christian truths and values. The Church and its schools realized the value of visual aids in the teaching of the gospel and of religion long before other educators be came aware of their value in secular subjects. Beyond their educational value, religious pictures and symbols give an institution a clear, unmistakable and necessary Catholic identity (McLaren, 1986).

Because ethnography is concerned with making sense of social life, an ethnographic approach to viewing the rich cultural symbols and rituals of a Catholic school and Catholic household through student-taken still-photographs will open some doors to the understanding of critical cultural knowledge as well as helping to frame, classify, and categorize collected behavior (Fetterman, 1998).

For stage-2 children, social awareness has been confined to the family and any other adult who is perceived as an authority figure. The children's understanding of God has been generated through each of their relationships to their parents. The 4th grade Hispanic girl and the 4th grade Caucasian girl are classmates at the same Catholic elementary school and are best friends. They exhibit similar stage-2 faith development characteristics, evidenced in their still-photographs, but both of them still maintain their uniqueness.

Both girls' parents talked about the importance of the Catholic school experience for their daughters because the school created a family atmosphere that was safe and

welcoming. The 4th grade Hispanic girl's mother, who proclaimed herself to be a *private* person, yet felt close to the people in the school, while the 4th grade Caucasian girl's parents, who were more actively involved in parish life, felt close to the people in the school because of their own parish involvement. Both girls took more than half of their still-photographs at the school. These pictures included, but were not limited to, their teacher, their principal, and their similar friends.

One noteworthy difference was that the 4th grade Hispanic girl took additional pictures of adults who were involved in an aspect of school life that the 4th grade Caucasian girl wasn't part of, namely the after school program. The 4th grade Caucasian girl, on the other hand, took pictures of adults who were involved in her life outside of school: her parents, and both sets of grandparents. All of them live close by and are actively involved in the life of their granddaughter. Children in a stage-2 faith development have composed an ultimate environment for themselves and seem to orient themselves toward the people who make up the character of that environment (Fowler, 1981). It is evident from their pictures that for the 4th grade Hispanic girl, the adults in the *school* environment are as important to her as were the adults in the 4th grade Caucasian girl's family environment. For both girls, the school community of friends contributes to their overall development.

Another difference noted between the 4th grade Hispanic girl and the 4th grade Caucasian girl's still-photographs was foundin the pictures of symbolic Catholic artifacts that each girl took. In both cases, the parent

interview and all the student interviews took place in the home. Whereas the 4th grade Caucasian girl's home had two visible Catholic artifacts in the living/dining area, the 4th grade Hispanic girl's did not have any. After their still-photographs were developed, the Hispanic girl's Catholic artifacts were no longer in places for public view. The still-photograph of a Saint Jude visor clip on the inside of her mother's car and she told me that the other artifact pictures she took are located in various bedrooms in the home. The 4th grade Caucasian girl's artifacts are all very visible to the general public. A statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary on the mantel of her grandmother's house, as well as the Christ flag hanging from the front porch of her grandmother's house were visible to anyone approaching and going into the house. Without further observations and conversations, the researcher is unable to determine how the personal versus public display of Catholic artifacts might affect the faith development of either girl.

The 5th grade Caucasian boy and the 5th grade African-American boy are classmates at the same Catholic elementary school. As indicated earlier, 5th grade Caucasian boy, an only child, is very involved in his parish community because his dad models expected behavior. The 5th grade African-American boy's mother is involved in the parish as well, yet, her modeling doesn't encourage his involvement. Both boys took pictures at school during recess periods on the playground. The only apparent difference is that the 5th grade Caucasian boy was farther away from his subjects than the 5th grade African-American boy appeared to be.

The 5th grade African-American boy decided not to use

all the pictures available on the camera. After a 10-day period in which to take pictures, one-third of the available pictures in the camera were unused. When asked if he needed or wanted more time to take pictures, he responded in the negative. In comparison, the 5th grade Caucasian boy began the second student interview asking for another camera to take more pictures. The only pictures he took were taken at school during a recess period on the playground. He did not take pictures of symbolic Catholic artifacts. When asked why, all he did was shrug his shoulders. There was no verbal response. Without further exploration, the data or *lack* of data, could be representative of what Fowler (1981) would consider a danger in stage-1 faith development. Dangers in this stage arise from the possible possession of a child's imagination by any unrestrained images, terror and destructiveness or from the witting or unwitting adult exploitation of a child's imagination in the reinforcement of taboos and moral or doctrinal expectations (p. 134).

The 5th grade Caucasian boy was the only student to take pictures of his neighbors. During the parent interview his mother, who spends more time with him than does his father, talked about knowing all of the neighbors, and that they called her if they needed someone to watch their kids. She was also the one to plan and coordinate planting flowers on city property within the neighborhood. Whereas the father modeled faith community involvement, the mother modeled neighborhood community involvement.

When asked to explain a collage on the side of a file cabinet in his father's home office, the 5th grade Caucasian boy was able to tell the stories his father had probably told

him about the pictures he had included. Like the 4th grade Hispanic girl, most of the 5th grade Caucasian boy's symbolic Catholic artifacts were in bedrooms or out of sight from someone entering through the main entrance of the home. The 5th grade Caucasian boy had a friend take a picture of him praying which is indicative of his stage-1 development where he learned the stories, the moods, and the actions of the faith of those adults most important in his life.

The 5th grade Hispanic boy's still-photographs were representative of his strong sense of family and church that both he and his parents spoke of during their interviews. A multi-generational family picture, taken at a cousin's Baptism, showed four generations of adults who probably share in his faith development. His mother, during the parent interview, related a few of the generational rituals she has passed on to her children that she learned from her own mother and grandmother. These same rituals, praying in Spanish, *Las Posadas*, and *El Dia de Los Muertos*, were shared by the student during his first student interview.

The still-photographs that he took at school were items he identified as being symbolic Catholic artifacts. During the second student interview, he spontaneously talked about having similar artifacts at home, yet did not take any pictures of them. Children in stage-2 faith development have combined fragments of stories and images given by their cultures into their own clusters of significant associations dealing with God and the sacred (Fowler, 1981).

The 5th grade Hispanic boy posed three of his classmates, a Caucasian, an African American, and an

Hispanic, for a picture that exemplified the cultural diversity of his classroom and his school. He was the only student to create a picture of this kind. His father, during the parent interview, felt that his son's school needed to address multicultural education more thoroughly in the school's curriculum.

The transition to the next faith development stage will begin in the child's growing concern to know how things are and to clarify the bases of distinction between what is real and what only seems to be. Chronologically, the 4th grade African-American girl is the youngest student in the study, yet she exhibits characteristics of a stage-2 faith development that is in transition. Throughout all the student interviews, as well as her parents mentioning her inquisitiveness during the parent interview, she asked more questions about the questions being asked than did any other student interviewed.

Information gathered from both the parent interview and the student interviews illustrate close family ties. The 4th grade African-American girl stated that the decisions she makes are based on input from her parents, especially her mother, as well as input from her older brother, and that family influences have priority over teachers and friends. She included still-photographs of her parents, her brother, the family dog, and a favorite cousin. Noteworthy here was the inclusion of certain buildings in her still-photographs. She was the only student who took pictures of specific buildings that she felt were important to her Catholic cultural identity. Her church and her school were symbolic Catholic artifacts because the people who occupy the

buildings and the events that took place in the buildings have provided memories that make the buildings an integral part of her formation. Where the 4th grade Caucasian girl and the 4th grade Hispanic girl included pictures of each other as representative of the place of friends in faith development, the 4th grade African-American girl included a picture of herself because she loves and cares for herself and that's what God would want her to do.

Prior to beginning the fourth grade, the 4th grade African-American girl asked her mother to have her placed with a specific fourth grade teacher. Of the two teacher possibilities, she wanted to be in class with the one she had heard was strict. She told her mother that she could learn more from the strict teacher. During the teacher interview, her teacher had used *strict* to characterize her classroom style and her parents had used the same word when telling the story of her request. To have her include a picture of herself with her teacher lends credence to the transitions from stage-2 to stage-3 since her teacher is someone who can help her clarify the bases of distinctions between what is real and what only seems to be (Fowler, p. 134, 1981).

Where the stage-1 child fuses fantasy, fact, and feeling, the stage-2 child works hard and effectively at sorting out the real from the make-believe. The Mythic-Literal child will insist on proof and demonstration for claims of fact. It is during this stage that the products of imagination are confined more to the world of play and submitted to more logical forms of scrutiny before being admitted as part of what the child *knows*. The stage-2 child begins to demonstrate the ability to coordinate a personal

perspective with that of another person and the experience of a more predictable and patterned world.

Stage-2 faith development is the era of the *true* story where the meaning of the story is trapped in the narrative, there not yet being the readiness to draw from the story a conclusion about a general order or meaning in life. Simple stories about good and evil hold a great attraction to stage-2 children. The stage-2 child's capacity to construct the perspectives of others means that the child now can also construct God's perspective. Marked by increased accuracy in taking the perspective of others, stage-2 children compose a world based on reciprocal fairness and an emmanent justice based on reciprocity. A factor initiating transition to stage-3 will be the implicit clash or contradictions in stories that can lead to one's reflection on meanings.

During the teacher's interview for the 5th grade Hispanic girl, the teacher mentioned that she takes the time and makes the effort to create a family atmosphere in her classroom where the students can think of themselves as brothers and sisters. Pictures taken in the classroom and the captions placed under them bear witness to her response to this kind of an environment. Peter McLaren (1986) writes, "When taken together, the peculiar characteristics of ritual space and time, the morphological qualities of the instructional rites, the style of performance by the teacher, and the prevailing root paradigms with their symbolic entailments, added up to a distinctive politics of communication that may be said to have both influenced and shaped the dominant epistemes through which Catholic students made sense of their phenomenal world" (p. 202).

The 5th grade Hispanic girl uses two classroom objects: a classroom altar and a religion textbook to illustrate symbolic Catholic artifacts, but what is even more noteworthy is her inclusion of the school sign, and its caption, as a Catholic artifact. The captions she wrote were two and three sentence paragraphs, characteristically stage-2 type, where simple stories about the goodness of a person, were similar to the verbal responses she made during her first interview. She speaks from within the flow of her experiences demonstrating the ability to coordinate her own perspective with that of another person (Fowler, 1981).

The Teacher as Catholic Cultural Identity Carrier

To better understand a Catholic school experience, it is important to look at those directly responsible for orchestrating that experience. Each teacher interview took place in the teacher's classroom after a regular school day. The single interview lasted approximately one hour and there were no additional meetings or observations after this initial meeting. The interview responses centered on five areas of interest: the distinctiveness of the school, the teacher's professional contribution to the distinctiveness of the school, artifacts used in the curriculum to teach Catholic identity, a definition of the Catholic identity of the school, and the role of continuing religious education for the Catholic school teacher.

The first area of interest--the distinctiveness of their school--found that half of the teachers interviewed cited parent involvement as the most distinctive feature of the Catholic school. The other half cited the Christian

atmosphere created through the teaching of religion within the daily routine. Of interest from those who mentioned parent involvement was the belief that the parents were involved because they were paying tuition for the education their children were receiving. The teachers, when asked how they felt they professionally contributed to their school's distinctiveness, all but one made mention of personal characteristics such as being a "good listener," "good communicator" or "motherly" to describe their professional contributions. Only one teacher interviewed mentioned her enjoyment of teaching and how she felt that *teaching* went on in her school.

The teachers had been asked to bring to the interview a minimum of three artifacts which they used in their classrooms to teach about Catholic cultural identity. If the artifact was seasonal or conceptual, the teachers were asked to elaborate on the artifact or the concept. All of the teachers were able to either display or talk about the specific artifacts they currently used or have used in their classrooms in order to enhance Catholic cultural identity. Half the teachers interviewed made reference to using literature outside their regular religion curriculum where major or minor characters could be cited for modeling appropriate behavior or life style. The students could then use these characters from literature as Catholic cultural identity references for themselves or other people. One teacher talked about her use of a particular bulletin board in her classroom where she posted children's pictures in a circular fashion to illustrate a family focus. This particular bulletin board was displayed throughout the entire

first grading period. Another teacher shared her plans of having each student create an Easter candle that could be taken home at the beginning of the Easter vacation. The purpose of this candle-making activity was for the students to better understand the importance of symbols used during the Easter Triduum--the three day period of prayer, devotions, and preaching in preparation for the Feast of Easter (Encyclopedia Dictionary of Religion, 1979).

When directly asked what was the Catholic identity of their school, all of the teachers gave unique answers. One stated that the Catholic identity of the school was found in its visual signs and symbols: crucifixes, bulletin boards, and the display of a core set of values. Another teacher said that it was prayer in the classroom; that kids knew traditional "Catholic" prayers. Mass is attended once a week. Mass and prayer are automatic, and there is a religion class every day. A third teacher believed that the Catholic identity of the school was connected to the giving of time and talent as well as to student behavior. In the most diverse Catholic elementary school in the study, the interviewed teacher believed the Catholic cultural identity was rooted in the different cultures and nationalities--the melting pot of students in the building. Of all the teachers interviewed, only one teacher was unable to define the Catholic identity in the building. After a rather long pause, she did say that she thought that it was somehow connected to knowing Jesus.

All the teachers believed that what they modeled in word and practice in their classrooms were important; that they were role models for their students. When asked about the

importance of updating their religious education to keep current on Church teachings, as well as teaching and learning styles, the majority felt that it was important. Yet, other than the annual school-sponsored in-service at the beginning of the school year, they felt that if they needed more, they would receive it. When probed with the question of whether they would actually do anything beyond their annual in-service, all but one of the teachers said that they probably would not.

During the single teacher interview, responses to questions directly related to defining Catholic identity indicated a void in their being able to define the concept and apply it to what it was that made their school different. If defining the difference was problematic for the classroom teacher, then it becomes a reasonable assumption that it would also be problematic for the students. The strongest input the student would have for their spiritual development would then come from the home. This research provides only a snapshot, not a detailed landscape, of the influence of the Catholic school experience on the Catholic cultural identity formation of the student. Additional probing and examination of this snapshot is important.

When asked to speak about the distinctiveness of the Catholic school experience and how the classroom teacher contributed to the distinctiveness of the Catholic school, one of the 4th/5th grade teachers interviewed, had this to say:

> Parent involvement, along with their love and respect, is a distinctive quality of a Catholic school. the care and nurturing that creates the family atmosphere that is given off by the whole entire parish is a big part of the welcoming

> feeling. I'm easily approachable; very, very polite in dealing with others; I accept everyone and see differences as positive aspects and outlooks. I'm a good listener and I've created a warm and welcoming atmosphere in my classroom. The religious aspect of a Catholic school plays a major part in teaching the importance of each other in society and the importance of our job here on earth in how we treat each other. It teaches what we need to do to make each other happy and accept each other's similarities and differences. The values modeled in a Catholic school are the teachings of Jesus. Since converting to Catholicism I bring the whole aspect of Jesus into my life and the classroom. I see sharing the values of Jesus in the classroom as an important way to learn to model these same values in the everyday life of the students.

Artifacts used by classroom teachers to strengthen student's Catholic cultural identity were displayed or talked about during the teacher interview. Making an Easter candle, symbolically representing Christ as the light of the world, has been a staple in one teacher's religion curriculum for almost two decades. She feels that when students can make something and take it home, it becomes more important to them. For this teacher, integrating Church celebrations at Easter in her regular religion curriculum are more interesting when connected through the strongest symbol available. Rituals are best fathomed through an understanding of symbols, where the symbols are the primal and fully expressive representation of one reality rendering another present. The symbol is the reality in which a person attains knowledge of the being that expresses itself in the symbol. Thus the symbol allows what it symbolizes to be present insofar as the symbol is the vital, and not merely arbitrary, speaking forth of the reality it represents. The use/creation of artifacts in the Catholic school experience which symbolizes things that are Catholic has the power to engulf

the sensibilities of the student.

Every teacher interviewed mentioned the use of literary characters as classroom artifacts to help focus student attention on the Catholic cultural identity similarities between themselves and the heroes and heroines in their books. This type of character introduction would serve to strengthen the 5th grade Hispanic girl's relationship with the autonomous world, thereby helping her to develop a sense of her own identity. Her faith development is closely connected to her classroom experiences and her classroom community, as was indicated by her previous stories. She demonstrates a natural transition from a preadolescent to an adolescent stage in her faith, moral, and educational development.

The 5th grade Caucasian boy and the 5th grade Hispanic girl, both appearing to be in transition stages, were the only two students in the study to mention specific artifacts and classroom projects that they had done which matched similar artifacts and projects mentioned by classroom teachers. Even though each of the six teachers who were interviewed presented or could discuss a minimum of three artifacts and projects where they purposefully focused on Catholic cultural identity, only two of the eight students interviewed surfaced any connections.

Each of the four schools involved in this study required their students to attend one weekday Mass. The 4th grade African-American girl previously spoke about liking the structure and strictness of her teacher. She now relates the importance of the rules and regulations connected to this weekly activity:

> Once a week our class goes to church with the rest of the school. We try not to forget to sing loud and pay attention; to sit up straight and not put our butts on the pews; and we won't forget, that once we leave the school to walk over to the church, when we pass the bush on the sidewalk outside the school, we can't talk anymore.

Her mention of rules and regulations further support the placement of her faith and moral development.

The 5th grade Hispanic girl's teacher was the only teacher who spent time preparing students for better participation at Mass. This is an example of the kind of overt instruction that should be happening in all classrooms prior to Mass. Instruction like this moves the students in faith and moral development. The student mentions that even though she comes to church prepared, not being able to hear or always understand what the priest is saying makes it hard for her to concentrate.

> Every week before going to church we read the readings for that day and try to understand them so that if Father asks us questions about the readings during his homily we'll know the answers, because we'll get in trouble if we don't participate. If we don't participate, sometimes we miss recess. Sometimes it's hard to concentrate on the readings and hear what the priest is saying. By the time we get back to school I've forgotten what he said.

Knowing that her teacher will be asking questions about the Mass once they return to the classroom is oftentimes frustrating to the 5th grade Hispanic girl's stage-2 faith development. Church documents cited throughout this study have addressed the importance of integrating Church truths and values with the lives and cultures of the students. The Catholic school experience offers two *classrooms* where this integration can take place: In the Mass and in the school.

Both subjectively and objectively the liturgy is at the

heart of Catholic identity. It is the communion--the joining--of Catholic ritual and symbol. Subjectively, it is through participation in the liturgy that most Catholics are socialized into the community of faith. In the liturgy Catholic values and attitudes are spoken about, celebrated, and experienced in symbolic and ritual forms. The subjective significance of the liturgy for the individual Catholic and for Catholic communities is to deepen their sense of belonging to the Church. This is rooted, ultimately, in its objective nature as a privileged expression of Church life (Donovan, 1997).

In recent years the Catholic Church has issued guidelines for Masses celebrated with children, the purpose being to provide for a fuller participation and understanding on the part of the children. Liturgical adaptations, which is far more involved than *keeping the children's attention*, assumes a basic understanding of child development. David Elkind traced development in faith by showing that children under the age of 11 are not able to understand abstract religious expressions. A five-year-old has a nebulous understanding of prayer, though by age seven their prayers are usually petitions for concrete things. By age nine, prayer is understood by the child as a private conversation with God and is clearly connected with a particular belief system (Staigers, 2000). These basic understandings of how children comprehend religious experiences are crucial in knowing how to make liturgical adaptations, but also in knowing what symbolic language to use without making the liturgy a religious education classroom. When children are immersed in the liturgy, their understanding can go beyond

words. Children can take away from ritual more than they are able to verbalize (Philibert, 1989, p. 173).

The 5th grade African-American boy provided an anecdotal account of what happens in the majority of the classrooms of the interviewed students once they return to the classroom after Mass:

> Every week when we get back to the classroom after Mass it's time for a snack or it's play time until we have to finish the assignment from the board that we didn't finish before we went to church.

With the exception of the 5th grade Hispanic girl's teacher, once the priest gives the final blessing at the end of Mass, there is no further conversation about the event. For Catholics, the Mass is a communal event. It is not something that one ordinarily does alone. The celebration of the Mass--the liturgy--expresses the nature of the bond that unites all believers as it deepens and reinforces their faith. For the vast majority of Catholics, Mass attendance is the ordinary way to experience membership in the Church. The challenge is to ensure that those who are present can experience, in celebration, that they are part of a community of faith. The more real the Mass becomes for those present, the more their sense of belonging to a community of faith will be deepened. The Mass remains a major witness to what Catholics refer to as *tradition*. In it one can discern much that is central to the distinctively Catholic understanding and practice of Christianity. The Eucharist is how Jesus, sacramentally, remains physically present among believers until the end of time. For Catholics, Mass continues the Last Supper and perpetuates the sacrifice of Calvary. Everything that the Church does and teaches depends on the Mass; the reality of

Christ's presence among believers.

Moral Dilemmas

The ability or inability to put oneself in the shoes of another greatly influences moral reasoning. Since the thinking of elementary-age children is concrete, this limits their ability to take the perspective of others. They are able to understand the experiences of people like themselves who are in situations that they, too, have experienced (Stonehouse, 1998). Kohlberg argues that the goal of moral education is the stimulation of the natural development of the individual child's own moral judgment and capacities, thus allowing him to use his own moral judgment to control his behavior (p. 71).

During the first student interview, a series of three moral dilemmas were presented to student participants. These first three moral dilemmas were selected to mirror home situations that students might experience. In response to the first student moral dilemma, the 5th grade Hispanic boy, though saying that he knew it was wrong, would accept a monetary bribe from an older sibling in exchange for not telling his parents that his older sibling had broken house rules. According to Kohlberg (1969), this student exhibited moral development stage-2 elements of reciprocity in the form of "you scratch my back and I'll scratch yours," and not out of any loyalty, gratitude or sense of justice. Typically, as children develop they are partly in their major stage (about 50 percent of their ideas), partly in the stage into which they are moving, and partly in the stage they have just left

behind. Movement through a stage will depend upon conflict-induced reorganization caused by a stimulation of the child's restructuring of experiences (Kohlberg, p. 43).

The 5th grade African-American girl, the 5th grade Caucasian boy, and the 4th grade Hispanic girl, responding to the same dilemma, all said that they would tell on the older sibling for breaking the rules because they would get into trouble for not telling the truth. These three responses to the moral dilemma are representative of Level A, Stage One moral responses characterized by unquestioned obedience to rules and authority in order to avoid punishment. Where do children learn to be good people? Who teaches a child honesty, kindness, fairness, and loyalty? Parents, as first and primary teachers, have a unique opportunity to fashion the characters of their children. Since Christian parents *should* raise their children to be good Christians, they should take special care with religious formation, personally attending to it at every stage. The sacrament of marriage consecrates Catholic parents for this work which is a ministry of the Church directed toward building up new members. In particular, parents fulfill this ministry by the example they give of following the way of Jesus. By virtue of their ministry of educating, parents are, through the witness of their lives, the first heralds of the Gospel for their children. Including moral dilemmas placed outside the home or school allows a better understanding of the placement of Catholic identity within the identity salience hierarchy of the student. This identity salience is defined as the probability that a given identity will be invoked, or called into play, in a variety of situations; alternatively, it can

be defined as probability, across persons, that a given identity will be invoked in a given situation. Identity theory's fundamental proposition hypothesizes that choice between or among behaviors, expressive of particular roles, will reflect the relative location in the identity salience hierarchy of the identities associated with those roles (Borgatta and Borgatta, 1999). Based on data collected in parent and student interviews, the 5th grade African-American girl, the 5th grade Caucasian boy, and the 4th grade Hispanic girl responded to the moral dilemma through a faith-based model. The 5th grade African-American girl referred to "breaking a commandment," the 5th grade Caucasian boy responded that "Jesus always does the right thing," and the 4th grade Hispanic girl's use of the words "honest" and "guilt" assumed a choice made based on religious beliefs.

Noteworthy here is that the word *guilt* surfaced in the interviews of both the 4th grade Hispanic girl and her mother. In Catholicism, the concept of guilt seems to spread beyond the field of morals. In Catholicism, guilt is often expressed as an experience of uneasiness and anxiety arising from the recognition that one is a *stray*, one who does not belong, that one is not who and where she or he should be. Yet, distraught as may be the state of the person under the weight of Catholic guilt, s/he is not without hope. This is the true heartbeat of the life of Christian devotion, namely humankind's contrition and God's forgiveness (Encyclopedic Dictionary of Religion, 1979). The 4th grade Hispanic girl's faith development is reflective of her mother's. In parent and student interviews, both mother and daughter oftentimes referred to the presence of guilt in their lives which can

only be overcome by reconciliation with God. They strive to do their best knowing that they are imperfect and will fail. In the student's pictures, she has a majority of Catholic objects connected with prayer and protection. A guardian angel tapestry hangs above her bed, she helps her mother's friend to make rosaries with rosary beads she has, and there is a Saint Christopher medal clamped to the visor in her mother's car. Prayer and petition are also important to this student's faith development. The placement of prayer and petition has a natural setting in the Catholic school experience for the 4th grade Hispanic girl. Within the school community is a place where she can pray and offer petitions as well as seek reconciliation with her God. During the teacher interview, her teacher said that she felt that the Catholic approach to education won't make a difference in society because society has changed and the family structure has changed and the *straight and narrow* doesn't work anymore. The teacher feels that people are not focused on making a difference because their focus is on their own image. Within the 4th grade Hispanic girl's Catholic school experience, the implicit feelings of her teacher toward faith could affect her Catholic identity based on previous references to how strongly she is influenced by the adults in the school community.

The 5th grade African-American boy was the least talkative of all the students interviewed. His responses to the moral dilemmas appear to be based on his desire to avoid punishment as well as being representative of his concept of self and society. In Kohlberg's stage-1 moral development, the physical consequences of actions determine their goodness

or badness regardless of the human meaning or value of these consequences. Avoidance of punishment and unquestioning deference to power are valued in their own right, not in terms of respect for an underlying moral order supported by punishment and authority (Kohlberg, 1969). The 5th grade African-American boy has dreams of becoming a professional basketball player. His older sister plays basketball, volleyball, runs track, is a cheerleader, and takes dance lessons. His father lives in Florida and has very little contact with him. He knows that he doesn't practice as much as he should, and doesn't get all his homework done all the time, but when it is time to hand in the homework, he'll be ready. His maternal grandparents live two blocks away and are involved in his life. He spends time with his grandparents while his mother takes his older sister to her games, lessons, and practices.

Of all the students interviewed, the 5th grade Hispanic girl demonstrated a faith and moral development stage above all the rest. She seems to have a morality of her own:

> I am aware of the need for rules and regulations and will confine current life situations to conform to these guidelines. My dad tells me stories about respect for his dad, my grandfather. My grandfather owned a car shop and my dad wasn't allowed to sit in the cars, but he did. He told me the story of how he broke the rules and should have respected them to show respect for my grandfather. And then he tells me what I can and cannot do in his office. When I make decisions, my friends have the strongest influence because they're my age and probably go through similar problems. My parents, through all the stories they tell me, influence some of my decision making. They're always telling me to do the right thing and when they tell me stories I always know what the right thing and the wrong thing is. My friends and my parents influence

me more than my teachers do.

When adults are so busy trying to instill in children their own morality, they seldom listen to their children's moralizing. If the child repeats a few of the adult's cliche's and exhibits good behavior, most parents think their child has now adopted or internalized parental standards. A great deal of anthropology and psychology makes this assumption, which can only be made if we fail to talk to the children. As soon as we do, we find that they have many standards which do not come in any obvious way from parents, peers or teachers (Kohlberg, 1969, Lickona, 1991).

Conversations with the 5th grade Hispanic girl demonstrated examples of her ability to transition from a stage-2 Pre-Conventional to a stage-3 Conventional in her moral development stages. She moves from conforming to stereotypical roles to taking the viewpoint of the system which defines the roles and rules.

The second and third set of moral dilemmas presented to the student participants represented possible school-related experiences. Responses to these two sets of dilemmas reflected both a Pre-Conventional stage-1 and stage-2 moral development, and a Conventional stage-3 moral development. The 5th grade Hispanic girl's teacher grew up as the eldest of eight children and considers herself a *caregiver* based on her own life experiences:

> We are a family in this classroom, regardless of what happened in the past. We squabble and fight and try to leave it all behind, but I'm in charge and nobody tells me what to do except the principal. If they get in trouble at school they are to come to me first because I am their mother and their lawyer and we are each other's brothers and sisters and so we are here to protect and help

> and guide. This school is our home away from home and parents have entrusted to me their most precious possessions. I get them all day long and we are responsible for each other's needs. So the minute we walk through that doorway we become part of a family and a community and this is where they are safe.

The teacher refers to a specific bulletin board she used to convey to her students the importance of creating a *family* atmosphere in the classroom which was a similar goal of two other teachers in the study.

Building community is characteristic of Catholic Christianity. The distinctiveness of Catholic education, then, is prompted by the distinctive characteristics of Catholicism itself, and these characteristics should be reflected in the whole curriculum of Catholic schools. The 5th grade Hispanic girl's teacher used her personal life experiences to support her classroom atmosphere.

Another teacher used her personal spirituality to create this atmosphere by infusing Christian prayer into everything done in the classroom. She felt that this kind of modeling helped to set the stage for her expectations of student behavior.

> Our school emphasizes prayer. All the teachers make an effort to bring Christ into the classroom in all the subjects they teach. The interest the priest shows in the children with his sermons during the children's liturgies, the principal and the other staff members have all decided that prayer is important and have made the decision to bring it into the classroom. There are specific times we pray in the classroom and we know that it's important, and that we need to be respectful at these times. This is not something we do just because we have to. We also take the opportunities during the day to say a special prayer when we hear sirens. There's a definite effort to connect Christ to the world we live in. A public school cannot bring Christ into their classrooms.

A third teacher mentioned using her professional experiences to refocus student attention on the Christian atmosphere of the classroom, as well as using classroom books and videos that could compare and contrast qualities that are not acceptable. She would also bring in student experiences to discuss what is right and wrong within a given experience. The use of personal, spiritual and professional experiences supported each teacher's hidden curriculum.

The term *hidden curriculum* refers to the fact that teachers and schools are engaged in moral education without explicitly and philosophically discussing or formulating its goals and methods. On the face of it, engaging in moral education without thinking about its goals and methods seems as dubious as it would be in intellectual education. There is, however, a school of functional sociology which claims that unreflective moral education reflects the unconscious wisdom of society, and its needs for *socializing* the child for his/her own welfare, as well as that of society. When such socialization or rule of enforcement is viewed as implying explicit positive educational goals, it generates a philosophy of moral education in which loyalty to the school and its rules is consciously cultivated as a matter of breeding loyalty to society and its rules (Kohlberg, 1969). As mentioned earlier, these particular teachers do not maintain a hidden curriculum in regards to moral education. For them, in a Catholic school, moral education is an explicit, obvious, and overt practice.

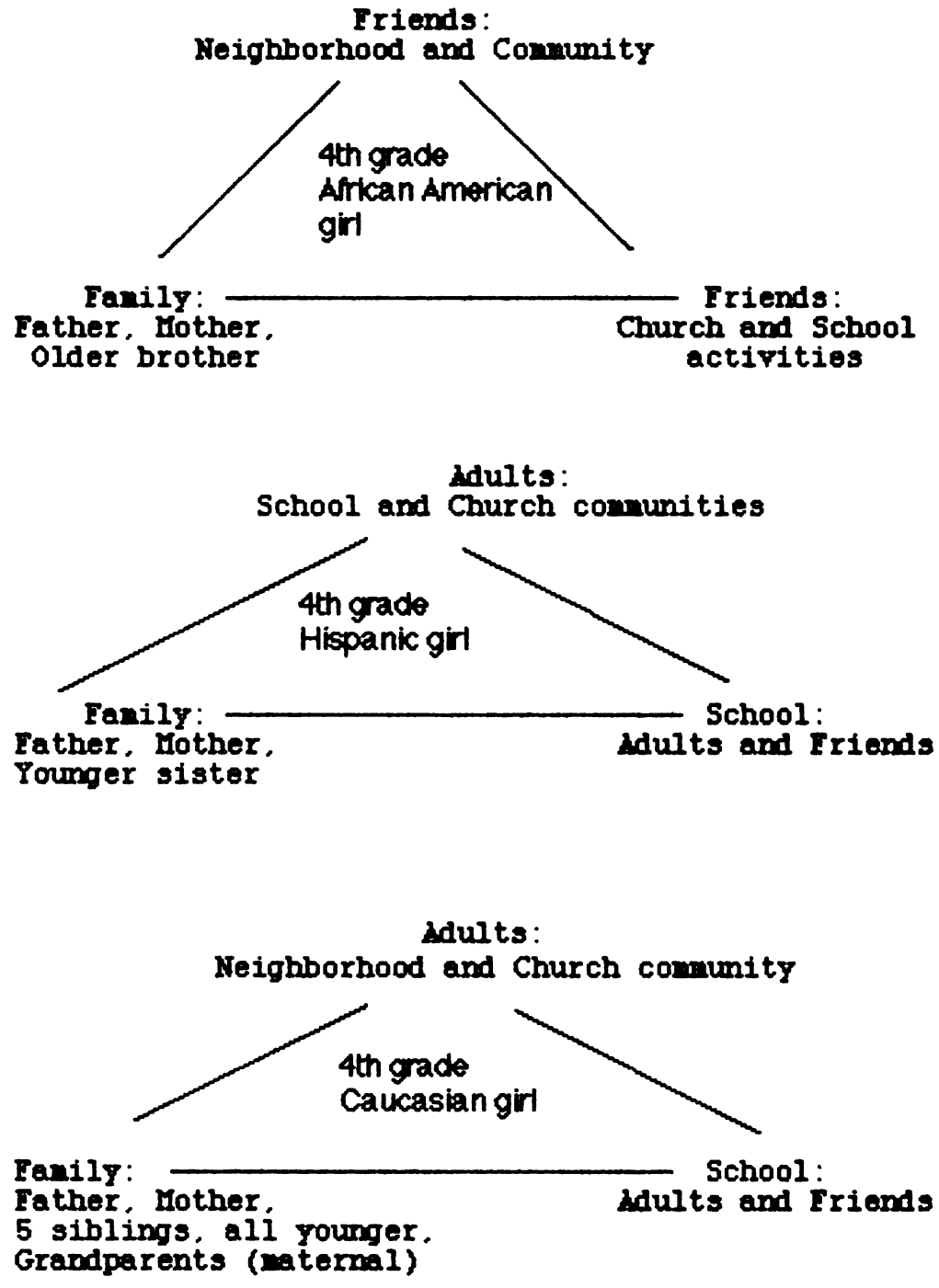
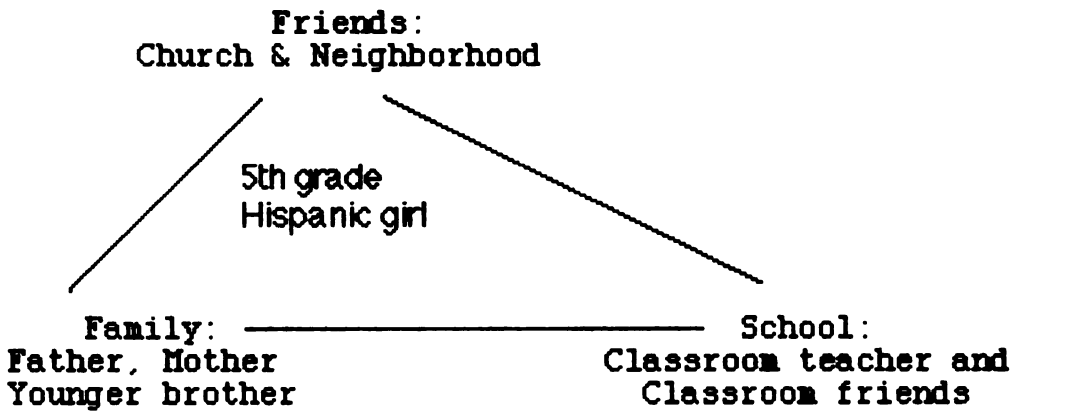
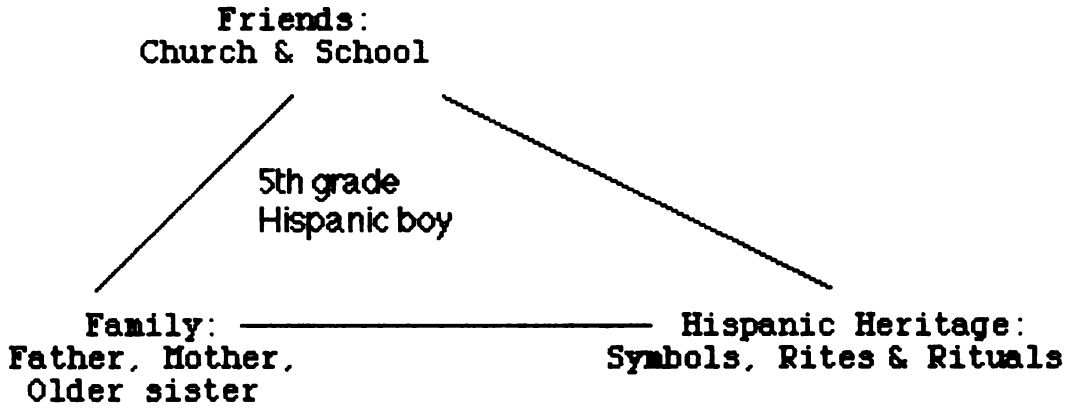


Figure 4.1 Students' Cultural Portraits





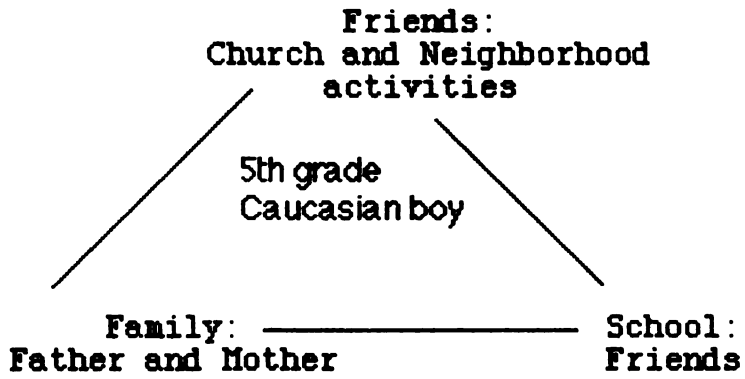


Figure 4.1 con't. Students' Cultural Portraits

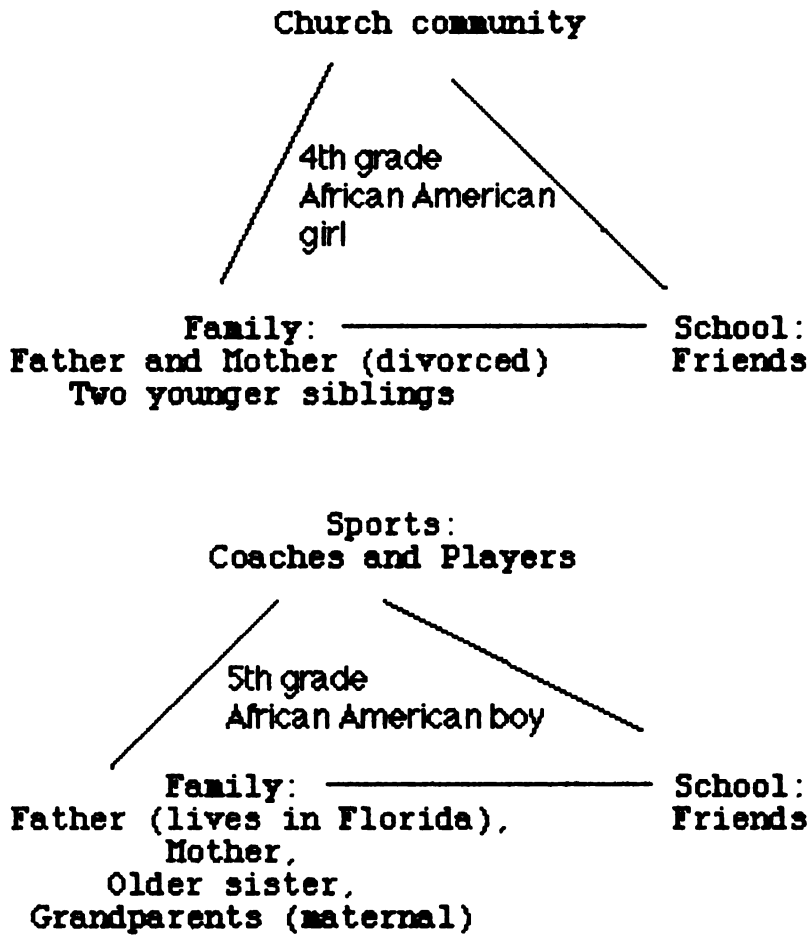


Figure 4.1 con't. Students' Cultural Portraits

	*Egan		*Fowler				*Kohlberg			
							Pre-Conventual		Conventual	
	Mythic Stage	Romantic Stage	Stage 0	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4
5th grade African American girl	x				x				x	
4th grade African American girl		x				x				x
4th grade Caucasian girl	x				x				x	
4th grade Hispanic girl	x				x				x	
5th grade Hispanic boy	x				x				x	
5th grade Hispanic girl		x				x				x
5th grade Caucasian boy	x					x				x
5th grade African American boy	x				x				x	

Figure 4.2 Student Stage Development Placement

* Not all Stages are included. The researcher has included one stage beyond the highest demonstrated stage.

Figure 4.2 cont. Student Stage Development Placement

Chapter 5 - Conclusions

The Catholic cultural identity of the Catholic elementary school is what makes the word *Catholic* an adjective modifying the noun *school*. Embedded in the history and tradition of Catholicism are doctrinal tenets that connect believers to a tapestry that dates back over two thousand years. The Catholic cultural identity of the school is what makes the school different from the local non-Catholic school. The purpose of the Catholic school springs from the belief that Christianity is not solely an idea or a creed but also, and more substantively, a way of life. As such, Christianity in a Catholic school must be lived, reinforced, and modeled each and every day. Therefore, it is imperative that those involved in the ministry of Catholic schools maintain their own personal Catholic cultural identity. Everyone who serves Catholic schools: faculty, support staff, cafeteria workers, and anyone else who would be considered an ambassador for the school, must know and understand Catholic cultural identity. It would be hard to teach and to model something that is not known or understood by those same people. When a Catholic school desires to examine its Catholic cultural identity, it begins an unending journey.

Some endeavors in the Catholic educational arena have a significant body of research attached to them. Others have been subjected to little study. Concern for Catholic cultural identity has been evident, not only in American Catholic writings (Breslin, 2000, Cook, 2001, Dobzanski, 2001, Gilroy, 1998, NCEA, 1991,O'Keefe, 1998, Ristau and Haney [Eds.],

1997, Shimabukuro, 1998, Starratt, 2000 van Beeck, 1985, Youniss and Convey, 2000, and Youniss and Convey, et. al, 2000), but also in Catholic writings from researchers in the field of religious education from England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, Germany, Finland, Switzerland, and Israel. Such writings were brought together to illustrate the variety of ways in which different research perspectives could illuminate the practice of religious education, and to shape future research (Francis, Kay, and Campbell, 1996). In addition, McLaughlin (1998) and Duigan and D'Arbon (1998) have provided research from Australian Catholic schools. This study examined the effects of the Catholic school experience on the Catholic cultural *identity* of a 4th/5th grade student in an urban Catholic elementary school. There is a significant body of research available on Catholic cultural identity. There is a smaller body of research available on Catholic cultural identity in *elementary students*. There has been very little research done on the Catholic cultural identity of elementary students using the voices of the students.

With the increasingly tenuous position of enrollment in some inner-city Catholic elementary schools as well as attrition in Catholic schools themselves, it is important that the school's cultural identity is different from that of the local non-Catholic school. Much work remains if Catholic schools are to be characterized as educational communities wherein Catholic cultural identity is communicated by educators who care for and about their students, as well as through curriculum that informs both the hearts and the minds of students.

What emerged after Vatican II was a greater focus on individual spirituality. The more young Catholics become assimilated into a mainstream American culture that is less Catholic, the more they become alienated from what little Catholic cultural identity might have been imparted in the home. The important thing to include in this inquiry is to hear all voices in examining the relationship between the student and the Catholic cultural identity of the school. While individual stories may seem to create a strange or confused pathway, taken together they reveal a common way of finding personal and religious meaning in the Catholic school experience. With this in mind, this study was initiated to seek information regarding the transfer of Catholic cultural identity from the Catholic elementary school to the 4th/5th grade student.

Questions were designed to determine (a) the elements of the Catholic school experience that are essential to the development of the Catholic cultural identity of the 4th/5th grade student in an urban Catholic elementary school; (b) other aspects of their lives which impact their Catholic cultural identity; and (c) how they define, in words and still photographs, their own Catholic cultural identity. Areas specifically addressed in the study were: (a) the rites, rituals, and symbols incorporated in early faith experiences in the home; (b) identification of Catholic artifacts in the home and school; (c) specific curriculum and related classroom projects used by the classroom teacher to enhance Catholic cultural identity; (d) defining Catholic cultural identity within the school; and (e) defining a *personal* Catholic cultural identity.

The population selected for this study included a purposeful sampling of culturally diverse 4th/5th grade students in urban Catholic elementary schools. Students were recommended and selected based on criteria outlined by the researcher. The original goal of five culturally diverse student groups was shortened to four because of an unavailability of 4th/5th grade Asian American students enrolled in any of the four urban Catholic elementary schools in the study. Interviews were conducted with eight student participants, their parents, and 4th/5th grade teachers in four urban Catholic elementary schools. The three student interviews elicited information related to Catholic cultural identity in the home and in the school and required students to be able to identify specific Catholic cultural artifacts. The one-on-one parent interview elicited information related to the Catholic cultural identity formation of the child prior to and during the Catholic school experience. The one-on-one teacher interview elicited information related to the Catholic identity formation of the student in the classroom during the Catholic school experience.

The purpose of this study was to explore how particular features of a Catholic school experience have enhanced the Catholic cultural identity of a 4th/5th grade student in an urban Catholic elementary school. Given this, the proposed research question was: What elements of the Catholic school experience enhance or inhibit the development of a Catholic cultural identity among 4th/5th grade students? To respond to this query, the following sub-questions were proposed:

1. How do 4th/5th grade students define their particular

Catholic cultural identity?

1a) If there are differences, what accounts for the differences?

1b) If there are similarities, what accounts for the similarities?

2. What elements of the Catholic school experience do 4th/5th grade Catholic school students identify as essential to their Catholic cultural identity formation?

3. What other aspects of the student's life do they identify as impacting their Catholic cultural identity?

4. What can we learn? What salient themes emerge from the student's stories about Catholic schools and the formation of their Catholic cultural identity that would be useful for marketing, curriculum, and instruction?

At the conclusion of the first student interview, each student was asked to define their Catholic cultural identity. Without exception, not one of the students could put into words a definition. Therefore, the cultural portraits (Figure 4.1) for each student can provide answers to the first and third sub-questions. In all cases, the family is a strong source of Catholic cultural identity. Parents continue to be major Catholic cultural identity carriers for their children. The understanding of God, though strongly based on their relationship with their parents, can also be found in their relationships with other important adults in their lives. For those students whose faith development is stage-1 or stage-2, the inclusion of extended family members such as grandparents or aunts and uncles, did not seem to be either a benefit or a deterrent. Some of the students' still-photographs showed adults within the school community who were of importance:

the principal, the school secretary, teachers, the school custodian, and parent volunteers. These adults more than likely demonstrated Catholic cultural identity characteristics similar to those of the parents of the student photographer.

I believe the still-photographs to be the best source of information for an answer to the second sub-question. Within the still-photographs are embedded those elements of the Catholic school experience that, according to the student photographer, are essential to their Catholic cultural identity. These still-photographs indicated a strong relationship between the symbolic Catholic artifacts of the parents and those found in the Catholic school. The students were able to recognize Catholic artifacts in their schools as being similar to ones found in the home. The photographs also indicated an awareness by the students of those places in the home and in the school that were *sacred spaces* because of Catholic artifact placement. The stage-1 and stage-2 student would benefit from a strong home-school relationship.

Before addressing the fourth sub-question, I would like to return to the research question itself. In this snapshot of a Catholic school experience, this researcher did not find any elements which enhanced the Catholic cultural identity of the 4th/5th grade student participants. The faith development initiated in the home, in this snapshot, was the strongest element in the Catholic cultural identity of the student participants.

So what does this all mean? What can we learn? In light of the work of the Second Vatican Council, and the desire of the Church to be in union with all Christians, Pope John

XXIII's desire for *aggiornamento* may have lost something in the translation.

Catholic laity--non-ordained members--put a primary value on the need for religious instruction. Parents want to pass on their religious culture to their children, and the principal way this was being done--in the late nineteenth century--was through the Catholic school. Family and church had not abdicated this responsibility, but after the mid-nineteenth century the school increasingly became the primary institution in the religious education of children. The school became an essential part of the Church's evangelization program. The shift from the primacy of informal religious education in the family to formal religious instruction in the school was critical to the development of a Catholic school system.

For Pope John XXIII, *aggiornamento* meant that the Church had to change in order to meet the needs of the times, that is, the changes taking place outside of itself. *Aggiornamento* looked to the needs and legitimate demands of the people. It was not a simpleminded rejection of all that was old and a breezy acceptance of everything new, but rather a disengagement from the limitations of the past and from a culture no longer viable. *Aggiornamento* denoted critical involvement in the new culture without denying its evil and its need for transformation.

Vatican II created chaotic times in the Roman Catholic Church. Although doctrinal information remained stable, the rites, rituals, traditions and symbols of Catholicism all came under scrutiny. There was almost total disappearance of any Catholic culture that was influential in the lives of

previous generations of Catholics. Religious instruction was diluted by the fact that religious educators were not sure of curriculum content. With so much uncertainty, the religious education of children stood unsteady in family, in parishes, and in the Catholic school.

Theoretical Implications

James Fowler (1981), Kieran Egan (1979), and Lawrence Kohlberg (1969) all believe that various forms of personal development happen in stages that are necessary steps for the total development of a person. In defining these various stages, these theorists enable someone to be placed and identified within the stage framework. People being uniquely individual, placement and identity are likewise. Movement through the stages is controlled by the individual and his or her life experiences.

Although some believe that Fowler's theory is susceptible to the charge that it maintains a balance between universalism and cultural religious diversity in favor of a Western, white, liberal, and masculine world-view, and to the disadvantage of any who stand outside this experience (Slee, 1996, p. 92). Fowler's lower stages of development, like the lower stages of Kohlberg's moral development, provided this researcher with a starting point from which to view the stages of development in a small number of urban Catholic 4th/5th grade students.

In Egan's educational development stage theory, with the exception of the mythic stage a person cannot be thought of as being exclusively in any particular stage (Egan, p. 93).

Through the process of data analysis, this researcher was able to explore the presence of key structuring characteristics of cultural identity from each theorist lens citing specific evidence of faith, moral, and educational development constructs from within the individual student data. For this study, what was missing from each of the stage theories was the presence of a Catholic doctrinal element that would help characterize the constructs of the student participants' Catholic cultural identity.

Implications for the Catholic School Teacher

To ensure a positive contribution to the atmosphere that makes a Catholic school *Catholic*, the adults working in the school need a personal understanding of characteristics that are *Catholic* and will contribute to the existing school atmosphere. Educating youth involves forming them intellectually and morally to exercise their rights and responsibilities as Catholic citizens, not only of this nation and the global community but of God's kingdom as well. As a builder of God's kingdom, the religious educator needs to be a visionary who designs the plans for preserving, enhancing, and communicating what is sacred. What the former religious men and women educators received as a regular part of their formation, what they lived and breathed in their communities, and expressed in the apostolate is something lay educators do not ordinarily receive and, until recently, has not been a regular part of continuing in-service education (Jacobs, 2000). This failure does not bode well for Catholic schools or their students, if only for the reason that

unformed or ill-formed educators in Catholic schools may unwittingly create a program or moral formation that has little, if any, referent to the school's mission and philosophy.

In elementary schools, where one teacher handles many subjects, each teacher ought to have had at least as much training in how to teach religion as in how to teach any other subject. Religious men and women educators received the training that enabled them to understand Catholic educational thought, coupled with their community's traditions as well as what it implied for the role of the Catholic educator. One especially pronounced consequence for the laity who now serve Catholic schools--some of whom are not Catholic--has been fewer opportunities to receive the level of training previously available. Those who are non-Catholic need the requisite vocational training to function effectively in Catholic schools. The goal in providing this training is to enable those who serve in Catholic schools to grow in their knowledge of and appreciation for the Catholic faith. they need to know what the Church expects of them as ministers so that the school's purpose and identity can be made explicit. Staff development in Catholic cultural identity development needs to be an ongoing process coupled with the examination of the individual Catholic cultural identities of those working in the school. The NCEA has existing programs and materials already mentioned in this study that would serve staff and personal developmental needs.

Of the children enrolled in Catholic institutions the vast majority are in elementary schools; many of these children will cease attending Catholic schools after the

eighth grade. What is and can be expected of the majority of the laity, then, is something like an eighth-grade level of religious knowledge and maturity. The majority of the teachers interviewed in this study stated that their need for vocational training was met through the annual religious education in-services provided by the school or parish, as well as an annual staff retreat program. When probed as to whether they would attend additional religious educational programs focused on strengthening their personal or professional Catholic cultural identities, the reply was negative. As laity replacing religious in Catholic schools, these educators cannot remain inexperienced or uninformed about the substantive religious, theological, and spiritual mission of Catholic schooling.

The school surrounds the child with a learning environment which allows the student to make the school's Catholic cultural identity their own. A concerted effort to purposefully and intuitively integrate religion throughout the curriculum needs to be explored when creating curriculum policies. "Integration" existing on an elementary level needs to be more than stressing the Catholic pioneers in American history. Including "Catholic" words in spelling tests, introducing Priests and Sisters into selected stories, and asking math questions such as "How many Hail Marys will have been said by a class of 25 students by the time they have recited three decades of the rosary?" In the school settings, Catholic educators need to capture and attend to the Catholic imagination of the students. They do so by utilizing the building blocks of cultural identity which include ceremonies, rituals, symbols, and human communication. The

direction the laity will chart for Catholic schools by translating the school's Catholic cultural identity into concrete educational practice can shape how the next generation of American Catholics will perceive the Roman Catholic Church and their membership in it (Jacobs, 2000).

Given the decline in vocations to religious life, a daunting question looms: How can their replacements have the same level of educational attainment, knowledge of Catholicism, and ability to work for a sub-standard salary? Moreover, since so few of the teachers are products of Catholic institutions, who will carry on the charisms and culture that provides religious distinctiveness?

Catholic school teachers have a responsibility to tell the story of the Catholic Christian tradition to their students. Instruction in religious truths and practices, and its integration into the totality of the lives of the students, are integral to Catholic schools. This is what distinguishes them from other schools. There is a crucial need for Catholic school teachers to understand what is meant by Catholic cultural identity. A uniform, common, conscious acquisition of Church doctrine and practice can no longer be assumed. It must be worked at so that it can be exhibited. And this must occur at a time in history when diversity is seen as a value.

One of the demands that can legitimately be made of teachers in Catholic schools is the infusion of religious teaching throughout the curriculum. This infusion presumes a fairly sophisticated knowledge of Catholic theology, history, and culture, as well as knowledge of the academic disciplines and an extensive repertoire of pedagogical strategies. Few

teachers possess these prerequisites for infusing Catholic truths and values into curriculum. Yet, Catholic schools demand that they do this!

For teachers in a Catholic school, to effectively replace the religious men and women who were their predecessors, it now becomes imperative that the teacher is aware of and nurtures an individual Catholic cultural identity through continued faith development opportunities. They must know, for example, what virtues look like, what they are in practice, how to recognize them, and how they work. The purposeful integration of Catholic rites, rituals, traditions, and symbols into the school day/year with proper instruction as to the history and meaning of the artifacts or events, needs to become an intuitive process.

According to Fowler, Kohlberg, and Egan the best means of promoting development is by being sensitive to the stage of a person's highest achievement and by organizing the knowledge to be learned in a manner appropriate to that stage. In this way it both fulfills the needs of that stage and provides nourishment for further development. Egan also suggests that teaching should be much more active and directive. Egan believes that simply leaving students open to the variety of sources of knowledge, and leaving them to direct their own inquiry and learning, without carefully structuring the context which will determine the kind of meaning derived from the knowledge, is to risk doing as much harm as good. The teacher needs to impose an organization of knowledge which will ensure it primarily feeds the educational development of the young.

Implications for Parental and Family Support

The four Catholic elementary schools involved in this study are parish-centered schools. They are *parochial* in the traditional sense, with the local parish giving the school legitimacy, a sense of identity, and a mission. As a whole, parish-centered schools are structured to meet the needs of a culturally diverse population. Multicultural, value-driven, and the use of symbols are what provides the context in which the Catholic faith is celebrated, taught, and ritualized. This emphasis helps to create an atmosphere for community formation conducive to Catholic cultural identity formation.

Parish schools embed their mission and philosophy within the mission and philosophy of the parish, but exclusive reliance on the parish puts the school organizationally at risk. Despite the emphasis on a common culture and a significant overlap between the church and the school populations, competing interests and goals can erupt in conflict. Unless the parish/school community is well established with a strongly united leadership, in times of financial crisis the relationship between the school and the parish can become tenuous. Knowledge of parish/school organizational structures and identities empower the parent to know and understand all the pieces that, when linked, are the strengths of the parish-centered Catholic school model.

The findings of this study have confirmed that the parents, as first teachers, have established and nurtured the Catholic cultural identity of their children as well as modeled expected behaviors. Church documents presented have stressed the role of the parent in communion with the parish

community. Of those parents interviewed, half specifically mentioned being actively involved in parish life. As stated earlier in this study, the majority of Catholic school students will not advance past an eighth-grade religious education and maturity. Beneficial to the continued spiritual growth of students is the continued spiritual growth of the parent(s). Active participation in diocesan or parish adult religious education programs can only support the faith development stage advancement of the student.

If the tenets of Catholicism are integrated throughout the Catholic school, the experience will strengthen the family by offering the student the seeds with which to grow into an integrated, self-realizing, responsible adult. For Catholic families then, if they expect the Catholic school experience to enhance the faith-based Catholic cultural identity initiated in the home, there is no guarantee that it will happen. Catholic parents need to remain diligent in their knowledge of the integration of religion throughout the curriculum, as well as in how the school celebrates and institutionalizes the Catholic heritage of the family.

Stories from two students included their involvement in their respective parish communities. It might be important to note here that a significant number of those who identify themselves as Catholics do not belong to the local parish or to any parish at all. As indicated in the findings of this study, family involvement in the life of the parish community promotes upward movement in faith development.

Implications for School Policy

Because the Catholic school experience is a vehicle through which the Catholic Church has transmitted its doctrines and practices to generations of its youth, Catholic schools should immerse students in a living Catholic culture that permeates all aspects of school life. Experiencing the prayers, understanding the rhythm of the liturgical year from fasts to feasts, and experiencing in sound, sight, taste, touch, and smell the living tradition which they inherit, *should* make the Catholic school experience essential in Catholic cultural identity. Although the data indicated that the students, at whatever developmental stage, are getting the signals in their curriculum through *some* activities, the data also indicated that these signals are subtle in most cases. Only in a few situations do these signals encourage deep thinking. Each encounter in the Catholic school--structure, policy, daily life--should be a teachable moment capable of shaping the life of the student.

The center of a Catholic school is always the Catholic faith. Therefore, participation in a weekly Mass *should* be mentioned as an essential element in the Catholic cultural identity formation of these students. A defining feature of this weekly ritual is that it is celebrated by the community and it expresses a communal meaning, belief or commitment. In preparing students for involvement in the Mass as a communal assembly, Catholic schools prepare students to participate more fully in this celebration. This should mean helping students bring their own concerns to the Mass and shaping the ritual expression by using the language, music, and ritual

gestures and performances of the students within the Mass.

In essence, students should meet Jesus on their own terms of understanding and their own level of faith development. The liturgical celebration, while containing essential elements common to liturgical practice throughout the Church, should also be expressive of the local context, local issues, and local sensibilities. The Catholic school, as an agent for building the kingdom of God through religious formation, invites students to engage in a critical reflection on the personal life of Christ; to examine how the life of Christ plays a central role in their Catholic cultural identity formation; and how it aids in discerning the individual's place in the world. The Catholic school experience should challenge the student to examine the tenets of their faith and seek application to their lives. This research indicated that the Catholic cultural identity of a 4th/5th grade student in an urban Catholic elementary school is not challenged through the Catholic school experience. Early faith development and formation, started and nurtured in the home, was more evident in the data than the faith development and formation attributable to the Catholic school experience.

This research project sought to add the voice of the student to the conversation among Catholic educators, administrators, and parents concerning Catholic cultural identity development in 4th/5th grade students in an urban Catholic elementary school. In light of the findings of this study, Catholic educational leaders must continually ask themselves and other members of the community--especially the students--if the school's cultural identity is any different

than that of the local public school. If the mission and philosophy of the school is not reflective of the mission and philosophy of the parish and the family, perhaps the cultural identity of the school is being taken for granted. When Catholic cultural identity is taken for granted or left unattended, the way of life which flows from the Catholic school grows stagnant and is devoid of meaning. Then, within a short period of time, the Catholic cultural identity of the school becomes lifeless. If that becomes the case, there is a need to examine and correct the results in an effort to recapture and restore what is being marketed as *the difference* in the Catholic school experience.

A strong and effective organization invariably possess cultures which provide a more meaningful way of life for its members (Schein, 1992). The culture of Roman Catholicism, for example, offers a unique vision about human existence and a configuration of core commitments enabling its members to bring that vision to fruition. This vision and configuration of core commitment is what distinguishes Catholics, their experience of God, and their spiritual imagination from the members of other religious traditions. The most effective and authentic Catholic schools, then, provide members an experience of a way of life that springs from this Catholic vision, transmits the configuration of core commitments to its members, and captures their spiritual imagination (Cook, 2001).

In the end, being a part of a living community of faith, a community with its own distinctive rituals and structures, and its own patterns of individual and collective life, makes the Catholic school experience synonymous with Catholic

cultural identity development. Distinctive practices, structures, attitudes, and ideas that increasingly have come to mark Catholic cultural identity, is what connects the individual, through the Catholic school experience, to a community of countless other believers who have experienced a long and complex history reaching back more than two thousand years.

Several documents exist, some of which are referenced in this study, that can help in the efforts to identify schools as Catholic. One of the most widely quoted is, *To Teach as Jesus Did* (NCCB, 1972). Others would include, but are not limited to: *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witness to Faith* (CCE, 1982), *The Catholic School* (CCE, 1977), *A Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School: What Makes a School Catholic* (CCE, 1988), *A Call to Reflection: A Teacher's Guide to Catholic Identity for the 21st Century* (Shimabukuro, 1998), and *As We Teach and Learn: Recognizing our Catholic Identity* (Ristau and Haney, Eds., 1997). The identity of the Catholic school is reflected in the Catholic school teachers, administrators, and support staff. It is the beliefs and philosophies of these people who are integral to the Catholic school experience that makes schools *Catholic*. In light of Roman Catholic Scripture and Tradition, the Catholic school must emphasize the same values that Jesus Christ exhibited when he walked the earth if the Catholic cultural identity of the school is to be institutionalized.

If a diocese chooses to provide only direction to the local school through a broad curriculum framework, then the written curriculum emerges from the local school through a process described and encouraged within diocesan guidelines.

As a professional in the field of Catholic education, I find my viewpoints are often at odds with diocesan policies and curriculum guidelines. I question diocesan and parish initiatives established for creating a Catholic school experience. Such initiatives have customarily been established without adequate vision or planning on the part of diocesan and parish leadership. To integrate Catholicity into content area curricula should be a visible maneuver which communicates the fundamental nature of the elementary school. This integration is an effort to state clearly that faith formation is not an activity isolated within religious education classes. It is the integration of the students' relationship with God into the *entire* educational experience that makes faith formation possible for students within the Catholic school.

Catholic elementary school curriculum often reflects the various educational orientations present within public school curricula. Often, a Catholic school curriculum does not explicitly state faith formation goals beyond the area of religious education, even though the assumption would be that the Catholic school does integrate these goals. The challenge for a Catholic school teacher is to represent the faith formation curriculum within the institutional goals and objectives across the curriculum content areas.

The quality of teaching that transforms the written curriculum into the learned curriculum, the modeling of Catholic faith and values implicit within life in the classroom, and the interactive influence of the Catholic school and family warrant further study for their collective contribution to the Catholic school experience.

The task of professional development is daunting. Providing vocational training for teachers in Catholic schools is a formidable endeavor. Vocational training requires both pre-service and in-service continuing education experiences, steeped in adult learning theory. The goal in providing this training is to enable those who serve in Catholic schools to grow in their knowledge of and appreciation for the Catholic faith, as well as to know exactly what the Church expects of them as ministers. In this way the school's Catholic purpose and identity will be made explicit. Catholic school leadership must assure that teachers are models of Catholic Christian values to their students. Leadership must provide teachers and students opportunities for reflective practices that explore personal faith development.

Catholic identity is best measured by the extent to which the school prepares young men and women to live moral and decent lives and to participate in the evangelizing mission of the Church. For Catholic elementary school leadership, to assure religious instruction that is aligned with doctrine and Catholic heritage, training one or two teachers specifically for religious instruction could be beneficial. These same people could then assume shared responsibility for assisting others in integrating Catholicity throughout the daily exercises of a school day.

A suggestion for curriculum development would be the inclusion of the new Catechism of the Catholic Church into the existing religion curriculum in the school. Not since the Baltimore Catechism has there been such a definitive source of Catholic information.

There are a number of crucial policy questions about how Catholic schools will enhance conditions for their teachers. For example, how long can a good place to work be a substitute for higher salaries elsewhere? To keep qualified teachers in a time of expanding education, will Catholic schools have to greatly increase tuition? Can Catholic schools continue to maintain a high-quality teaching force as they enroll students whose parents have very high educational expectations? Will the mission of Catholic schools be compromised by the lack of religious faculty, as well as the high numbers of non-Catholic students? The challenges that will be faced by Catholic schools with respect to staffing issues will have affects on the whole system. Future school closings as well as enrollments are closely tied to these issues of staffing and are largely dependent on quality and availability of teaching staff.

The mission of Catholic schools described by papal directives is an *ideal*, and Catholic schools vary in their success in attaining this ideal. Tensions exist in the Catholic Church between those who hold to pre-Vatican II thinking and those who are committed to rebuilding a Church based on the Vatican II vision. Many of these tensions are played out in Catholic schools as conservative clergy struggle to maintain control over the educational philosophy and theology that guides Catholic education. How this struggle is resolved will determine the kind of religious training Catholic schools will offer in the next few decades.

Further study

A second generation of children are now having their lives de-constructed through the lenses used in this study. As each lens is reviewed and revised, challenged and changed, the key structuring characteristics of faith, moral, and educational development will provide a more concise picture of movement through a stage sequence, despite the fact that the contents of images, values, and commitments may be quite different. The use of more contemporary theorists may produce a different snapshot or a more detailed landscape of cultural identity formation.

Despite the effects of Vatican II on the Roman Catholic Church, Catholic and non-Catholic parents continue to choose Catholic schools to educate their children. The reasons for their choice include, but are not limited to, family traditions, core beliefs and values, heroes and heroines, symbols, ritual traditions, human communication, and history, as well as those characters whose behavior and antics influenced and shaped Catholic culture. This researcher wonders what the Catholic school experience will mean to the next generation of parents who have no recollection of Vatican II. They will have no history of a school filled with nuns as classroom teachers or parish rectories housing a pastor and two or three associates. Continued conversation with parents, teachers, administrators, and, especially, students, will provide an answer.

This researcher would recommend that a similar study, which would also include students, be conducted as a longitudinal study with more than eight students. For

example, the longitudinal studies of people like Jonathan Kozol, Robert Coles, and Shirley Brice Heath show the strength of spending extended time with children, their parents, and their communities.

Appendices

Appendix A

Student Protocol

First Student Interview

> Thank you for being a part of this study. My name is Michael Marshall and I am a doctoral student at Michigan State University. Everything we talk about today will be kept secret. Your participation is voluntary and you may ask me to turn off the tape player at any time; you may choose not to answer any questions; and you may ask not to be a part of this study. We will meet a total of three times. Each meeting will take approximately one hour. Throughout this research, your privacy will be protected to the maximum extent allowable by law and confidentiality will be maintained in any reports of the findings. Do you have any questions before we begin?

> We'll start off slow with two questions about your school and then we'll do a writing project about what you do during your day, and then I'll ask you a few more questions about your school. After that, we'll talk about what will happen the next time we get together and what you'll need to do to get ready for it. Any questions? OK, here's your first question:

> 1. What is special/unique about your school?

> 2. Do you think you're school is different? What makes you think so? Describe a few differences between your school and another school. Why do you think you're coming to school here?

> Now I'm going to ask you some questions about what you do during a day in your life. I will be happy to repeat any question and if you have any questions about my questions,

just ask me.

> We're going to do what I call 'scroll writing.' I'll put a sticker on this roll of paper every time I ask a question. You can use as much paper as you need. I am also going to be doing a 'scroll writing' about the same questions you are answering. Do you have any questions?

> OK. Here's a pen to use and here's your scroll of paper. Unravel some of the paper and let's begin.

A Day in the Life of

Probing questions might include:

> Let's start your day.

> What time would you get up for school on a Friday (day based on a weekday all students attend mass) morning?

> Do you use an alarm clock or does someone wake you up?

> What happens once you're out of bed?

> Do you hear any 'noise' (music, talking, etc.) while you're getting ready for school?

> How do you get to school in the morning?

> Do you talk with anyone on your way to school?

> What do you do once you get to school?

> Do you talk to anyone?

> What happens after the first bell rings?

> What happens after the first bell rings and before the second bell rings?

> Do you listen to morning announcements?

> What do you remember about the announcements?

> How does your teacher get you ready to go to church?

> What do you think about as you walk over to church?

> Describe walking into the church and sitting down.

> What are you thinking about?

> Describe some of the things you remember about the Mass?

> In your opinion, what's the most important part of the Mass?

> Describe leaving the church to walk back to the school.

> What do you think about?

> What happens in your classroom once you've come back from Mass?

> Who do you play with at recess?

> What kinds of games do you usually play?

> What happens in your classroom after recess?

> Who do you usually talk to while eating lunch?
> Do you play with the same kids during lunch recess as you did during morning recess?

> What happens in your classroom after lunch recess?

> How does your teacher usually end the day?

> On your way home from school, do you talk to anyone?

> Describe what do you do once you get home?

> Who's at home when you get there?

> When do you eat dinner?

> Who's there?

> What happens after dinner?

> What time do you go to bed?

> Describe what happens at bedtime.

> On the weekend, do you usually go to a church service?

> Is getting ready for a weekend church service any different than getting ready for school on Friday? If so, how?

> Describe the last weekend church service you went to. What do you remember?

Moral Dilemmas for First Student Interview

> A. Do you have an older brother/sister? (If yes, continue; if no, go on to B). I want you to tell me what you would do in this situation. Your parents have gone out for the evening and your older brother/sister, and you, are home. Your parents have given you and your older brother/sister rules to follow when they're not home. Your older brother/sister invites some friends over, which is against the rules, and s/he's told you not to tell your parents. Do you tell your parents that your older brother/sister broke the rules? Why? Why not?

> B. Tell me what you'd do in this situation. Your parents take you to the mall to buy your favorite group's newest CD. You're in the music store looking for the CD and your parents tell you that they'll be across from the music store in the card shop and you're to come there when you're done. They give you a $20 bill to buy the CD and tell you to bring them the change. The music store's all out of the newest CD of your favorite group, but they do have a CD your favorite group did that you don't already have - and it's on sale for half off. Your parents know that new CDs can cost almost $20, but you paid only $10 for the one you bought. Do you return all the change to your parents or just the amount they're expecting? Why? Why not?

> C. Here's another one. Tell me what you'd do. You're waiting outside of school for the first bell to ring. You don't see anyone else around but you notice that someone left a gym bag on the ground. No one else is around. There's no name on the gym bag and it doesn't look like any that you've seen before at school. Hoping to find some sort of identification in the bag, you look inside the gym bag and see that there's a complete set of Poke'mon cards. Your set is incomplete. What do you do with the cards? Why?

> Thanks for putting so much thought into those answers. Now I'd like to ask you ten more questions about what I'm going to call Catholic identity.

> 3. What do you watch on television? Is there anything that you are not allowed to watch on television? Who told you what you were allowed to watch and not watch? Why do you think they told you that?

> 3a. Do you have Internet access at school/home? What do you access at home/school? Does your computer have a filter on it that stops you from accessing any web sites?

> 3b. Do you consider yourself a hopeful person? Why? Why not?

> 3c. Tell me who/what influences your decision-making

when it comes to the following subjects: religion, faith, family relationships, violence, peacemaking.

> 4. What does the phrase 'Gospel values" mean to you? How can/do you apply 'Gospel values' to your daily life? Do your teachers help you understand 'Gospel values'? How?

> 5. What about the phrase 'Christ-like'?

> 6. How can/do you try to be more 'Christ-like' during the day?

> 7. Is it easier being 'Christ-like' at home or at school? Why?

> 8. Do your teachers help you understand what it is to 'Christ-like' in school? How?

> 9. Are there any other people in the school who help you understand God's love? If yes, who are they and how do they help you?

> 10. In your own words, what is a <u>Catholic cultural identity</u>?

> Great job! Now let's get ready for our next time together.

<u>Catholic Cultural Identity in Pictures</u>

> Do you know what I have in my hand?

> That's right, it's a camera. A disposable camera. That means that after all the pictures have been taken, the whole camera is dropped off at the film developing place.

> Have you ever used a disposable camera before?

> Let's go over the directions together on how to use the camera.

> Now that you know how to use the camera, this is what I want you to do with the camera in the next week: I want you to take pictures of persons, places, or things that show what Catholic identity is, to you. I'll get the pictures developed and the next time we sit down to talk, I'll ask you to tell me about the pictures and why you took the pictures that you did. We'll put titles and captions on the pictures. To help you remember your thoughts during this experience, here's a journal to write about your picture-taking experience and about the pictures themselves.

> Any questions?

> Remember, you have the entire week to take pictures of persons, places, or things, or whatever, that show what Catholic identity is, to you. Have fun and I'll look forward to our next conversation about the pictures.

Second Student Interview

A Picture's Worth a Thousand Words

One week later - after pictures have been taken...

> It's nice to see you again. This meeting should take about an hour. Throughout this research, your privacy will be protected to the maximum extent allowable by law and confidentiality will be maintained in any reports of the findings. Do you have any questions?

> I've mounted your pictures on a piece of cardboard --one picture for each piece of cardboard --and now I'm going to ask you to write a title/caption for each picture.

> Here's the first picture. What would the title of this picture be? What if I asked you to put a caption under it? What would the caption say?

> OK, let's do the rest of the pictures the same way. Remember, if you don't want to talk about any of the pictures, please let me know. Any questions? Let's go.

Probing questions might include:

> How does this picture go along with the theme of all the pictures you took?

> Do you think that other students would take the same pictures you did? Would your older brother/sister take the same picture you did? Would your parents take the same pictures you did?

> What is 'Catholic' about this picture?

Moral Dilemmas for the Second Student Interview

> Remember last time when I asked you what you'd do in certain situations? Well, I've got a couple more situations I'd like you to tell me what you would do if they happened to you. OK? Any questions? Here's the first one:

> A. You make plans to go to the movies with your friends. You've told your parents you're going to see Toy Story 2. When you meet your friends at the movies, one of them suggests that you all go see a PG-13 movie that you know your parents don't want you to see. Your parents told you to look for them outside the movies after the show's over to get picked up. Which movie do you go to? Why?

> B. Tell me what you'd do in this situation. You're at school eating lunch with your friends. One of your friends starts to talk about another friend who isn't there. The talk isn't nice. In fact, you think that what is being said is not true. What do you do? Why?

> C. OK, here's the last one for awhile. One hot summer afternoon, while walking through a parking lot at the mall, you notice a dog locked in a car with all the windows rolled up and the car is locked. What would you do? Why?

> Good job! Now let's get ready for our next meeting.

> You did a great job in taking pictures of what Catholic identity was to you and explaining it to me. Now I'm going to ask you to find Catholic identity somewhere else.

> As a student in a Catholic elementary school, Catholic identity is something that the principal and the teachers work on. In your classes, your teacher shares his/her own Catholic identity with you in how they act, how they treat you and others in the building, and what/how they teach you.

> During the next week I'd like you to find a piece of work you've done, either in or outside of class, that was an assignment, where your Catholic identity is evident in the assignment. When we meet again, I'll be asking you to do some thinking/talking/writing for me about the assignment you bring in.

> Any questions?

Third Student Interview

What I Learned at School Today

One week after talking about the pictures

Catholic Cultural Identity in Words

Prior to this interview I will have spoken to the teacher about possible assignments/artifacts that may appear, and how the teacher presented the information, will help me help students who may become stymied.

Artifact/Assignment in hand:

> It's nice to see you again. This meeting will take about an hour. Throughout this research, your privacy will be protected to the maximum extent allowable by law and confidentiality will be maintained in any reports of the findings. Do you have any questions?

> Today, you're going to do a couple of fast writes. That means that I'm going to ask you a question and you need to write everything you can think about until I say stop. Don't worry about spelling, punctuation, or sentence structure. Just write your thoughts down in groups of words or simple phrases.

> Describe what you brought with you to share?

> Why did you chose this object?

> Describe how your teacher explained what s/he wanted you to do.

> How does this say 'Catholic' to you?

> Now I'm going to ask you for your thoughts on a few more situations. And just like before, I want you to tell me what you'd do and why. OK? Any questions? Let's go.

> A. You've studied for the big math test today. Your parents helped you study last night and you've spent extra time doing extra problems your teacher gave you for practice. You're ready! At morning recess, right before the test, your best friend tells you that s/he hasn't had time to study for the test because of soccer practice and piano lessons and going to visit grandparents. S/he was hoping you would write big so that s/he could see your answers. What do you do? Why?

> B. Same big math test, but this time you're having trouble remembering how to do some of the problems. You could

easily look at someone else's paper for the answers. Would you do it? Why? Why not?

> C. You're part of a group of three who has been assigned a report on state's capitals that's due next week. You've finished your part of the report and you know that one of the other persons in the group is done with theirs. The third person in the group, your best friend, hasn't done anything and wants to take your part of the report as hers and tells you to do the part she didn't do. You could easily get it done before the report is due. What do you do? Why?

> Is there anything else you'd like to tell me about your Catholic cultural identity that I haven't asked you about?

> You were excellent and I thank you for all your hard work. Thanks.

Appendix B

Parent/Guardian Protocol

> Thank you for being part of this study exploring the features of the Catholic school experience and the Catholic identity of your 4th/5th grade student in an urban Catholic elementary school. As stated in your letter of consent, all information gathered during this interview will be held in the strictest confidence and that your participation is voluntary and that you may ask for the tape player to be turned off at any time; you may choose not to respond to any question; and that you may withdraw from this study at any time with no repercussions. Your privacy will be protected to the maximum extent allowable by law and confidentiality will be maintained in any reports of the findings. Do you have any questions before we begin?

> I will be asking you questions that will address the spiritual development of your child. This interview will take approximately one hour. Are you familiar with the Baltimore Catechism? A catechism is a book giving, in question-and-answer form, a brief summary of the basic principles of a religion. In 1994, the Roman Catholic Church updated the Baltimore Catechism in the form of the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Within this set of principles there are references to the role of the family in the spiritual development of children. I'll make reference to some of these principles during our conversation. My first question shows how it'll be done. Let's begin.

> The Catechism of the Catholic church makes a reference to the family being the first place a child learns to pray and learns about prayer.

Probing questions might include:

> In what ways have you introduced your child to praying and prayers as they were growing up?

> In what other ways (actions, words, etc) do you believe you can be identified as a Christian family?

> Does your family have any specific rituals, symbols, or routines that you feel enrich or strengthen your Christian identity?

> The Catechism of the Catholic Church refers to the responsibility of the parents to choose a school for their child.

Probing questions might include:

> What were the choices you felt you had when deciding where your child would go to school?

> In what ways does the school your child now attends continue the spiritual development started in the home?

> What role do you see the school playing in the goals you have for your child? Describe specific ways the school helps foster successful goals?

> The Catechism of the Catholic Church makes reference to the responsibility of the parents to give good example to their children.

Probing questions might include:

> Based on what you know about yourself and what you know about your child, what are your child's social attitudes and practices about:

1) religion,
2) family,
3) violence
4) peacemaking,
5) relationships

> In what ways has your child demonstrated to you that they are hopeful?

> How do they deal with the occasional feeling of hopelessness?

> The Catechism of the Catholic Church speaks to the

affect the child has on the holiness of the parent.

Probing questions might include:

> In what ways does your child contribute to your growth in spiritual development?

> In what ways do your parenting practices contribute to your child's Catholic cultural identity?

> Do you believe you can make a difference in the life of your child? In what ways?

> You have chosen a Catholic school experience for your child. What do you see as some of the differences between the Catholic approach to education and other approaches?

> In what ways can a Catholic approach to education help your child with 'real life' situations in a changing society?

> Are there any thoughts you'd like to share about the Catholic school experience or about your child's Catholic cultural identity that haven't been covered in this conversation?

> Are there any thoughts you'd like to share that haven't been covered in this interview?

> Thank you for your time and support of this project.

Appendix C

Teacher Protocol

> Thank you for being part of this study exploring the features of the Catholic school experience and the Catholic cultural identity of your 4th/5th grade student in an urban Catholic elementary school. As stated in your letter of consent, all information gathered during this interview will be held in the strictest confidence and that your participation is voluntary and that you may ask for the tape player to be turned off at any time; you may choose not to respond to any question; and that you may withdraw from this study at any time with no repercussions. This interview will take approximately one hour. Your privacy will be protected to the maximum extent allowable by law and confidentiality will be maintained in any reports of these findings. Do you have any questions before we begin?

> I will be asking you questions that will address your role in the Catholic school experience of the student. Are you familiar with the 1977 document issued by the Congregation for Catholic Education entitled *The Catholic School* ? If you are, that's good, if not, it won't make any difference since I'll make reference to this document during our conversation. My first question shows how it'll be done. Let's begin.

> *The Catholic School* refers to the differences that permeate the Catholic school.

<u>Probing questions might include:</u>

> What is distinctive about your school?

> How do you, professionally, contribute to your school distinctive qualities?

> Describe your personal contributions to this distinctiveness.

> How would you characterize the major differences between the Catholic approach to education and other approaches?

> *The Catholic School* also makes reference to the Catholic school teacher as one who forms and guides students to develop into mature Christians.

Probing questions might include:

> Explain the 3-5 artifacts that you brought with you that are specific examples of how you have integrated Catholic doctrine into your teaching.

> Which of these lessons/experiences do you feel had the most impact on the Catholic cultural identity development in your students? What evidence do/did you have to support this feeling?

> Describe an effective strategy that you have harvested/gleaned/borrowed from the experiences of others in the profession for strengthening Catholic cultural identity in students.

> In what ways do you model your personal Catholic cultural identity for your students?

> How do your students respond to these demonstrations?

> Let's talk about your students who are part of this study, for a moment. This next set of questions deals with the social practices and attitudes of your students.

Probing questions might include:

> How much daily television do they watch?

> What are they watching?

> Are there shows they are not allowed to watch?

> Do they have computers at home?

> Internet access?

> What are they accessing?

> Are their web sites filtered?

> What are their attitudes about religion?...about family?...about violence...about peacemaking?...about relationships?

> How do they demonstrate, in school, that they are hopeful people?

> How do they deal with the occasional feeling of helplessness?

> *The Catholic School* says that what is lacking, among people working in a school, is a clear realization of the identity of a Catholic school and the courage to follow all the consequences of its uniqueness.

Probing questions might include:

> What is the Catholic cultural identity of your school?

> How do you contribute to that identity?

> In your opinion, what are some of the consequences of the uniqueness of the Catholic school?

> How are you affected by this uniqueness?

> How do you respond to the consequences?

> Do you believe that you can make a difference in the lives of your students? In what ways?

> *The Catholic School* makes a statement about the importance of the continuing spiritual formation of teachers in a Catholic school.

Probing questions might include:

> Describe your most recent continuing spiritual formation experience.

> In your opinion, is it important for teachers in Catholic schools to continue their spiritual formation? Why? Why not?

> Do you believe that the Catholic approach to education can substantially fortify a changing society? In what ways.

> *The Catholic School* firmly believes in the people who work in the Catholic school. They are the transmitters of the Christian message.

Probing questions might include:

> Do you believe that, in imitation of Christ, your words and gestures should reveal the Christian message to your students? Why? Why not?

> Are there any thoughts about the Catholic school experience or about the Catholic cultural identity of your students you'd like to share that haven't been covered in our conversation?

> Thank you for your help and support of this study.

Appendix D

Letters: Introduction, Invitation, & Consent

Dear _____,

I am a doctoral student at Michigan State University who is pursuing an advanced degree in Educational Administration. You have been recommended as a participant for my research.

The purpose of my research is to explore the features of an urban Catholic school experience that contribute to the development of the Catholic cultural identity of the 4th/5th grade student.

The procedures of my research will involve interviews and observations with students, their parent(s)/guardian(s), and their teachers. These procedures will be conducted in the school, the classroom, and the home. Participation in this study is voluntary and you may stop participating at any time. Each scheduled interview will take approximately one hour. All research data will remain confidential and privacy will be protected to the maximum extent allowable by law.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns you may have regarding the study. I can be reached at the address, phone number, and email address listed below. I look forward to working with you. Thanking you, in advance, for your help and support of this project.

Sincerely,

Michael G. Marshall
401 Moores River Drive
Lansing, MI 48910-1435
(517) 482-7917
mmarshall@
www.holycross.pvt.k12.mi.us

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Michigan State University
246 Administration Building
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(517) 355-2180
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Ucrihs@pilot.msu.edu

Students
Letter of Consent

I agree to take part in a study exploring the features of the Catholic school experience that enhance the Catholic cultural identity of 4th/5th grade students in a Catholic school.

I have received and read the letter from Michael Marshall dated, _____. The letter includes his name, address and methods of communications in case I have questions or concerns about the study.

I will take part in three meetings with Mr. Marshall, each taking approximately one hour and be observed in a school setting. All of the information which I share with Mr. Marshall about my school experiences and my family will be held in strictest confidence. My name will not be used on any forms during the preparation and completion of this study. Taking part in this study is completely voluntary and I may ask for the tape recorder to be turned off, choose not to answer a particular question, and I may withdraw from the study at any time with no repercussions or penalty.

_____

Signature of Student Date

Your privacy will be protected to the maximum extent allowable by law.

Michael G. Marshall
401 Moores River Drive
Lansing, MI 48910-1435
(517) 482-7917
mmarshall@
www.holycross.pvt.k12.mi.us

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Parent(s)/Guardian(s)
Letter of Consent

I agree to participate in a study exploring the features of the Catholic school experience that enhance the Catholic cultural identity of the 4th/5th grade student in the Catholic school.

I have received and read the letter from Michael Marshall dated, _____, which briefly describes the purposes and procedures of the research. The letter includes his name, address, and methods of communications in case I have any questions or concerns regarding the study.

Participation in this study requires me to take part in an interview lasting approximately one hour. My child will also participate in three interviews, each lasting approximately one hour and will be observed in the school setting. I may request that an adult be present during the interview if I so choose.

All interviews and information pertaining to my child, his/her school experiences and our family will be held in strictest confidence. Our identities will not be disclosed in any form during the preparation and completion of this study. My participation in this study is completely voluntary. I may ask for the tape recorder to be turned off at any time, choose not to respond to any question, or withdraw from the study at any time with no repercussions.

_____

Signature Date

Your privacy will be protected to the maximum extent allowable by law.

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401 Moores River Drive
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Teachers
Letter of Consent

I agree to participate in the study about exploring the features of the Catholic school experience that enhance the Catholic cultural identity of the 4th/5th grade student in the Catholic school.

I have received and read the letter from Michael Marshall dated _____, which briefly describes the purpose and procedures of the research. The letter includes his name, address, and methods of communications in case I have any questions or concerns regarding the study.

My participation in this study requires me to take part in a one hour interview.

Interview data will be held in strictest confidence. The identity of the school and individuals will not be disclosed in any form during the preparation or completion of this study. My participation in this study is completely voluntary and I may ask for the tape recorder to be turned off at any time, choose to not respond to any questions, and withdraw from the study at any time with no repercussions.

_____

Signature Date

Your privacy will be protected to the maximum extent allowable by law.

Michael G. Marshall
401 Moores River Drive
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Principals
Letter of Consent

I, hereby, approve the dissertation research study exploring the features of the Catholic school experience that enhance the Catholic cultural identity of 4th/5th grade students in a Catholic school, to be conducted at_____School by Michael Marshall beginning in March, 2000.

I have received and read the letter from Mr. Marshall dated _____, which briefly describes the purposes and procedures of the research. The letter includes his name, address, and methods of communications in case I have any questions or concerns regarding the study.

All interviews and data will be held in the strictest confidence and the identity of the school and the individuals will not be disclosed in any form during the preparation or completion of this study. Participation in this study is completely voluntary and individuals may choose not to respond to any question, and/or withdraw from the study at any time with no repercussions.

_____

Signature Date

Your privacy will be protected to the extent allowable by law.

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Appendix E

Human Subjects Form

MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

March 5, 2001

TO: Maenette K. BENHAM
430 Erickson Hall

RE: **IRB # 00-137** CATEGORY: EXPEDITED 2-G
RENEWAL APPROVAL DATE: March 5, 2001

TITLE: A STUDY TO EXAMINE CATHOLIC CULTURE IDENTITY: THE VOICES OF 4TH/5TH GRADE STUDENTS

The University Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects' (UCRIHS) review of this project is complete and I am pleased to advise that the rights and welfare of the human subjects appear to be adequately protected and methods to obtain informed consent are appropriate. Therefore, the **UCRIHS APPROVED THIS PROJECT'S RENEWAL.**

RENEWALS: UCRIHS approval is valid for one calendar year, beginning with the approval date shown above. Projects continuing beyond one year must be renewed with the green renewal form. A maximum of four such expedited renewal are possible. Investigators wishing to continue a project beyond that time need to submit it again for complete review.
REVISIONS: UCRIHS must review any changes in procedures involving human subjects, prior to initiation of the change. If this is done at the time of renewal, please use the green renewal form. To revise an approved protocol at any other time during the year, send your written request to the UCRIHS Chair, requesting revised approval and referencing the project's IRB# and title. Include in your request a description of the change and any revised instruments, consent forms or advertisements that are applicable.
PROBLEMS/CHANGES: Should either of the following arise during the course of the work, notify UCRIHS promptly: 1) problems (unexpected side effects, complaints, etc.) involving human subjects or 2) changes in the research environment or new information indicating greater risk to the human subjects than existed when the protocol was previously reviewed and approved.

If we can be of further assistance, please contact us at 517 355-2180 or via email: UCRIHS@pilot.msu.edu.

Sincerely,

Ashir Kumar, M.D.
Interim Chair, UCRIHS

AK:

cc: Michael Marshall
410 Moores River Dr.
Lansing, MI 48910-1435

OFFICE OF
RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES
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Appendix F

Dissertation Timeline

Pilot Study	November/December, 1999
Proposal to Committee Members	December, 1999
Proposal Defense	January, 2000
UCHRIS Approval Target Date	February, 2000
Formal Study	March, April 2000
Date Collection Dates:	
Student Interviews	March, April 2000
Parent Interviews	March, 2000
Teacher Interviews	March, 2000
Student Documents - Photos	March, 2000
Student Documents - Writings	March, 2000
Document Analysis	May, June, 2000
Committee meeting prior to Data Analysis	April, 2000
Revisions of Chapters 1-3 and Additions to References	November, 1999/May, 2000
Write Chapter 4:Findings	June/July/August, 2000
Write Chapter 5: Conclusions	September/October, 2000
Dissertation Defense Target Date	April, 2001

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