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ROMAN CATHOLICS DEVELOPING A MORAL COMPASS: PAROCHIAL SCHOOL GRADUATES' EXPERIENCES AND REFLECTIONS OF LIVING THE CARDINAL VIRTUES

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ROMAN CATHOLICS DEVELOPING A MORAL COMPASS: PAROCHIAL SCHOOL GRADUATES' EXPERIENCES AND REFLECTIONS OF LIVING THE CARDINAL VIRTUES

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Dedication

Love takes up where

knowledge leaves off.

—St. Thomas Aquinas

To my parents, Joseph and Barbara, who encourage me to seek less traveled roads.

To my husband, Nick, who supports me in life's adventures.

To Him who gives me the prudence and passion to write this story.

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I wish to thank, with sincere gratitude, the research participants who gave their time and shared poignant experiences. Many people face obstacles to develop a moral compass, and if there had not been issues that existed in human experience, there would not have been this dissertation about moral experiences from a person's childhood. My desire is to give "voice" to the moral experiences of the research participants who gave me the gift of their memories.

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study explored moral experiences using personal interviews and oral history narratives gathered from adult participants. The purpose of the research study was to seek a deep understanding of students' moral development in Roman Catholic schooling and the sustainability over time. The study focused on former parochial school students' perspectives of their moral experiences as children in Catholic parochial schools of the 1950s and 1960s. Participants were adult volunteers, age fifty-five to seventy-five years old, who had attended Catholic parochial schools. They responded to open-ended questions about their memories of childhood events, such as how the moral experience affected them when it initially happened, and how they feel it has shaped them as adults. Data collection utilized interviews, which were coded for evidence of specific cardinal virtues.

The four cardinal virtues (prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance) provided an organizational tool from which to understand moral beliefs and actions over time. One key result of this study demonstrated that the majority of participants learned to think independently and critically about the meaning of many tenets from the Catholic Church doctrine in relation to their own moral growth. Along with the development of independent thought, other values such as fairness, honesty, courage, and balance in life emerged as important factors in their moral formation. This work indicated that aspects of moral development were grounded in their parochial educational experiences and could be positively affected in situations that produced conflict or frustration. The latter supported findings in selected literature on moral development.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The longstanding issue of how students develop morally is an intriguing and complex problem. Schooling, whether public or private, arguably affects the lives of people more than any other American institution. Many people hold memories from their schooling experiences for the remainder of their lives as they grapple with life's struggles to find meaning and happiness. These memories shape many future decisions, including more than just their intellectual choices. Indeed, society's educational system influences both the intellectual and moral development of a child. The school environment affects, positively and negatively, a student's moral conduct, and some believe that religious private schools are better at teaching moral principles to their students than are public schools. For example, Roman Catholic parochial schools traditionally have had a strong commitment to developing moral virtues within the educational structure. Yet, there has been little evidence to support these claims. This study seeks to shed light on the relationship between moral development and parochial schooling.

Historical Background

The roots of American Roman Catholic education can be found in the colonial experience. During the 1780s, many Catholics, who had long been accustomed to being treated as inferior citizens, felt excitement about the birth of a republicanism ideology. In *The American Catholic Experience*, distinguished Catholic historian Jay P. Dolan wrote that many Catholic citizens felt the revolution was a new beginning,

and they welcomed the new changes for Catholics.[1] Republican laws led to some new freedoms for Catholics, such as voting or running for a political office. Furthermore, similar to the founding fathers, they sought a division between church and state. The division reflected the ideas of a republican church and brought changes in the minds and hearts of American Catholics, who wanted to ensure their rights to religious freedom and moral development for future citizens of this new nation.

Known as the Catholic Enlightenment, the period between 1780 and 1820 "attempted to bridge the ever-widening gap between the Roman Catholic Church and the social and intellectual forces of the Enlightenment."[2] The first American Bishop, who was based in Maryland and named John Carrol, encouraged various aspects of this movement. For instance, he supported the use of the English language in church services, and in 1790 an English Catholic adaptation of the Bible was published.[3] However, he primarily relied on parochial schools to accomplish Americanization so that Catholic members would not lose their religious faith in the assimilation process.[4] His position was that Catholics should marry within the Church to preserve their moral training. Historian Timothy Walch stated, "Carroll's initial campaign for parish schools was motivated by a simple concern. Without Catholic schools or some similar institution, untold numbers of Catholics would be

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[1] Jay P. Dolan, *The American Catholic Experience: A History from Colonial Times to the Present* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1985), 101.
[2] Joseph P. Chinnici, "American Catholics and Religious Pluralism 1775-1820," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 16 (Fall 1977), 729.
[3] Dolan, *The American Catholic Experience*, 110.
[4] Timothy M. Dolan. "Right From the Start: John Carroll, Our First Bishop." Retrieved February 15, 2013, from http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=8269

lost…."[5] Carroll strongly believed that natural interactions with non-Catholics in common schools would ultimately cause this predicament. Therefore, he openly spoke of the importance of a religious education in America as a specific approach to instilling principles in the New World that would protect and preserve Catholicism.

At first parochial schools developed slowly, and then they grew rapidly between 1820 and 1920 when millions of poor but ambitious immigrants arrived in the country. Specifically, from 1821 to1850, almost 2.5 million Europeans, many of whom were Catholic, came to America.[6] Many hoped that their Catholic beliefs, especially traditional sacraments of baptism and marriage, would be the moral foundation for young generations in American society. Thus, parochial schools were the solution that many immigrants embraced to avoid losing religious and even cultural identity in public schools. Hunt noted:

> It was at the Fourth Provincial Council in 1840 that the Catholic bishops of this fledgling nation first made official reference to the difficulties Catholics were encountering in the public schools, troubles that related to the Protestant influence in the system, as exemplified by some practices, such as devotional reading of the King James version of the Bible, and textbooks that had passages that were offensive to Catholics.[7]

The last half of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries witnessed a heavier immigration of Irish, German, Italian, and Polish Catholics, and formal Catholic education was able to flourish as they built more parish schools for the expanding population. Indeed, as Catholic immigration increased, the Catholic

[5] Timothy Walch, *Parish School: American Catholic Parochial Education From Colonial Times to the Present* (Washington, D.C.: The National Catholic Educational Association, 2003), 16.
[6] *Report on the population of the United States at the eleventh census, 1890, Vol. 1, Part 1.* Washington, DC: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1985.
[7] Thomas C. Hunt, "Catholic Schools: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow," *Journal of Research on Christian Education* 14, no. 2 (2005): 162-163.

communities increased, establishing their ethnic identities so that each group had its own parish church and school headed by priests and nuns of the same cultural background.[8] Adults wanted their ethnic heritage passed down while they also assimilated into American society, and Catholic parish schools became an important vehicle for transmitting religious, cultural, and social beliefs to the next generation of American youth.[9]

The dioceses had difficulty providing education for all their students, so the 1950s, the expansion of their school system brought a couple of new issues. First, the national enrollment had increased with unpredictable numbers. Second, the schools had to serve an enrollment of about 4.2 million at the end of the 1950s, and bishops could not keep up with the fast pace of building new schools and accepting new students.[10] The bishop of each diocese was regarded as the legal owner and educational leader of elementary schools[11] who had the authority in practical matters and curriculum (See Figure 1 as a visual aid created by Catholic sociologist Father Andrew Greely about the hierarchy of Catholic administration that had been established.[12] It shows the relationships of various school leaders.). With increasing parochial school enrollment, Monsignor O'Neill C. D'Amour, a Catholic educator, proclaimed that cooperative Catholic school boards must be created to support changes.[13]

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[8] Gregory M. Holtz, "Curriculum in Context: The Changing Catholic Schools," *Educational Leadership* 33, no. 4 (1976): 296-298.
[9] Anthony E. Bryk, Valerie E. Lee, and Peter B. Holland, *Catholic Schools and the Common Good* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1993), 27.
[10] Walch, *Parish Schools*, 170.
[11] Andrew M Greeley, "Who Controls Catholic Education?" *Education and Urban Society* 9, no. 2 (1977): 147.
[12] Ibid., 153.
[13] Hunt, "Catholic Schools," 166.

Thus, the 1950s were a time of growth and building that foreshadowed changes for the next decade and can be seen in the Second Vatican Council, which occurred on October 26, 1962. Referred to as "Vatican II," it produced dramatic changes in the Church and educational system. For example, the universal Latin language, spoken by priests and learned by young Catholics, was altered to the native language of the country. The priest, furthermore, would now face and speak to the congregation during school masses and weekend masses. These and other changes from Vatican II have continued to be implemented by the Catholic parochial schools.

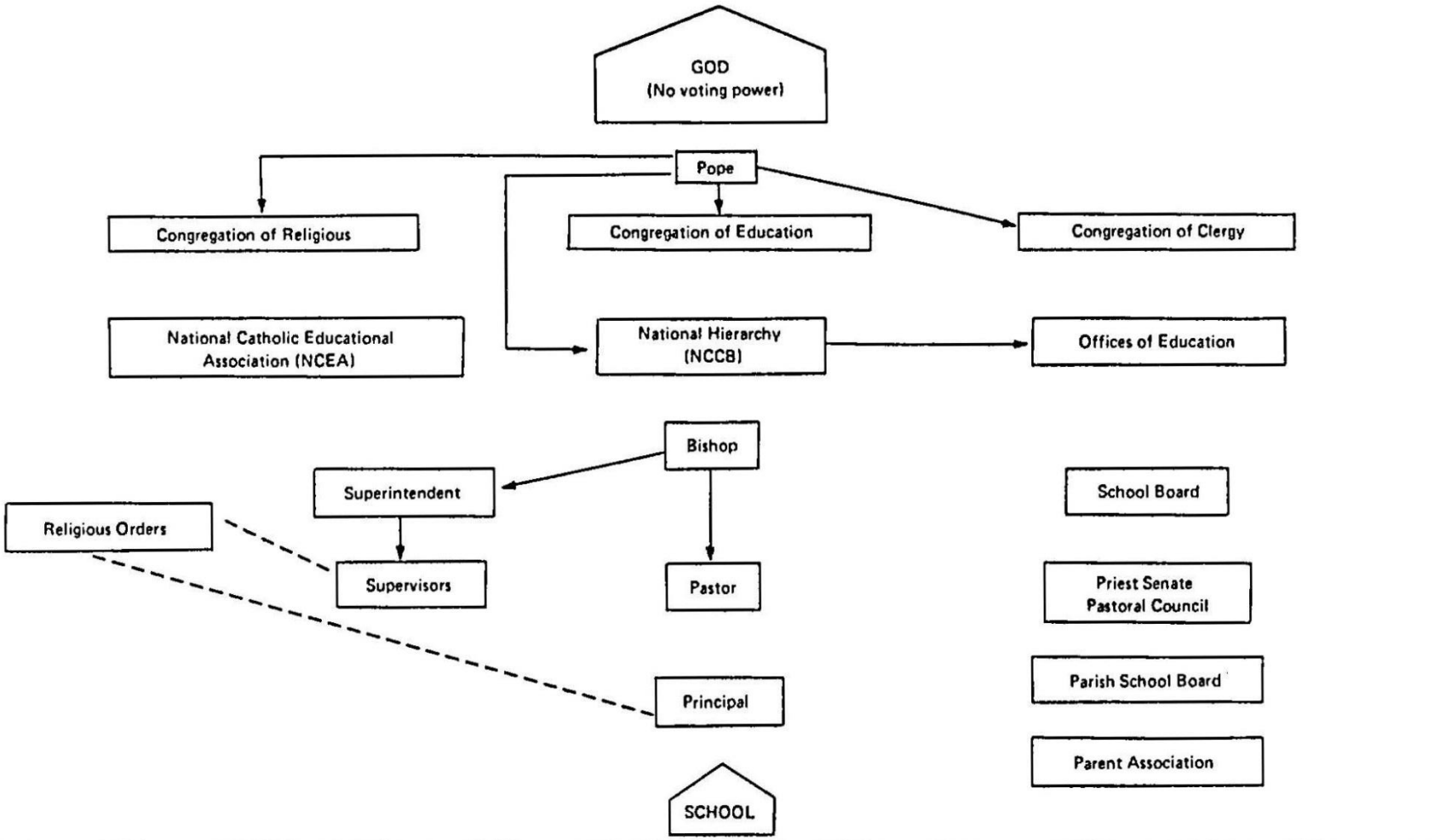

Figure 1: Schematic Description of Catholic School Administration.

Shortly after Vatican II, the parish schools' enrollment reached an all-time high. In 1965, Catholic K-12 enrollment was calculated at 5.6 million students which represented 12 percent of all American K-12 students.[14] During this time, the growing number of pupils and declining number of religious[15] led to the hiring of lay teachers instead of monks, nuns, or priests. American historian and educator Francesco C. Cesareo wrote that all Catholic education confronted these challenges. Nonetheless, he observed, "The Catholic institutions became stronger academically—by imitating their secular counterparts—they paid little attention to hiring faculty with a commitment to and understanding of the religious mission of the institution…."[16] Instead, he contended, the primary emphasis of the institution became academic credentials, not religious.

The 1960s brought new challenges as "the exodus of men and women from religious life"[17] had created financial issues, because the Catholic school system had been constructed from the intense labor of nuns who were paid little to no salaries. Despite the decreasing number of American nuns, a demand for students' moral education remained strong as evidenced by high parochial school enrollment. Even so, religious education began to receive criticism. As lay teachers increased, many Catholic families sent their children to public school, because they no longer felt that parochial schools were providing a strict moral environment. Furthermore, a controversial book shook the Catholic community at this time. Mary Perkins Ryan

[14] Hunt, "Catholic Schools," 166.
[15] A term that describes people who make monastic vows.
[16] Francesco C. Cesareo, "Can a Catholic College Exist Today? Challenges to Religious Identity in the Midst of Pluralism," *The New England Journal of Higher Education* 22, no. 2 (2007): 17.
[17] Bryk, Lee, and Holland, *Catholic Schools and the Common Good*, 33.

wrote *Are Parochial Schools the Answer?*[18] Her response was, "no," because she believed that the community—especially the parents—should be responsible for shaping children "to adjust to the atmosphere of a secular society as well as to their own new situation."[19] These issues about parental responsibility triggered controversy about parochial education for years to come. In spite of this, many Catholic parents continued to send children to parochial schools in hopes of developing a moral grounding for the next generation.

Statement of Problem

Although I am a Catholic, I was educated in the public school system. My own schooling experiences led me to question the phenomenon of moral growth and the need for more than just academic credentials. My story began with a stolen paper while I was on my way to meet friends. As I was leaving my classroom, the shuffling of papers caused me to look up. The football coach's son was stealing a paper from the finished basket of assignments. As a teenaged student who just happened to notice, I asked him what he was doing. His reply was something to the effect that he was borrowing this paper so he could finish his homework quickly because he had practice after school. My response was that he needed to do his own work. We all had busy student lives.

I, then, noticed my best friend's familiar large and bubbly handwriting. It was obvious that the alleged borrowed paper was my best friend's finished biology assignment. I especially felt sickened that he was stealing the answers from someone who had worked honestly to learn them. I raced off to tell my best friend what had

[18] Mary Perkins Ryan, *Are Parochial Schools the Answer?* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964).
[19] Ibid., 59.

just happened. I winced as I saw the look of surprise and pain on her face. This scenario was one I will never forget.

Since that time I have often reflected about how might students grow and develop their own moral compasses and what role past ethical situations play in that development. Do their childhood perceptions evolve and change? Or are childhood perceptions steadfast and consistent for most of their lives? Also do some students develop moral compasses that allow them to participate in acts of dishonesty for the sake of academic, even career, success? Since the cheating incident, I have wondered what defining thoughts that particular student stored in his memory, what the student was thinking when the event occurred, and how he would feel about the moral experience now.

The effect of the coach's son cheating was different in many ways for me than for other students who found the behavior acceptable. It affected me as a student and later as a Catholic schoolteacher. In a recent survey, almost three-quarters of the adult respondents described adolescents with words such as "irresponsible," "wild," or "rude."[20] When asked to indicate the most concerning problem for today's youth, the adults responded that children and adolescents are not learning or practicing moral virtues.[21] In fact, 93% of adults commented, "kids failing to learn such values as honesty, respect and responsibility" as a very or somewhat serious problem for present-day society.[22] As a graduate student, I read studies on moral development to gain an understanding of students' insights about moral experiences long after the

[20] Ann Duffett, Jean Johnson, and Steve Farkas. "Kids These Days '99: What Americans Really Think about the Next Generation." Retrieved September 10, 2013 from http://www.publicagendaarchives.org/files/pdf/kids_these_days_99.pdf, 3.
[21] Ibid., 4.
[22] Ibid., 10.

school bells ended. I discovered that many educators shared my questions and concerns,[23] and decided to explore morality and moral education in my dissertation. Having been a public school graduate, I was intrigued with what my moral education might have been in Catholic schools and its long-term influences. Thus, the question for this study became: how did Catholic parochial schooling from the 1950s and 1960s affect moral development later in life? To examine the question in an enduring way, I selected eleven former Catholic students in their fifties and sixties and who had attended Catholic schools during the 1950s and 1960s. Through in-depth interviews, I asked them what they did or did not get from their moral training as they shared their defining moral experiences at school and throughout their adult lives in order to get a better understanding of their own perceptions of moral growth and development. Because Catholic religious education is based on Thomas Aquinas' theory of four cardinal virtues (prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance), I used them as a lens with which to understand and interpret the data, always making room for any theoretical work that also helped conceptualize the findings.

The Purpose of the Study

The intention of this research is to understand how older adults perceive their moral development across time from their school days to the present. Moral learning happens through different school interactions that lie at the heart of intellectual and

[23] Daniel Hart and Gustavo Carlo, "Moral Development in Adolescence," *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 15, no. 3 (2005): 223-233; Robert K. Fullinwider, "Philosophy, Causality, and Moral Development," *Theory and Research in Education* 8, no. 2 (2010): 173-185; Kevin Ryan and Thomas Lickona (Eds.), *Character Development in Schools and Beyond* (Washington: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 1992); Robert Kunzman, *Grappling with the Good* (New York, NY: State University of New York Press, 2006); Nel Noddings, *Educating Moral People: A Caring Alternative to Character Education* (New York, NY: Teachers College Press, 2000).

moral growth.[24] In parochial schools, students are given moral instruction in religious classes, and they are allowed time within the school day to think about moral lessons. The belief is that these opportunities will lead to moral development and continue across a lifetime. However, there is a dearth of evidence to support this concept. The goals were twofold: to explore the lived experiences of former parochial students who had attended Catholic parochial schools in the 1950s and 1960s and to understand their moral experiences in terms of virtue-oriented behavior. The inquiry examined adult perceptions of early moral experiences and sought to elicit understanding of the long-term effects of moral experiences in parochial schools during this time period.

Significance of Study

Addressing what might be seen as a crisis, policy makers, administration, and even researchers have focused much attention on the concept of schools as moral formative institutions. Lawrence Kohlberg and Richard H. Hersh declared, "Whether we like it or not, schooling is a moral enterprise. Values issues abound in the content and process of teaching."[25] Each classroom environment should encourage positive moral development, which in my study's case focuses on acquiring virtue.

Consequently, this study is meaningful to classroom teachers, to educators in general, and to educational leaders who are responsible for ethical policies. Students naturally grapple with moral experiences outside the methodical wording of textbooks or worksheets. Complex concepts like suicide, euthanasia, and even abortion can be

[24] Deborah Meier, *The Power of Their Ideas: Lessons for America From a Small School in Harlem* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995).
[25] Lawrence Kolhberg and Richard H. Hersh, "Moral Development: A Review of the Theory," *Moral Development* 16, no. 2 (1977): 53.

discussed in a Catholic curriculum.[26] This emphasis, in turn, stimulates student thought on controversial topics that create interesting and often polarizing dialogues even among adults.

Conclusion

Therefore, Catholic schools place direct priority on religion as the central part of their operation. Gerald Bracey acknowledged how these parochial schools hold to the main idea that "We're not a successful school if our students get into Harvard but in the process drop the Catholic Church. The principal reason for the school is to hand down the Catholic religion."[27] Traditional Catholic schoolteachers, especially the teaching religious, feel a duty to emphasize moral instruction as the fundamental operation of a Catholic education. For that reason, Youniss, Convey, and McLellan wrote *The Catholic Character of Catholic Schools*, which stated that "one would think with all the publicity given to Catholic schools since the 1980s, we would know much more about them, how they operate. Yet, when one looks at published studies, few details are available."[28] Even though Father Andrew Greeley tried to determine the operational results of Catholic schools and discovered that Catholic schools in complete conjunction with parents promoted virtue-oriented behavior,[29] the understanding of the long-term effects of a Catholic education are still missing. As students from Catholic education become adults in our larger American society, questions of long-term effects of their

[26] Richard N. Frgomeni, et al., *Blest Are We* (Allen, Texas: RCL Benziger, 2010).
[27] Gerald Bracey, *Setting the Record Straight: Responses to Misconceptions About Public Education in the US* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2004).
[28] James Youniss, John Convey, and Jeffrey McLellan (Eds.), *The Catholic Character of Catholic Schools* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2000), 7-8.
[29] Andrew M. Greeley and Peter H. Rossi, *The Education of Catholic Americans* (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1966).

education on their moral virtues will help us understand their sustaining effect on older adults. This study will help to provide an understanding of a person's moral compass across a lifetime.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF SELECTED LITERATURE

Moral development research shines a light on the process by which people develop or fail to develop morally. In order to establish a conceptual underpinning for this study, literature related to the following topics are reviewed in this chapter: moral development groundwork, moral judgment with and about children and adolescents, moral reasoning abilities of higher education students, and reflective experiences. Previous studies have attempted to examine short term effects of a student's moral development on a variety of outcomes such as classroom behaviors, epistemological environments, gender perspectives, ethics and citizenship, individualism and community moral habits, elementary school and college moral learning.[30] However, long-term research on moral development is needed. Only then can participants make meaning of the moral lessons learned, particularly in Catholic schools, and trace throughout their lives, the presence or lack of a moral code.

[30] See Clifford H. Edwards, "Moral Classroom Communities and the Development of Resiliency," *Contemporary Education* 71, no. 4 (2000): 38; Jeff Astley, "Christian Ethics in the Classroom, Curriculum and Corridor," *Studies in Christian Ethics* 17, no. 1 (2004): 54-68; Katariina Holma, "The Epistemological Conditions of Moral Education: The Notions of Rationality and Objectivity Revisited," *Educational Theory* 61, no. 5 (2011): 533-548; Sevim Cesur and Muslafa Sami Topcu, "A Reliability and Validity Study of the Defining Issues Test: The Relationship of Age, Education, Gender and Potential Education with Moral Development." *Educational Sciences*: *Theory and Practice* 10, no. 3 (2011): 1681-1696; Laurance Splitter, "Identity, Citizenship and Moral Education," *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 43, no. 5 (2011): 484-505; Robert N. Bellah, Richard Madsen, William M. Sullivan, Ann Swidler, and Steven M.Tipton, *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996); Nancy Faust Sizer and Theodore R. Sizer, *The Students are Watching: Schools and the Moral Contract* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1999); Philip Jackson, Robert Boostrom, and David Hansen, *The Moral Life of Schools* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1993).

Groundwork

A pioneer of moral development research**,** the Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget established distinct stages through which a child develops a moral perspective on the world. Most of his work was based on studies in which he observed children and their beliefs concerning what is right and wrong. In particular, he relied on Kant and Durkheim when asserting that children make moral judgments and regard the rules based upon their experiences of the world.[31] Rather than listening to adult instructions, the children were more concerned with social rules when interacting with each other. Here they experiment with such moral principles as fairness and reciprocity. Watching a game of marbles, and later interviewing them, Piaget empirically documented how children behave and reason through various dilemmas. He discovered that children heuristically came to judgments through their actions and conversations about the rules of marbles. Piaget explained, "But not every habit will give rise to the knowledge of a rule. The habit must first be frustrated, and the ensuing conflict must lead to an active search for the habitual."[32] Thus, moral development arises from a child's continuous conflicts and subsequent actions. Although a fluid process, Piaget's work does lead to developmental stages, beginning with individualism, exploring egocentric views, developing attitudes of mutual cooperation, and finally codifying rules.[33]

[31] Jean Piaget, *The Moral Judgment of the Child* (New York, NY: The Free Press, 1966).
[32] Ibid., 87.
[33] Ibid., 26-27.

Inspired by Piaget's work on moral reasoning, Lawrence Kohlberg studied and created the notion that children learn to think through distinctive moral stages.[34] Although, in principle, Kohlberg confirmed Piaget's stages, Kohlberg maintained that moving through them is gradual and extends throughout the aging process. He argued that people cannot live in accordance with moral principles if they do not understand or appreciate the concept of morality. Thus, they could think in terms of moral principles and just not live up to them.[35] Pleasure might be more appealing even when it flies in the face of what might hurt another. Transcending this, Kohlberg stated that the highest form of moral development is to believe abstractly in absolute tenants (See Figure 3 Chart).

Levels	Lower Stage	Upper Stage
Pre-conventional: this level emphasizes the individual.	Stage 1 Obedience and punishment	Stage 2 Exchange and instrumental purpose
Conventional: this level emphasizes the group relationships.	Stage 3 Conformity and mutual expectations	Stage 4 Social harmony and system compliance
Post-conventional: this level emphasizes inner-valued principles.	Stage 5 Social contact and individual rights	Stage 6 Universal ethical principles

[34] Lawrence Kohlberg, "Moral Education for a Society in Moral Transition," *Educational Leadership* 33, no. 1 (1975): 46-54.
[35] Ibid., 49.

Figure 3: Kohlberg's Stages of Moral Development

Kohlberg is not without his critics. His student Carol Gilligan challenged his work, noting that it was based on white middle class male subjects, people who might have the luxury to practice unconditional morality.[36] Due to caretaker and other gender related responsibilities, women, she wrote, may morally think from a relativist case by case perspective. Other scholars[37] have criticized Gilligan's early work, eventually highlighting the fact that poor and unentitled minorities may, out of necessity, practice a type of situational morality whom she concluded were no better or worse than an absolutist approach. Nevertheless, numerous moral development studies used Kohlberg's work as a frame of reference, particularly his six stages of moral growth.

For example, Colby, Kohlberg, and Gibbs conducted a longitudinal study [38] on boys aged ten, thirteen, and sixteen. The authors periodically interviewed the participants every three to four years over a twenty-year period, discovering that moral judgment is positively correlated with age, socioeconomic status, and schooling. They found that few participants moved beyond the conventional stage. Most significantly, the children progressed in a regular sequence of stages and never skipped stages or levels. This study ended when participants were in their thirties

[36] Gilligan, *In a Different Voice* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982), 10.
[37] Christina Hoff Sommers, *The War Against Boys: How Misguided Feminism Is Harming Our Young People* (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 2000); Naomi Weisstein, "Power, Resistance, and Science: A Call for a Revitalized Feminist Psychology," *Feminism & Psychology* 3, no. 2 (1993): 239-245.
[38] Anne Colby, Lawrence Kohlberg, and John Gibbs, *A Longitudinal Study of Moral Judgment.* With Commentaries by Kurt Fischer and Herbert D. Saltzstein; with Reply by Lawrence Kohlberg and Anne Colby. *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development* 48, no. 200, 1983.

and validated Kohlberg's work as a way to view the gradual adaptation of ascending moral practices.

Other psychological research finds a strong correlation between moral judgment and moral behavior. In a study of habits of honesty and temperance, Kohlberg and Candee concluded that a person uses his/her understanding of right and wrong, makes a cognitive judgment about what to do in a specific situation, and acts accordingly.[39] Those who reached Kohlberg's higher moral judgment categories understood and acted on their understanding of right and wrong.

Moral Research with Children and Adolescents

Research about the moral enterprise of schooling with children and adolescents indicates that educational methods, like volunteer service with discussions and journal writing, enhance moral judgments.[40] Based on Kohlberg's stages, James Rest created Defining Issues Test (DIT); an instrument to indicate at what stage an individual is operating.[41] It has been used frequently for pedagogical research into moral development[42] and is viewed as the best objective test of Kohlberg's cognitive moral development. Further research has continued to validate this instrument.[43] Using the

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[39] Lawrence Kohlberg and Daniel Candee. (1984). "The Relationship of Moral Judgment to Moral Action." In: L. Kohlberg (Ed.), *Essays in Moral Development: Vol. 2. The Psychology of Moral Development* (pp. 498–581). New York: Harper & Row.

[40] Darcia Narvaez, "Moral Text Comprehension: Implications for Education and Research," *Journal of Moral Education* 30, no 1 (2001): 43-54; Bernardo Gargallo Lopez and Rafaela Garcia Lopez, "The Improvement of Moral Development through an Increase in Reflection. A Training Programme," *Journal of Moral Education* 27, no 2 (1998): 225-241; Joseph A. Durlak, Roger P. Weissberg, Allison B. Dymnicki, Rebecca D. Taylor, and Kriston B. Schellinger, "The Impact of Enhancing Students' Social and Emotional Learning: A Meta-analysis of School-based Universal Interventions." *Child Development* 82, no. 1 (2011): 405-432.

[41] James Rest, *DIT Manual for the Defining Issues Test* (Mimeo, University of Minnesota, Center for the Study of Ethical Development, 1986).

[42] James Rest, "The Hierarchical Nature of Stages of Moral Judgment," *Journal of Personality* 41, no. 1 (1973): 86-109.

[43] James Rest, et al., *Postconventional Moral Thinking: a neo-Kohlbergian approach* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1999).

DIT, many quantitative research studies show that the character content and reflective education does support development of moral reasoning. For example, Lopez and Lopez's study [44] proposed if teachers demonstrate how to develop moral reflectivity as a cognitive style, students could increase moral development. According to this investigation with thirteen to fourteen-year-old children, there were significant improvements in the moral ability of the experimental group, students who were taught how to be reflective. As measured on the DIT, the students who were given moral instruction were capable of *thinking* (not evaluated for acting) at higher levels of moral reasoning. The study indicated specific techniques of moral instruction, such as problem-solving, can lead youth to improve their moral judgment.[45] Further, Rossiter indicated that such higher-level moral thinking results from issue-oriented education.[46]

Another similar study included Catholic youth and also relied on the DIT to assess a person's choices for principled level issues in solving moral dilemmas.[47] More specifically, the study used Kohlberg's moral judgment stages[48] and investigated the relationship between personality and moral development. Catholic students, who attended high schools and colleges in the Archdiocese of New York, were given forty-five minutes to respond to a prompt about moral dilemmas. The outcomes revealed that students who selected higher levels of moral reasoning, according to the DIT,

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[44] Bernardo Gargallo Lopez and Rafaela Garcia Lopez, "The Improvement of Moral Development through an Increase in Reflection. A Training Programme," *Journal of Moral Education* 27, no. 2 (2006): 225-241.
[45] Ibid., 239.
[46] Graham Rossiter, "Catholic Education and Values: A Review of the Role of Catholic Schools in Promoting the Spiritual and Moral Development of Pupils," *Journal of Religion in Education*, Mater Dei Institute of Education, no. 4 (2003): 105-136.
[47] Patricia Polovy, "A Study of Moral Development and Personality Relationships in Adolescents and Young Adult Catholic Students," *Journal of Clinical Society* 36, no. 3 (1980): 752-757.
[48] Lawrence Kohlberg, "Stage and Sequence," In D. Goslin (Ed.) *Handbook of Socialization Theory and Research* (New York: Rand McNally, 1969).

were also considered to be dependable and intelligent. In addition, the students were "able to think independently" and were "aware of the need for change."[49] Based upon this investigation, Polovy concluded, "These students may have been exposed to a value-oriented, religious educational setting that placed emphasis upon the understanding of social-ethical issues rather than upon the assimilation of religious doctrine."[50]

Other research studies were less definitive. Putting a bit of a damper on the above findings, Gertrud Nunner-Winkler conducted a longitudinal study to examine moral motivation across a person's youth.[51] She concluded that moral motivation at age four is not necessarily predictive for age twenty-two. Conversely, research on aggressive children showed that lack of care for others is a stable characteristic through adulthood,[52] a finding that educators should take as a challenge not a predictor of defeat. Ironically but similarly, Colby and Damon found that children who develop a high moral understanding displayed a high moral commitment for the remainder of their lives.[53] The bottom line is that schools must attend to the moral development of children and hope that they will be resilient enough to make moral choices throughout their lives.

[49] Polovy, "A Study of Moral Development and Personality Relationships in Adolescents and Young Adult Catholic Students," 752.
[50] Ibid., 757.
[51] Gertrud Nunner-Winkler, "Development of Moral Motivation from Childhood to Early Adulthood," *Journal of Moral Development* 36, no. 4 (2007): 399-414.
[52] John Gibbs, *Moral Development and Reality: Beyond the Theories of Kohlberg and Hoffman,* Chap. 5 & 6 (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2003).
[53] Anne Colby and William Damon, *Some Do Care: Contemporary Lives of Moral Commitment* (New York: Free Press, 1992).

Morality and Traditionally Aged College Students

Much of the work on adults focuses on college students in their early twenties.[54] In research by Kieran Mathieson,[55] traditional Kohlbergian methods were used and expanded upon. His work examined beyond typical constructs of moral judgment and reasoning as it sought to understand moral maturity for higher education students. Mathieson asserted seven factors of morally mature people. They:

1. See self as a moral being
2. Have the cognitive ability to make judgments
3. Use emotional resources and sensitivity with social relationships
4. Use social skills to relate and persuade other people
5. Use higher-order ethical principles for guidance
6. Respect other people
7. Achieve a sense of one's ultimate purpose

Mathieson stated that Kohlberg's stages can frame an understanding in young adults, but only if they socially and mentally have shown signs of moral decision making.

Contingent on college students' prior experiences with moral reasoning, Fatima Nather found that this ability could increase with higher levels of education.[56] Her research used the DIT for assessment of students' moral reasoning, and the students were evaluated with a P score, which was the percentage of Kohlbergian Stage 5 and 6 moral reasoning that a person showed while responding to dilemmas.

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[54] Perry L. Glanzer and Todd C. Ream, "Addressing the Moral Quandary of Contemporary Universities: Rejecting a Less than Human Moral Education," *Journal of Beliefs & Values: Studies in Religion & Education* 29, no. 2 (2008): 113-123.
[55] Kieran Mathieson, "Elements of Moral Maturity." *Journal of College and Character* 4, no. 5 (2003), retrieved April 22, 2014, from http://journals.naspa.org/jcc.
[56] Fatima Nather, "Exploring the Impact of Formal Education on the Moral Reasoning Abilities of College Students," *College Student Journal* 47, no. 3 (2013): 470-477.

Her results revealed that junior high school students have P scores that average 21.9 (percent); senior high school students, 31.8; adults in general, 40.0; college students, 42.3; graduate students in business, 42.8; medical students, 50.2; law students, 52.2; liberal Protestant seminarians, 59.8; and graduate students in moral philosophy and political science, 65.2. Although the type of education seems to be a predictor of intricate moral reasoning, this study further shows that individuals who seek higher education are often interested in societal issues and self-understanding. Casting doubt on whether the above groups could sustain their moral compass in later years, another study investigated a Catholic educational environment from trainee teachers' reflections, on sharing and dialoging in order to improve moral reasoning.[57] This study found short-term moral effects but produced little information about virtue sustainability throughout life.

Finally, a 1988 longitudinal study reported in the *British Educational Research Journal* found that the participants did not alter their conservative social values throughout their educational experiences from age eighteen to twenty-two. [58] This study evaluated whether Catholic college students would become more liberal (open minded) under the influences of college life. It may be that a religious college experience does not encourage evolution of thought from earlier formative understandings. Another interpretation might be that the greater emphasis a college places on moral formation, the more likely students are to maintain the same values manifested as children and restated in higher education. Or, during their earlier

[57] Erik Nijhuis, Chris Hermans, and Johannes van der Ven, "Patterns of Moral Reflection of Trainee Teachers of Catholic Primary Schools in the Netherlands," *International Journal of Education and Religion* 3, no. 2 (2002): 117-139.
[58] Peter Sutherland, "A Longitudinal Study of Religious-moral Values in Late Adolescence," *British Educational Research Journal* 14, no. 1 (1988): 73-87.

schooling, these students may have reached pinnacles of moral development that only needed refining in later years.

Reflective Moral Experiences with Older Adults

Looking much farther down the life road, one longitudinal study focused on educated adults, aged eighteen to eighty. It indicated that moral judgment does evolve dramatically throughout one's life.[59] These twenty-nine participants were interviewed over a ten-year period. Many of the participants revealed substantial changes in their reasoning about and motivation toward social justice issues although the average moral judgment score on hypothetical dilemmas was Kohlbergian Stage Four. This study indicated no gender differences between male and female participants. However, research does caution one never to ignore the constant social issues that influence personal choices such as those who have power over others' beliefs and decision making that can impede positive moral development.[60] Perhaps, herein lies covert ways to be true to one's sense of morality.

Suggesting that past experiences may also impede or encourage moral development, Victor Jeleniewkski Seidler's "Troubled Memories and Fractured Identities: Reflections on Moral Development" explored the personal experiences of second-generation Holocaust survivors.[61] As a child of Jewish refugees, Seidler felt that the absence of past stories of horrible wrongs left him with little upon which to draw when faced with moral choices. Children could see their parents react to the

[59] Cheryl Armon, "Adult Moral Development: Experience and Education," *Journal of Moral Education* 27, no. 3 (1998): 345-370.
[60] Jane Sumner, "Reflection and Moral Maturity in a Nurse's Caring Practice: A Critical Perspective," *Nursing Philosophy* 11, no. 3 (2011): 159-169.
[61] Victor Jeleniewski Seidler, "Troubled Memories and Fractured Identities: Reflections on Moral Development," *Journal of Moral Education* 40, no. 3 (2011): 299-307.

incidents, but they rarely spoke openly about their experiences. Some manifested empathy to others, some shut down and kept out all emotions, and some used language to distance themselves from the memories. For example, parents neutralized their camp life, by referring to people who "perished" not people whom monstrous people murdered.[62] Thus, the children's moral thought patterns lacked some type of progressive connection to their families' past. Indeed, "We cannot separate the forms of our thinking, including our moral thinking, from the lives we have been living and the influences that have helped to *shape* the lives [emphasis in the original]."[63] Still, in the Seidler study parents sought better lives for their children. The author wrote, "The past belonged to them [Jewish people who had survived] and we had a different task for shaping a future. It was to be through *our* achievements that their *survival* was to be redeemed [emphasis in the original]."[64]

Conclusion

Catholic education directly and indirectly teaches moral development through the four cardinal virtues providing a stage for the examination of moral development over time. Yet, the above literature is both conflicting and consensual regarding possible findings—leading to several points of interest to be explored in this study. For example, according to Piagetian logic, does Catholic K-12 education "frustrate" students, nudging them into independent thought?[65] Or, conforming to another study does the moral development of Catholic students remain the same in college? Does this mean they do not grow through Kohlberg's stages, remaining in a law and order

[62] Ibid., 304.
[63] Ibid., 306.
[64] Ibid., 304.
[65] Piaget, *The Moral Judgment of the Child*, 87.

status of morality, never really internalizing a sense of right or wrong? Or, perhaps by the time they graduated from high school they had achieved higher order moral development capacities, only to be refined by life experiences. Or does the study listed in this chapter on student interns suggest that any sustainability is questionable. Finally, as Seidler's work indicates many moral lessons are subtle and must be teased out of this work's interview transcripts. The current study helps to unravel such diverse observations.

CHAPTER 3

CARDINAL VIRTUES AS A UNIVERSAL FOUNDATION OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION

The four cardinal virtues (prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance) provide an organizational tool from which to understand moral beliefs and actions over time. The cardinal virtues, initially named in ancient Greek philosophy,[66] require right reason in human actions and emotions. Specifically, this lens hails from Thomas Aquinas' theology of the virtues from the *Summa Theologica*.[67] A Dominican friar, Aquinas (AD 1224/1225-1274) instructed students at the University of Paris and wrote *Summa* towards the end of his life.[68] As a guideline to introduce beginners to his theology summary, this work is considered one of the most important syntheses for moral theology, which highlights God and the relationship between God and humanity.

Aristotle (384 BC- 322 BC) and Aquinas had closely related ideas about these virtues. Unequivocally, Aquinas regarded wisdom to be the main ingredient necessary in order to achieve human happiness on earth. Similar to and based upon Aristotelian metaphysics, Aquinas agreed that moral reasoning is fundamental to happiness in life.[69] Aristotle recognized right will and reason as crucial to humans. In contradistinction to Aristotle, Aquinas considered the rectitude of the will to be

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[66] Plato, *Republic*, translated by G.M.A Grube (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1992); Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, translated by Terence Irwin (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1999).
[67] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, translated by English Dominican Fathers, trans. 3 vols. New York: Benziger, 1947-1948; reprint ed., Allen, TX: Christian Classics, 1981.
[68] Thomas Aquinas, *The Cardinal Virtues: Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, and Temperance*, translated by Richard J. Regan (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2005).
[69] ST I-II, Q. 4, A. 4.

whatever God loves and wills. He argued that humans could attain imperfect happiness in their life.[70] As a Christian theologian, Aquinas expressed viewpoints that are defined with the ultimate end as achieving eternal life.

The endeavor to Christianize the cardinal virtues in the Latin West began with Ambrose of Milan (AD 340-397) before Aquinas would interpret the virtues in detail during the Middle Ages. While giving a funeral oration for his brother Satyrus, Ambrose first used the term "cardinal virtues."[71] This reference to the cardinal virtues is a hagiographic tradition that praises a holy person's life.[72] Ambrose praised his brother Satyrus for going beyond the four Platonic-virtues. He is the first known person to use the term *virtutes cardinales.*[73] Still, early doctrines that emphasized virtues evoked skepticism from Christians because these writings were not considered Scriptural enough.[74] Thus, the medieval writer Aquinas developed a virtue-oriented system that became the voice of Catholic tradition.

Other scholars refined the theory of the cardinal virtues. Jerome (AD 347-420) made references to them, which were actually modeled from the Greek fathers, especially Origen.[75] Significant for philosophy and theology, Jerome's Latin manuscripts saved some of the original ideas of Origen's references to the virtues. Although the cardinal virtues are not examined in his treatises, his letters[76] to the people explained how believers experience God through them. Augustine (AD 354-

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[70] Thomas Aquinas, *Disputed Questions on Virtue,* translated by Ralph McInerny (South Bend, IN: St. Augustine's Press, 1999).
[71] *Funeral Orations*, translated by L.P. McCauley et al., Fathers of the Church vol 22, (New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1953) [by Gregory of Nazianzus and Ambrose].
[72] Istvan P. Bejczy, *The Cardinal Virtues in the Middle Ages: A Study in Moral Thought from the Fourth to the Fourteenth Century* (Boston: Brill, 2011).
[73] Ambrose, *De excessu fratris* 1.57, CSEL 73:239.
[74] Josef Pieper, *The Four Cardinal Virtues* (Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame Press, 1965).
[75] Harold Hagendahl, *Latin Fathers and the Classics* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1958).
[76] Jerome, *Epp.* 52.13, 64.20, and 66.3, CSEL 54:437, 611, 649-650; 121.3, CSEL 56.1:14.

430) also secured the cardinal virtues in the scope of Christian morality. Even though he frequently used the cardinal virtues in Neoplatonic terms, he demonstrated that they have the ability to cleanse souls as people strive for the divine.[77] Consequently, despite the non-Christian, Neoplatonic background, Augustine's work was innovative due to the conception of virtue deriving from good will and virtue relying on faith in God. Similar to Ambrose and Jerome's earlier claims, Augustine declared the cardinal virtues to be the foundation of Christian salvation.

Aquinas concurred. In his second book of the *Summa,* Aquinas wrote that specific virtues must be learned and refined in Christian life while the contrary sins are to be avoided. Theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity[78] must come from God because humans cannot acquire them through their own natural activities; that is, God's grace develops these virtues. Unlike the theological virtues in which are specific gifts of God, the four cardinal virtues can be practiced by all people. The word "cardinal" indicates that these virtues are central, rather pivotal, moral conceptions. Stated thus, prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance are principal virtues and exemplify the foundation of natural morality, according to the words of Aquinas.

The Four Cardinal Virtues According to Aquinas

As noted, the first cardinal virtue is prudence, which is an intellectual virtue, according to Aquinas. Prudence is ranked first by Aquinas because it involves reasoning and enables a person to appreciate the three moral virtues.[79] Rather than concerns about theoretical living, prudence embraces experience and practical living.

[77] Augustine, *De Musica* 6.13.37 and 6.15.50-52, pp. 80-82, 100-102 (PL 32: 1183, 1189).
[78] ST II, QQ. 1-46.
[79] ST II-II, QQ. 47-56.

In particular, prudence must apply knowledge to human action. For that reason, a prudent person needs to understand universal principles and the individual conscience involved in action. Prudence is frequently called practical reason or wisdom. The main function of prudence is to guide people toward right action.

The second cardinal virtue is justice. Justice is a unique virtue that involves one's relations with others, so it is invariably the most important moral virtue.[80] The goal is to follow the right objective.[81] Justice, in this sense, becomes guided by the aim of the common good,[82] and the ideas of both commutative (rights between one individual and another individual) and distributive justice (rights that an individual claims from society) become necessary. Two fundamental parts of justice, encapsulated by Aquinas, must exist: avoiding evil and doing good.[83] In other words, the two parts are viewed as acts contrary to justice and acts required by justice. Sometimes the law is not just. Therefore, reason demands that fairness has higher value than human law.

The third cardinal virtue is fortitude. As a special virtue, fortitude supports human will against natural instincts to leave reason due to fear of mortal dangers.[84] To put it differently, fear becomes the main obstacle because this virtue enables humans to be brave and counterattack typical human fears,[85] such as being afraid of bodily harm. Humans who act bravely demonstrate perseverance and mental confidence. Nonetheless, humans are tempted by the corresponding sins of fortitude without balance, which include the following: excessive boldness, rashness, and

[80] ST II-II, Q. 58, A. 12.
[81] ST II-II, Q. 57, A. 1.
[82] ST II-II, Q. 58, A. 6.
[83] ST II-II, Q. 79, A. 1.
[84] ST II-II, Q. 123, A. 4.
[85] ST II-II, Q. 123, A. 3.

timidity. With this cardinal virtue, humans act with courage so that they encounter their fears, of failure or rejection. From the writings of Aquinas, aspiring for perseverance and magnificence provide paths to achieve fortitude.

The fourth cardinal virtue is temperance. This virtue protects the will against seeking and choosing an excess of pleasurable desires.[86] Humanity violates temperance when an individual chooses overindulgence contrary to logic. Common components of temperance pertain to food,[87] alcoholic beverages,[88] and sex;[89] because humans should maintain moderation, sobriety, and chastity. All in all, this virtue in Thomistic thought encourages the practice of moderation.

Based upon Aquinas' thinking, one virtue does rely on the others. Aquinas' earlier work *Disputed Questions on Virtue,*[90] as well as *Summa,* proffered that the virtues are reciprocally connected. He voiced the following thesis about the cardinal virtues: a person who has one virtue has them all, and a person who lacks one virtue spoils the other virtues.[91] This thesis may seem extreme. As Aquinas believed it, humans acquire virtues through God's grace or through their own sincere efforts. He argued that through love humans infuse cardinal virtues. Moreover, he asserted that a person's virtues appear equivalent[92] and build on each other.

Catholic Church and Thomistic Philosophy

Pope Pius IX (AD 1792-1878) ruled through his absolute authority, but his successor Pope Leo XIII (AD 1810-1903) preferred a more classic and intellectual

[86] ST II-II, Q. 141, AA. 2-3.
[87] ST II-II, QQ. 143, 151-154.
[88] ST II-II, QQ. 143, 149-150.
[89] ST II-II, QQ. 143, 151-154.
[90] Thomas Aquinas, *Disputed Questions on Virtue,* originally written 1269-1272.
[91] Ibid., Article 2.
[92] Ibid., Article 3.

approach to Catholic education. Leo XIII felt the Church should address the tensions presented by modernity.[93] To solve these issues, he declared an educational revival for all the original works of Aquinas. His ideas were based upon being an "earnest student and ardent admirer of Thomas Aquinas."[94] Instead of using new Thomistic interpretations, the original *Summa Theologica* was particularly re-embraced.

Although Thomistic philosophy had waned, Leo XIII composed a revolutionary encyclical (letter addressed by a pope). On August 4, 1879, he formally proclaimed his encyclical *Aeterni Patris* ("Eternal Father").[95] This encyclical became a significant and lasting legacy. Specifically, this document proposed a reintroduction to Thomism as a foundation for the Catholic churches and school systems in order to bring about faith and reason. In clear words, Leo XIII called Aquinas the "leader and master of them [Scholastic Doctors] all"[96] and thus declared veneration for Aquinas' best "intellect of all."[97] He proclaimed Aquinas to have gathered and written the most comprehensive work for the Catholic faith; thus, this pope referred to his encyclical as "The restoration in Catholic schools of Christian philosophy according to the mind of St. Thomas Aquinas, the Angelic Doctor."[98]

The encyclical, therefore, allowed the Church to face the challenges of modernity by using the philosophy of Aquinas as the official doctrine of the Catholic Church. Leo XIII's primary aims were restoration and correctness in teachings of the Catholic Church. He believed all priests and Catholic educators should study

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[93] *The American Catholic Quarterly Review, XXXI* (1906).
[94] Ibid., 21.
[95] Pope Leo XIII, Encyclical *Aeterni Patris*, August 4, 1879; in *Acta Sanctae Sedis* (Rome, 1879), Vol. XII.
[96] Ibid., p. 97.
[97] Ibid., p. 97.
[98] Victor B. Brezik (Ed.), *One Hundred Years of Thomism: Aeterni Patris and Afterwards A Symposium* (Houston, TX: Center for Thomistic Studies, 1981), 7.

Aquinas' writings. Accordingly, Thomism thought became the theological system of the Church. At the heart of this movement, the modern implications of Thomistic theology evolved into a foundation of the Catholic educational system and became a lasting Catholic philosophy of education.

From the reconsideration given to Aquinas' writings, Neoscholasticism (also known as neo-Thomism because of the influence of Aquinas' work on this movement) opened many doors to the Church, which had been closed before. This new approach promoted a Catholic scholarship in metaphysics, science, and human nature. Rather than arbitrary changes to the Church, it offered a meticulous synthesis of the relationship between humans and God.[99] Furthermore, during the twentieth century, Neoscholasticism's peak became a significant intellectual movement in the United States due to the translated writings of Jacques Maritain (AD 1882-1973) and Etienne Gilson (AD 1884-1978).[100] In particular, their educative ideas influenced other Catholic intellectuals around this time period. The influences were not felt immediately in the Catholic school systems. Yet, when all is said and done, their contemporary writings have deepened the Thomistic foundation in modern American Catholic education.

From his writings about education in the 1940s, Maritain's ideas are especially important because he was a philosopher of education and shaped present-day Catholic schooling in participatory and communal ways. Maritain believed that every society, not just a Catholic society, should embrace one primary goal: the common good.[101]

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[99] Jacques Maritain, *The Person and the Common Good*, translated by J.J Fitzgerald (London: Geoggrey Bles, 1946).
[100] Brk, Lee, and Holland, *Catholic Schools and the Common Good*, 37.
[101] Jacques Maritain, *Education at the Crossroads* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1943).

His ideas include that education can form an individual and aims to develop critical, self-reliant pupils in a broader community context. Although he was a European by birth, Maritain emphasized democratic notions. In addition, he argued society should have shared ideas about freedom, equality, and justice in order to reach a common agreement on these factors of life.

In Maritain's perspective, schooling is responsible for shaping basic moral views toward fairness, aesthetics, and—foremost—a devotion to truth. He worried that some individuals would hold self-interest over truth and community. That is to say, he proclaimed, "At the beginning of human action, insofar as it is human, there is truth, grasped or believed to be grasped, for the sake of truth. Without trust in truth, there is no human effectiveness."[102] Indeed, like Aquinas, Maritain vehemently warned that power could become more important than truth, community, or virtue in present-day capitalistic economy. For that reason, Maritain believed that schooling should combat hegemonic powers, helping students feel passion and love for democratic ideas.[103]

Maritain believed that growing secularized education would eventually threaten parish community life. He held that education should be collaborative and give dignity to each person. Learning tasks should develop students' thinking so that they act in ways of shared responsibilities. Additionally, all people should be given educational opportunities to learn the benefits of the cardinal virtues and other moral dispositions in Catholic education.

[102] Ibid., 47.
[103] Jacques Maritain, *The Education of Man* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1962).

Similarly, Gilson's writings declared Aquinas to be "our teacher" in his influential booklet of the 1950s. [104] He also claimed that we can specifically learn from a teacher, but we will never think exactly the same way. In Gilson's view, we can take the words of our masters and continue their work. Although we wish to continue their thoughts and message, we cannot have "transfusion of learning in the sense that there are transfusions of blood."[105] Indeed, Gilson shared with Maritain and Aquinas himself the fundamental goal that knowledge should seek truth.[106] In his view, when we seek truths about life, we seek awareness and can recognize solutions in order to solve issues.

Based upon the original Aquinas' *Disputed Questions on Virtue,* the Catholic Textbook Division released an educational document called *Disputed Questions in Education.* Gilson and Anton Pegis wrote this document as a "contribution to Catholic Education."[107] The traditions of Aquinas have become the cornerstone of Catholic education in American society, and they proclaim a proper education is necessary for successful Catholic children. Even today, an educator's duty in Catholic education is expressed as the following: "As Catholic teachers, we must teach truth in the here and now, in the United States at mid-century. We must help to make truth a living reality in those who are our students and who will become adult American citizens in all walks of life."[108] Understood in this way, Catholics should be prepared to be active citizens of society and promote truth for all.

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[104] Etienne Gilson and Anton C. Pegis, *Disputed Questions in Education* (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1954).
[105] Ibid., 26.
[106] Etienne Gilson, *Thomist Realism and the Critique of Knowledge* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1939.
[107] Gilson and Pegis, *Disputed Questions in Education,* Title Page.
[108] Ibid., 7.

According to Gilson, if one seeks truth, one will grow in prudence or wisdom. This intellectual virtue may involve many different traits of memory from the past and imagination for the future. He claimed, "You cannot cross a bridge that does not exist."[109] Additionally, Gilson considered himself to be the first historian of philosophy, while he used the writings of Aquinas to illuminate current issues. Gilson, in short, believed his task was to restore wisdom from the Common Doctor of the Church, St. Thomas Aquinas. He clearly wrote that humans should not delude themselves with false ideas. A person of wisdom seeks truth, and a teacher certainly wants to share reason with others. Consequently, Gilson believed true wisdom can be described as discovering truth and helping other humans—namely, to teach the truth in love and hope.

Even though various Neoscholastic writers, like Maritain and Gilson, gave Catholics a chance to unite with modernity, their interpretations brought much confusion. Their writings, in fact, seemed to enforce the hierarchical relationships of the institutional Church, in which certain people were thinkers and others were followers. The Catholic Church aided people, but male leaders of the Church would not necessarily encourage Church all members to think critically. Especially on controversial issues, members were neither allowed to question nor to decide how to apply virtues in their own lives. From new Catholic research, Anthony Bryk, Valerie Lee, and Peter Holland pointed out that "Perhaps the most vivid educational symbol of this extreme authoritarianism was the *Baltimore Catechism*, a precise exposition of the tenets of the faith that first appeared in 1885." [110] They noted, "Knowing the

[109] Gilson, *Thomist Realism and The Critique of Knowledge*, 82.
[110] Bryk, Lee, and Holland, *Catholic Schools and the Common Good*, 40.

catechism was *the* faith experience for three quarters of a century. Practicing the faith involved following its rules."[111] Nonetheless, Neoscholastic writers hoped to advance mankind's goodness through love and hope for the final end, just like Aquinas did many, many centuries before.

Traits of the Cardinal Virtues

According to Catholic education that uses Aquinas' work as a foundation, the road to happiness—in other words, a good life, embraces the cardinal virtues. The four virtues concern actions related to here on earth. In addition to just actions on earth, the particular term "cardinal" comes from the Latin "hinge" since a life of happiness is believed to hinge upon prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance. Many philosophers, including Aquinas, articulate that both the well-ordered person and well-ordered society apply these four virtues.[112] In any case, there is a remarkably clear focus in Catholic education about the significance and truth of the cardinal virtues in the moral life.

Recent Catholic scholar Douglas McManaman[113] systematically explored how cultivating the virtues requires mentors, brings challenges, and takes a lifetime. McManaman acknowledged the Church's philosophers and thinkers before him because his cardinal virtue treatise extends from his mentor Clair Girodat's ideas on the spiritual development of virtues.[114] He asserted that humans need to cultivate these traits/components within the virtues. His rigorous analysis demonstrated a

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[111] Ibid., 40-41.
[112] William C. Mattison III, *Introducing Moral Happiness and the Virtues* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2008).
[113] Douglas McManaman, *A Treatise on the Four Cardinal Virtues* (Canada: Douglas McManaman, 2013).
[114] Clair Raymond Girodat. 1977. "The Development of Man According to the Virtues in the Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas." PhD dissertation, University of Toronto (Canada). Ann Arbor: ProQuest/UMI. (Publication No. NK35214).

Catholic perception of certain characteristics that belong to the four cardinal virtues. Below the table shows the "etic overlay" of the four cardinal virtues as applied to the in-depth interviews.

PRUDENCE	JUSTICE	FORTITUDE	TEMPERANCE
Memory	Humility	Magnanimity (not vainglory/ambition)	Abstaining
Experience	Gratitude	Patience	Chastity
Open Mind	Honesty	Perseverance	Clemency
Caution	Piety		Modesty
Counsel	Patriotism		Sobriety
Command	Obedience		Shame
	Dignity		Fasting

Figure 2: Traits of the Four Cardinal Virtues

For Catholic members, these traits of the virtues are relevant in current times. Recently, Pope Benedict XVI published a book called *The Virtues.*[115] His argument is simple: we must pursue the virtues and thus grow closer to God. His work is composed from his addresses, mass homilies, and encyclicals. Benedict XVI revealed Thomistic conceptions about the virtues into his analysis and discussions. These virtues are perceived as a "roadmap"[116] to reach God in heaven. This Pope used

[115] Pope Benedict XVI, *The Virtues* (Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Division, 2010).
[116] Ibid., 9.

biographies of the saints and the *Catechism* to show the human need to cultivate virtues in our own lives. Through these virtues and corresponding traits, Pope Benedict XVI declared that humanity can pursue the good and ultimately develop in our relationship with God.

The Universal Nature of Catholic Education

Despite historical debates and interpretations of the four cardinal virtues, the mission of the Church and the school system seems clear: unity of the faith. Catholics strive to be connected or have coherence in the sacred bond of universal catholicity. Daniel J. Harrington described this concept of universality:

> The word *catholic* means "universal, worldwide, all over." We [Catholics] are rooted in ancient Israel yet open to all peoples. We come from a particular history, and yet are open to all the nations of the world. As God's people in and through Christ, we have become members of the same body of Christ and are sharers in God's promises to Abraham. Neither an ethnic group nor a sect, we are a universal, that is, catholic church.[117]

Universality, hence, conveys the idea that the Catholic Church desires the essence of a unified community of faith despite many various global locations. This means that "Everywhere the same scriptures are read, the same creeds are professed, the same sacraments administered"[118] to bring cohesion to all Catholic members worldwide.

However, the universality concept includes the question of whether or not each church focuses on complete unity in practice, especially within different, local churches. How the scriptures and sacraments are implemented would be identical, according to the notion of universality. All practices of each Church are similar and thus administered throughout Catholic schools through the same methods. In fact,

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[117] Daniel J. Harrington, "Particular and Universal," *America* 196, no. 1 (2007): 30.
[118] Joseph A. Bracken, "Ecclesiology and the Problem of the One and the Many," *Theological Studies* 43, no. 2 (1982): 300.

the universal sacrament of one baptism relied on administration by the Church in order to welcome all members in the same way. This sacrament gave salvation because the holy initiations show Catholic membership and embodied the unity of faith, which is a ritual of universal catholicity.[119] A critical component in Catholicism would be to rear children in the local parochial schools and pass on the universal beliefs to the youth. Thus, local Catholic schools became important in order for children to learn the ways of their Catholic faith to carry on through generations.

Catholic School Curriculum

Modeled like Aquinas' *Summa Theologica* and used across the United States in all Catholic parochial schools, the *Baltimore Catechism* remained a strong, written staple to the traditional practices of the Church for over a hundred years. Neil Gerard McCluskey evaluated in 1959 that "since the times of Archbishop Hughes of New York and the controversial 1840s, the Catholic position on education has remained substantially the same."[120] Indeed, the *Baltimore Catechism* became the religious content for Catholics to know and practice since it first was produced in the 1840s until about 1970. For that reason, the school culture expected children to memorize specific answers from this book of Catholic faith and participate in the traditional and seasonal practices as explained in the study lessons. Hunt illustrated the exact consistency and discipline of Catholic school culture:

> For instance, Catholic school children prepared for the reception of the sacraments of Penance, Holy Eucharist, and Confirmation

[119] Augustine, *De Baptismo contra Donatistas (On Baptism),* Trans, J. R. King NPNF 1, 4 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1999): 411-514.
[120] Neil Gerard McCluskey, *Catholic Viewpoint on Education* (Garden City, NY: Hanover House, 1959), 167.

> during the school day; boys learned and recited the prayers that mass servers needed to know; the school day began with daily Mass, at which the upper grades often sang; and the students took part in parish celebrations, such as Stations of the Cross on Fridays during Lent, Rosary devotions during October, and Forty Hours' devotional exercises.[121]

The Catholic beliefs and practices were to be clear to the students. Moreover, students memorized the rote knowledge with the intent of future application.

Father Thomas L. Kinkead, whose widely used book *An Explanation of the Baltimore Catechism,* makes clear that "A catechism is any book made up in question and answer, no matter what it treats of."[122] As a result, a Catholic's Catechism is a book in this approach that relates to religion. Kinkead wrote how all Catholics should memorize the information, even though a person may not fully understand the concepts. With exploration, the questions and answer approach will guide Catholics to better understand sermons, further religious readings, and especially moral experiences.

The student's *Baltimore Catechism* was viewed as a study manual for Catholic students. Multiple exercises and quizzes followed particular lessons. A student's version included word studies and illustrated charts. These word studies clarified religious terms to show how Catholics understand the meaning. For example, heaven was described as a place where God lives. The picture charts provided a visual aid to show relationships or organization. A message, furthermore, to the boys and girls was placed on the front cover. This note from the author reminded the children to study and always practice the truths from the *Baltimore Catechism.*

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[121] Hunt, "Catholic Schools: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow," 165-166.
[122] Thomas Kinkead, *An Explanation of the Baltimore Catechism* (Rockford, IL: Tan Books and Publishers, Inc., 1891), 24.

On the first page of the *Baltimore Catechism,* there is a bolded heading called "Note for the Teacher."[123] This official book of doctrine proclaimed, "The study helps in this Catechism are designed that there is no chance for guesswork on the part of the pupil."[124] The religious statements of the book were to be learned with purpose and "a certainty of information."[125] Accordingly, the young followers knew how to reply. The format of the book was specific questions and answers. The memorization of answers was to stay with Catholic students throughout their life in that they can state clear responses to questions of faith. Although the rote memorization could be considered boring by Catholic students, the repetition became valuable as students examined the wording of beliefs.

The first section was called "Prayers"[126] in the standard *Baltimore Catechism.* This included the Sign of the Cross, Grace After Meals, The Apostles' Creed, and other traditional Catholic prayers. These are traditional prayers of comfort, which students learned by memory to be used as meditation prayers. The Mysteries of the Rosary were also to be studied and memorized in this beginning unit. To demonstrate, students learned by heart the three sets of mysteries that were to be recited for different days of the week. The three original sets were the following: The Five Joyful Mysteries, The Five Sorrowful Mysteries, and The Five Glorious Mysteries. Pope John Paul II later added a fourth set of mysteries in 2002, which is termed The Five Luminous Mysteries, but just three sets were established during the 1950s and 1960s. Also, the last passage of the opening unit stated how lay people can and should baptize

[123] Michael A. McGuire, *Baltimore Catechism* (NY: Benziger Brothers, Inc., 1962).
[124] Ibid., 2.
[125] Ibid., 2.
[126] Ibid., 4.

in case of an emergency. A special note at the bottom of the page urgently reminded students that any person of any gender who has reached an age of "reason"[127] has the ability to save through the act of baptism if a situation of extreme emergency should ever occur.

The following four sections identified particular practices and beliefs of the universal Catholic community. The second section was titled "The Creed."[128] It included the purpose of man's being and the holy trinity concepts. The third section was named "The Commandments."[129] This learning study featured the Ten Commandments that many Christians believe were given to Moses, which are slightly different in order for Catholics. The fourth section was "The Sacraments and Prayer."[130] In particular, students studied the seven holy sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, the Holy Eucharist, Reconciliation, Matrimony, Holy Orders, and Last Rites. The fifth and last section was called "The Mass."[131] As illustrated in the title, this section explained the components of the universal mass and liturgical requirements, which consists of the customary public worship according to Catholic practices.

In sum, the topics in the *Baltimore Catechism* were organized to be the main curriculum guide for all religious classes. The moral instruction could be addressed from kindergarten to high school students. Students, of course, read and studied almost daily from the catechism in their religion class. Indeed, religion was usually the first class of the day for most Catholic schools to demonstrate the significant

[127] Ibid., 7.
[128] Ibid., 13.
[129] Ibid., 88.
[130] Ibid., 136.
[131] Ibid., 219.

purpose of the school. Children must attain verbatim memorization of the questions and answers because the *Baltimore Catechism* was designed as a precise exposition of Catholic tenets of faith. This religious book, thus construed, was considered the appropriate means for children to acquire faith and practice the moral ideas in their daily lives.

Nature of Education in 1950s and 1960s Catholic Schools

Catholic education in the 1950s and 1960s was formative for the participants in this study. During this time Catholic schools especially embraced a two-prong teaching model: first, people know and understand the doctrine; and second, they are to live these tenets of faith. Similar to the approach of Aquinas' *Summa Theologica*, students were taught to know responses when questions of faith were required. Moreover, any professed follower of Christ and traditional Catholic member could openly share and live the good news through a set of principles—namely, instruction by a series of formal questions and answers, known as a catechism.

In historical letters from one state's archdiocese, nuns also remembered the strictness of the parochial schools. The priests were always present in the schools, and one nun recalled how the priests would hand out the grade cards.[132] She wrote, "When Magr. Connor was pastor he always gave out the report cards in the grade school and the high school. He always scanned the grades carefully." Not only did the priest check the report cards for the students' grades, he might let the students know that he knew how they were performing. The nun recalled in her writings, "One time I remember him asking a student in my room-'Do you like sister?' 'Yes,' the student replied. 'Well, that is good because from the looks of your grades you will be back

[132] Archdiocese Historical Letter Binder, "John Carroll School."

with her next year.'" A sister or priest could give a student a serious look to convey the clear message of what type of behavior was expected.

Consistency was a major feature of the strictness. Students had clear expectations to take part in community devotions of daily mass and weekly confession. Another sister and former student (Archdiocese Historical Letter Binder, "John Carroll School") reflected, "We all attended Mass every morning before classes started. Many of us sang in the choir every morning. We also went to confession every week." The nuns instilled in students the goal of fair action and staying true to the Church's core beliefs. This nun wrote about her own teacher-nuns while she was in school, "I remember the Sisters of Mercy to be firm, but fair. They instilled in us many, beautiful, and good solid values." She explained what the "values" were that the nuns specifically wanted the children to learn. The sister continued, "They taught us to love God, and to love our neighbor. They taught us to respect life, and to make our world a better place by 'living' the Gospel Message of Jesus and of the Catholic Church." In addition to the strict nature of the schools, respect was a special part of the process as revealed from this letter.

Former students who contributed to this cache of letters mentioned that the expectations in the classroom were for students to stay focused and busy on their own schoolwork. The nuns had large classes. Specifically, most class sizes ranged from forty to fifty students. Many nuns would teach two or more grade levels in the same classroom. In this instance, the class had about twenty fourth-graders and about twenty fifth-graders (Archdiocese Historical Letter Binder, "John Carroll School"). The sister worked with one side of the room and taught the material while the other

side practiced the assignment. This former student stated, "As an educator today, I marvel at the fact that we were quiet when she was working with the other grade and never felt that being together or being so large was a hindrance, or out of the ordinary." With classrooms filled with many students, the physical space was crowded. This populated school environment should have led to off-task behavior. Quite the contrary, the full classrooms were remembered as classrooms of concentration in which students worked hard to learn principles of the Catholic faith that were written by Aquinas.

Conclusion

The history of Catholic education, which embraced Thomistic philosophy, continues to emphasize moral development through the four cardinal virtues. The components mentioned above demonstrate the strict nature and curriculum of Catholic schooling. The *Baltimore Catechism* was arranged like Aquinas' *Summa Theologica* and used across the United States in all Catholic parochial schools, especially during the participants' schooling of the 1950s and 1960s. The question and answer format promoted memorization with future application as it embraced the order and structure of Church tradition. This research study uses oral history method to gain further understanding of the moral experiences that shaped participants' lives.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

Research Focus

As stated in Chapter One, this study seeks to gain insight into moral formation of students who experienced Catholic school education: how did their parochial schooling from the 1950s and 1960s affect moral development later in life? The intention of the oral history design is to examine participants' memories of moral experiences. Furthermore, I chose oral history because it explores different perspectives and how those people made meaning from those events.

Chapter Four expounds oral history research as methodology for these storied experiences. Brief participant descriptions emphasize demographics, career, and volunteer work (See Chapter Five for full descriptions). The interview guide and analysis provide insight into the use of narrative, and how the interviewees were informed of the purpose and open-ended questions that were explored. Finally, this chapter examines ethical considerations.

Oral History Research as Methodology

Research in oral history is a particular form of in-depth interview that focuses on past experiences of certain events in a person's life in order to understand how a subject has made meaning of those events. It relies on memories of the past, and the participants are viewed as narrators who share specific recollections. In-depth interview is a specific method of oral history that is guided through an interpretive framed set of topics grounded by the researcher to examine internal

memory of the narrator. By using interviews, the researcher must be careful of power relationships during the oral testimonies. Based upon this approach, oral history research values the narrator as having information and intimate knowledge of the experiences, and thus the researcher perceives the work in a collaborative spirit.[133]

Past memories are the basis of oral history investigations. For deep understanding, the researcher must capture the inside emotions for meaning. Oral history can humanize the past and access many different voices. Traditionally in history, dominant voices are considered to be the preserved memory. New information is discovered when testimonies from interviews capture often ignored voices. Through many first-hand accounts, these unique stories allow the researcher to uncover multiple layers of meaning that are embedded in a narrator's memory.

The researcher must realize that emotions are a strong connection in capturing the essence of past reflections.[134] According to Kim Atkins, narrative accounts were "More than merely having memories, personal identity requires that one must be able to appropriate past action to oneself as their subject."[135] By a person's reflections, the event's importance can develop from reflexive consciousness, possibly even realized during the actual in-depth interview. Memory has power from associated emotions. A person could reach self-understanding through different feelings, like guilt, anger, or joy. Particularly significant emotions from a person's past can provide lessons and give guidance throughout their

[133] Valerie Raleigh Yow, *Recording Oral History: A Guide for the Humanities and Social Sciences* (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2005).
[134] Kim Atkins, *Narrative Identity and Moral Identity: A Practical Perspective* (New York: Routledge, 2008).
[135] Ibid., 16.

lifetime. Thus, humans face challenges, justify choices, and find meaning through their own personal experiences.

Role of Memory and Age in Oral History

Participants' life histories were explored primarily through in-depth interviews where their memories reveal the meaning they have brought to past events, and how they have constructed meaning from those events. David Rubin acknowledged that most people do not recall the event's exact date. Many people will store a memory by "a cyclical timescale of years, seasons or months, and weeks."[136] For example, a person might remember an event being a Saturday in December. Perhaps the exact year might escape the narrator's memory, but the estimate is usually close and the memory is clear. In many instances, the researcher may be able to corroborate the date if necessary. Nonetheless, the time approximation is significantly placed in a timeline within the narrator's own mind.

While there has been concern about the relationship of memory to aging, Yow concluded that "people, whether young or old, remember what is important to them."[137] Consequently, memories are critical to in-depth interviews because oral historians listen to the narrators and enable opportunities to explain and reflect. Throughout our lives, humans frequently recall the past in order to not make the same mistakes and grow for the future. On this view, Rubin discovered that people especially began to reminisce in their forties, and that from age fifty and over the act

[136] David Rubin, "Autobiographical Memory and Aging," in *Cognitive Aging: A Primer*, eds. Denise Park and Norbert Schwarz, 131-149. (New York: Psychology Press, 2000), 132.
[137] Yow, *Recording Oral History*, 39.

of remembering becomes a steady and perpetual endeavor.[138] Rubin's research pointed out that from middle age on, people typically do not focus on memories from the current years of their lives; instead, people mostly reminisce about childhood, teenage years, and young adulthood memories. Formative events in our youth are more influential than later years. Thus, in-depth interviews provide an opportunity for reflections from participants on how the events defined them and brought meaning to their lives.

Role of Narrative and Story in Oral History Research

Oral history is explained as shared memories and stories passed down by spoken communication. Many cultures have historically used this technique of passing down tribal knowledge in story form. For instance, songs and rhymes have been constructed in order to preserve the memory of a past culture or society. Yow addressed a working definition of oral history when she explained, "oral history is the recording of personal testimony in oral form."[139] In research, oral history relies on the in-depth interview that provides the information in story form. In other words, the participants share their stories to the researcher. The living testimonies are viewed as a form of data.

People make meaning out of their experiences. This evaluation for meaning can become a moral compass on how we live the rest of our lives. Jurgen Straub asserted, "Narrative thinking can serve as a vehicle for reconciling the split between the desire to know what happened in the past and the desire to know the meaning

[138] David C. Rubin, Scott E. Wetzler, and Robert D. Nebes, "Autobiographical Memory across the Lifespan," in *Autobiographical Memory,* ed. David C. Rubin, 202-221 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).
[139] Yow, *Recording Oral History*, 3.

these events have for the present."[140] Therefore, one central aspect of narrative structuring is to provide significant meaning from experiences. It appears that life, in fact, is built around many narrative stories to learn lessons and develop understanding. Jerome Bruner stated that "our capacity to render experience in terms of narrative is not just child's play, but an instrument for making meaning that dominates much of life in culture—from soliloquies at bedtime to the weighing of testimony in our legal system."[141] For that reason, narrative structuring or framing in qualitative research can place the stories or events in a historical context.

Oral history studies allow us to holistically view the context and the way we understand memories. Yow emphasized that the holistic historical context can be a sensitive and critical aspect of each participant's testimony. Thus, the time period is an important boundary for this narrative study: all participants attended Catholic parochial school in the 1950s and 1960s. However, the demographics are spread across the United States. This adds validity to the results since the emerging themes are found in multiple settings. The participants lived in many different types of settings or community environments. The case will be understood holistically through the boundaries of parochial school membership and the time period of the 1950s-1960s.

When using in depth interviews, researchers must be certain to understand the narrator's meaning. This requires the researcher to listen and ask specific questions for clarity. Information may be given in various situation forms, but the intended meaning should not to be manipulated. Therefore, an important practice with oral

[140] Jurgen Straub, *Narration, Identity, and Historical Consciousness* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2005), 19.
[141] Jerome S. Bruner, *Acts of Meaning* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1990), 97.

history is that the researcher has a responsibility to accurately portray the stories and meanings. Oral historians have many responsibilities, but their biggest responsibility as researchers is to be an active listener, suspending their own value systems so that they can better understand that of the narrator. The investigations would be undermined if the participants' voices were misconstrued or incorrect.

Finally, the oral historians must analyze the findings from the participants with an open exploration. The data collection must be deconstructed so that popular conceptions, such as stereotypes and previous assumptions from common history, are examined for accuracy. For example, in this study, Catholic educational experiences should be described accurately from the in-depth interviews, rather than pop culture or myth. The explorations of interviews must stay true to what the participant thinks and believes about that time so that data can be placed within the broader historical context. A participant's past is relevant to provide further insights into society. Disciplined and rigorous subjectivity used in the interpretation of oral history interviews is a specific component which Ronald Grele addressed in "Listen to their voices: Two case studies in the interpretation of oral history interviews."[142] Grele wrote:

> Most works of historical analysis which use oral history interviews, have accented, quite correctly, the documentary aspects of those interviews. When used carefully and creatively in this manner interviews have been able to shed new light on once obscure historical processes. They have presented us with a new and different kind of evidence about the behaviour of people in the past; evidence which has often forced us to re-evaluate our conceptions of that past. They have also provided a rich source for

[142] Ronald Grele, "Listen to Their Voices: Two Case Studies in the Interpretation of Oral History Interviews," *Oral History Journal* 7, no. 1 (Spring, 1979): 33-42.

> the documentation of the ambience and context of the lives of people who would not have otherwise been noted by historians.[143]

Therefore, this subjectivity acknowledges that the researcher will interpret interviews through a new lens. As Jack Mezirow observed, "Intuition, imagination, and dreams are ways of making meaning. Inspiration, empathy, and transcendence are central to self-knowledge and to drawing attention to the affective quality and poetry of human experience."[144]

Interpreting is a continuous part of the process of accuracy in oral history studies. In the process of unpacking the data collection, researchers must stay true to the narrative stories. These narrative stories reveal how the participants created meaning in their own minds, and the research will denote emerging themes by the continual reflection. Peshkin, as a researcher in the field, contemplated, "…interpretation is an act of imagination and logic. It entails perceiving importance, order, and form in what one is learning that relates to the argument, story, narrative, that is continually undergoing creation."[145] This study's evidence is the result of finding meaning from the oral history narratives through the vision of inquiry and interpretation.

The Participants in this Study

The potential research participants were recognized and contacted by "snowball sampling." From *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*, David Morgan explained that snowball sampling "uses a small pool of initial

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[143] Ibid., 31.
[144] Jack Mezirow, et al., *Learning as Transformation: Critical Perspectives on a Theory in Progress* (San Francisco: JosseyBass, 2000), 6.
[145] Alan Peshkin, "The Nature of Interpretation in Qualitative Research," *Educational Researcher* 29, no. 9 (2000): 9.

in informants to nominate other participants who meet the eligibility criteria for a study."[146] For this study extensive interviews were conducted with eleven adults who had grown up in the United States, during the 1950s and 1960s and were currently between the ages of fifty-five to seventy-five years old. Their education had been in Roman Catholic schools, although some continued their Catholic education through high school. Eleven adults met the criteria and were selected for interviews. The chosen people were interviewed without initial concern for socioeconomic status, gender, or current career. Anonymity of the participants has been assured and protected by the use of pseudonyms.

Below are brief descriptions to establish the participants of the study.

Lucy attended a small Catholic parochial school named after a warrior saint in the St. Louis area for first through eighth grade. She was a stay at home mother to her two children and always quick to see humor in situations.

Lawrence attended a coed Catholic elementary school and an all-boys Catholic high school that was a preparatory seminary school in St. Louis. Then he spent some years in the seminary with the discernment to become a priest. He owns a steel fabrication business with another Catholic business partner of twelve years.

Bernadette grew up in Oklahoma City and attended Catholic elementary and high schools. She is a spiritual youth counselor and director of religious education in her

[146] David Morgan, *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2008), 816-817.

Catholic parish.

Peter attended a Catholic elementary school in the suburban area of Houston. He is an accomplished trial attorney and often mentors beginning attorneys.

Maria went to a small Catholic elementary school in Minneapolis, Minnesota. She received a foreign language degree, and she actually worked with the company that does engineering and environmental services. She is the head of the Mary and Martha Kitchen Stewardship for people in need of meals for various reasons.

Anne went to an elementary Catholic school while she grew up in Sea Cliff, New York. She received an English degree. She is the head of marriage counseling in her home parish.

Elizabeth spent thirteen years to Catholic schools in Fort Smith, Arkansas. She was a classroom teacher for many years and later a substitute teacher. Also, she teaches baptism classes at her local church.

Ed attended a large Catholic high school in Muskegon, Michigan. He worked for Oklahoma Gas and Electric (OG&E). He is an ordained deacon at his parish.

Luke attended Catholic elementary and high school in the Oklahoma City area. He is a retired professor and owns his own jewelry business. He is the long-time chair of

the building committee for the establishment and development of a new suburban parish.

Claire grew up in the Oklahoma City are and attended a Catholic elementary school. She is a retired professor and secretary of her church's adult faith studies and conducts different studies of Biblical Timelines, Women in the Bible, etc.

Martin went to Catholic schools in Kansas City and the Chicago area. He practices injury law. Also, he serves on his local Catholic Education Board.

The moral experiences were discussed as remembered by the participants, involving their childhood perceptions, present-day views and personal interpretations of their life events. During the process of interviewing, a conversational atmosphere was maintained. The researcher's intent was to accurately understand the effects of the participants' parochial schooling on their development then and later as adults; participants were asked descriptive, explanatory, probing and follow-up questions as they told their stories so that the researcher could obtain a more accurate and complete understanding of their experiences. Oral historians understand that "what you need to find out cannot be answered simply or briefly."[147]

Interview Guide

The interviewees were asked the following five main or topical questions to guide their testimonies: 1) what do you remember most about the type of Catholic

[147] Herbert J. Rubin and Irene Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2005), 2.

school that you attended; 2) describe or tell about the types of teachers that you had; 3) how would you explain the learning environment; 4) what did you find intriguing about your Catholic education; and 5) how did the moral and religious instruction affect you for the rest of your life? These broad questions were intended to set the stage and tease out stories that became very detailed and rich in imagery. The interviewer asked questions for more clarification, seeking specific examples to understand, describing situations, and explaining for the participant's meaning.

Before interviews were conducted, the researcher gained a thorough understanding of the topic and its content. After that, an interview guide[148] was created that included topical questions, open-ended questions, and detailed questions that elicited the information necessary to understand the meaning of the account for the subject or narrator. Committing the guide to memory, the researcher asked questions as narrators shared in order to maintain the conversational tone of the interview. The interviewees were informed of the purpose and types of questions and potential uses of the study before the formal interviews were conducted. The informed consent of the participants was a critical component of conducting the study. Glesne pointed out that "Though informed consent neither precludes the abuse of research findings, nor creates a symmetrical relationship between researcher and researched, it can contribute to the empowering of research participants."[149] All participants were verbally informed that they could stop the interview at any time or share to any extent what they felt comfortable with in regard to particular questions. Moreover, the interviews were administered after receiving approval from the

[148] Yow, *Recording Oral History*, 35.
[149] Corrine Glesne, *Becoming Qualitative Researchers* (Boston: Pearson Education, Inc., 2006), 132.

university's Office for Human Research Participation Protection and Institutional Review Board. Every interview was recorded and transcribed by a digital voice recorder, as well as shorthand field notes documented at the time. Some interviewers were interviewed more than once in order to clarify parts of their stories, and to ensure what anthropologist Clifford Geertz called "thick description."[150] The participants were allowed to give additional information and review the interviews to reinforce the accuracy of the data. Some couples chose to be interviewed together (See Appendix for a copy of the interview guide).

Analysis of Interview Data

Two coding methods were utilized to capture the moral experiences and the presence or absence of cardinal virtues in the data collection: values coding and narrative coding that uses vignettes. In *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers,* Johnny Saldana explained, "A code in qualitative inquiry is most often a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data."[151] This means that codes are not the emergent themes; that is, the code seeks to capture the essence of the interpreted passage. The initial idea of coding for themes is perhaps ambiguous or confusing. Saldana pointed out that while coding and themes are related, nonetheless, all themes are the result of the analytic reflection, relevant data, and careful coding.[152] Consequently, this is why the research study required two types of coding to enhance the depth of findings about moral experiences of the former

[150] Clifford Geertz, "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture." In *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays,* 3-30. (New York: Basic Books, 1973).
[151] Johnny Saldana, *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc., 2009), 3.
[152] Ibid., 13.

Catholic school students.

Values coding emphasized the individual and collective views of the subjects. We wonder what they think and feel about their experiences. This method explored the thoughts and emotions to gain understanding. It is specifically described as, "the application of codes into qualitative data that reflects a participant's values, attitudes, and beliefs representing his or her perspectives of world view."[153] The cardinal virtues: (1) prudence; (2) justice; (3) fortitude; and (4) temperance were used as a framework for organizing the storied experiences of the participants.

Ethical Considerations

This research study took into account a few ethical considerations. First and foremost, it was important that I recognized and considered my responsibility to the participants. Researchers have a responsibility to verbally and physically protect their human research participants. The primary researcher conducted in-depth interviews. If interviewees felt that a question was too sensitive in nature, they were allowed to refrain from answering and to stop the interview at any point. However, all participants appeared eager and excited to share narrative experiences about their childhood recollections of Catholic schools in the 1950s and 1960s. The stories may take on a personal nature, and participants were guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity.

[153] Ibid., 89.

CHAPTER 5

PARTICPANTS' STORIES

Eleven participants shared personal stories about their American Catholic school days from childhood to adolescence. Although most people were formal and cautious at the start of the interviews, they revealed personal histories about what moral experiences shaped them. Indeed, sensitive topics were explored because participants wanted to show why particular events were significant to their lives. Memories are an important component of oral history, in addition to the explanations and reflections. As I asked these participants questions, they usually responded in the form of stories. Each participant explained their lives in the following sequence: family background, schooling, and career/service. Below are overviews of each participant, who appeared to share candid thoughts about influential moral experiences.

Lucy

Lucy attended a small Catholic parochial school named after a warrior saint in the St. Louis area for first through eighth grades. She had to go to a public high school, which she explained as, "It was an expense thing." During her teenage years, she hated going to public high school--it was a large school with over one thousand students in each class. Interestingly, she still keeps in contact with her parochial school classmates; they have met frequently for eighth grade reunions. Due to one of those parochial school friendships, she met her husband, Longinus, who was another participant in this study. His seminary classmate's sister was friends with Lucy. That

is how Lucy met Longinus when the girls were dropping off a friend at Christmas Break. Although she was called a "Seminary Robber," they have been married for forty years now.

As mentioned earlier, she went to a small, Roman Catholic elementary school although her family lived in a large metropolitan area. Sisters of Loretta instructed students. They had two classes for every grade level and approximately fifty students per grade. Teaching high school curriculum, the nuns challenged their students. Lucy recalled the teaching staff as mostly nuns who taught in formal and full black habits. Even though the school was small, the parish had four priests in order to support the school. The seminary was only a mile and a half away, and that made it easy for the seminarians to visit at least once a week and teach religious classes. Another distinctive memory is how her third grade teacher, a nun, gave extra math homework as punishment. To this day, Lucy dislikes math.

She was a stay-at-home mother and enjoyed being at home with her two children. Her up-beat personality is quick to find humor in situations. Many of her stories showed irony that everyone was overly formal. For example, she has not been to Confession in over thirty years because of this rigidness. Her reasoning is God will forgive you, and a third person is not needed. In other words, sins are between that person and God. Therefore, a priest does not need to know everyone's personal issues. The formality is a turn-off to her as she questioned the public aspect of that sacrament. Many of her stories revealed disbelief about the ridiculous nature that her family went through to have formality. Lucy voiced we all have one God, and we can celebrate him in many different human ways. Her only wish is for her children to

practice a faith. Ultimately, she claimed it could be any faith, albeit Catholicism is Lucy's "way of life."

Lawrence

Lawrence attended a coed Catholic elementary school, an all-boys Catholic high school that was a preparatory seminary school, and some years in the seminary with the discernment to become a priest. All these schools were in the St. Louis area. Although he went to the all-boys Catholic school, his two sisters attended the coed Catholic high school. His younger brother had a learning disability, and the family thought the public school system would serve his needs best. His mom was Catholic while his dad was Lutheran during this time. Eventually, his father converted to Catholicism. Lawrence and Lucy have been married for forty years. They have a son and daughter who went to Catholic schools for their primary education.

During his high school years, the Sisters of Notre Dame instructed at the highest of standards. Lawrence asserted, "Perfection was the goal." In fact, he recited the grading scale: 97-100 was an A; 92-97 was a B; 85-92 was a C, and 70-85 was a D. Failing was anything below a 70. He fondly recalled how his grade was a small class of about sixty boys. In their senior year, they competed in the College Bowl, which was known to be "tougher than Jeopardy." They competed against the whole metro area, including all the public schools. Because they were used to the nuns' strict academic standards, his "high school blew away the other schools." They easily won the title of smartest and brightest class.

After attending the seminary for a few years, he decided that the priesthood was not for him. Specifically, he prayed for clarity while at a silent retreat about his

vocation. He, then, made up his mind: the priesthood was not his way of life. He had met Lucy and decided his life was taking another direction. Now he owns a steel fabrication business with another Catholic business partner of twelve years. They design and construct pressure vessels for the refining chemical industry. Lawrence emphasized that they run a business of honesty, integrity, and respect. Remembering his own background of poverty, he is pushed to succeed.

Bernadette

Bernadette was raised in a Catholic elementary and high school in the Oklahoma City area. Her parents were both Catholic and attended daily Mass together. Their family has been Catholic for many generations, and she spoke with pride about her father's grandfather clinging to his faith even when the Ku Klux Klan burned a cross on his Oklahoma land. She is the middle child. Her older sister is about three years older, and her younger sister is about a year younger. She married her high school sweetheart, who she knew her whole life, but they began dating while attending their city's main Catholic high school. They have five daughters.

Dominican Nuns taught at her elementary school where they only had one lay teacher. Her high school included nuns from various religious orders: Sisters of Mercy, Benedictines, Dominicans, Precious Blood Sisters, Providence Sisters, and Carmelite Sisters. She gave stories that demonstrated extremely strict teachers, including one coach who kicked desks and spit on students. Her class arranged boycotts to support desegregation. Service was the message from her high school teachers. In her opinion, this Catholic high school was "ten times harder than college." While in high school, she was on the pep squad and yearbook editor.

She is a spiritual youth counselor and director of religious education in her Catholic parish. Frequently, she speaks at conferences and holds a Master's degree in Human Relations with an emphasis on "chemical dependency." Her job offers counseling for troubled young children and teenagers. Additionally, she teaches the high school religious education class that prepares teenagers for the sacrament of Confirmation. She has taught this class for over twenty years. Her other church activities church include spiritual art classes, silent retreats, and adult religion classes. Currently, she is writing a book about finding happiness amidst obstacles.

Peter

Peter attended a Catholic elementary school in the suburban area of Houston. His mother married a non-Catholic man who converted to Catholicism when he was sixty-two. She went to an all-girls Catholic school and wanted her children to have a similar education. Peter is the second oldest child. His older sister was three years ahead in school, but his younger brother and sister are younger by five and seven years, respectively. The children attended Catholic schools until high school and then attended public schools. Interestingly, Mike and his siblings married people who were not Catholics, but all converted. His wife is an elementary school principal, and they have two daughters. The extended family still enjoys gathering for a large Christmas Eve Mass at the home parish of Peter's parents.

Carmelite Sisters taught at his school. For punishment, they would make students stand in the corner or send home notes about misbehavior. All the teachers were Catholic, but not all were nuns at this point in time. The school had one priest and one assistant priest. Peter was an altar boy and knew the priest quite well since he

helped out with weekend Masses and funerals. As an altar boy, he spent many Masses right at the altar. His favorite story is at Easter when the congregation reads "The Passion," and the criminal is saved. Before Jesus dies, a criminal gives his respect and asks to be forgiven. Through mercy and faith, the Bible explains that he has gained salvation—he will go to Heaven. Peter has remembered this story all his Catholic life. It is a reoccurring story from his childhood that gives him a sense of comfort and inspiration.

Peter has passionate drive in multiple areas of his life, especially his career. He is an accomplished trial attorney and often mentors beginning attorneys. After attending a private law school, his career began by working at the state's Attorney General where he soon became Chief of the Consumer Affairs Division. Specifically, his firm includes helping clients with injuries. He has represented clients for child deaths due to medical negligence, road and highway design, a border dispute between Oklahoma and Texas, and civil rights matter. Peter believes, "Fighting giants never goes out of style."

Maria

Maria went to a small Catholic elementary school and high school in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Her family sent all the children, Maria and her three brothers, to parochial schools. Maria's grandparents were immigrants from Ireland, and her family was strict and traditional. When she was twenty-two, she married a man who was not Catholic, which was scandalous to her mother. He has never converted and has "no religion." However, he signed papers to raise their children in the Catholic Church. All the children and grandchildren are practicing Catholic lay

people, as well as the grandchildren attend Catholic schools since the teaching methods are viewed as more advanced than the public schools.

In Maria's schools, Dominican nuns taught. Because the school was a private education, her mom was controlling about the school's activities and told the nuns what she expected. Maria did not like her mom's supervising and intervening at the school, especially since she "ran the school." The nuns and priests had evening activities every night so that the students had a safe place to socialize. She and her brothers would walk back in the evenings to see their friends. Once they arrived at the school, they would play basketball or billiards while the adults had meetings. Maria felt like the nuns were devoted due to the fact that their students were a direct reflection of their education.

After she graduated from her Catholic Academy, she continued her education and received a foreign language degree, but she found opportunity with a company that does engineering and environmental services. There, she met her husband. She later decided to stay home with their children. Now she is the director of the Mary and Martha Kitchen Stewardship for people in need of meals for various reasons. Maria volunteers for church prayer hours and the cleaning committee. Furthermore, she believes strongly in the Catholic school structure as a way to develop a life of service that she pays for her grandchildren's tuition.

Anne

Anne went to a Catholic elementary school while she grew up in Sea Cliff, New York. As immigrants from Germany, her parents were "highly motivated" to succeed. They had been childhood sweethearts and met by chance when they arrived

in America. Indeed, they were proud to be American citizens, as well as raise their children in a country with opportunities. Even though her father had been an engineer back in Germany, he had to shovel coal for fourteen hours a day until he could acquire the English language. The family traded furniture or whatever they had so that bills could be paid. Since both parents were Catholics, there was little question that their two daughters would attend a Catholic parochial school.

At her school, Sisters of Mercy instructed classes and extracurricular activities. This school was unique in that it was located in a harbor town where PT boats, U.S. Navy's motor torpedo boats, were tested. Anne was too young for first grade; however, the school had no kindergarten. Her parents decided to go ahead and put her in first grade. She traveled by public bus when she attended grades first through eighth at this small school. With confidence, she explained that everyday homework was given by the nuns, and she liked the challenge. These nuns had teaching methods that "were way ahead." When Anne switched to public schools, she felt more academically advanced than her peers.

A strikingly beautiful woman with bright blue eyes, Anne openly shared her opinions. Life was tough, but she voiced, "I had a strong belief in who I was, and what I stood for." In high school, she was the head baton twirler. Other students looked up to her. Certainly, Anne is used to responsibilities. Her sister was four years older and suffered from alcoholism. Anne voiced that her sister had caused enough problems for their family. She had to be the one who could take care of their parents. School was one of her priorities, and after high school, she received an English degree. A life of service and hard work was expected from her parents. Now she is the

director of marriage counseling at her home parish and volunteers for Adoration prayer hours at her church.

Elizabeth

Elizabeth went thirteen years to Catholic schools in Fort Smith, Arkansas. Like many participants, one of her parents was Catholic, her father, and then her mother converted before the children were born. Their family had four children who all attended Catholic schools. Her parents liked that the schools were a "homogeneous" group. This meant two-parent families who monitored their children's education. Her parents felt like there was an "extra layer" of respect since most the teachers were nuns.

Sisters of Mercy ran her small Catholic schools with rigorous attention. Elizabeth loved school. As a child, she was active in Girl Scouts. In fact, all the girls in her class participated in Girls Scouts, albeit it was considered an optional activity. She recalled one nun told her that she had good leadership skills when she was in junior high, and this, in turn, motivated her to be in more leadership roles. In particular, she was involved in National Honor Society, President of the Pep Squad, and Yearbook Editor. Her parents sacrificed to send all the children to Catholic schools. However, they wanted a Catholic education to be passed down to Elizabeth and her siblings.

Her life has revolved around her faith. She was a Catholic schoolteacher for many years and later a substitute teacher in public schools. Because the nearest Catholic high school was about forty-five minutes away, they sent their children to only Catholic elementary schools. Surprisingly, all her children have spouses who are

Catholics. Two of these spouses are converts. Additionally, Elizabeth was president of the Catholic School Board, which encouraged teams of husbands and wives to be active. Thus, she and her husband, Ed, acted as the presidential team of the Catholic School Board for several years. Now she teaches baptism classes at her local church.

Ed

Ed attended a large Catholic high school in Muskegon, Michigan. His family was active in the school and parish, which particularly embraced Polish roots. His grandparents were Polish-Catholic immigrants and profoundly influenced him. Notably, his father was a devout Catholic; his mother was a convert to the faith. He has one sibling who also attended Catholic schools from first grade to senior year. Their family was transferred to Fort Smith, Arkansas, after Ed's graduation. There, he met Elizabeth since he was friends with her older brother. They have been married forty-six years and have four children.

Sisters of Mercy educated the students at his elementary school and high school. Ironically, the nuns had taught most of their fathers and reminded the students of this fact! As mentioned before, being Polish was a "strong part of the culture." When he was young, Ed spent time studying to be an altar boy before Vatican II. As an altar boy, he worked with the priests often. Being an altar boy was an honor, and the boys felt proud to learn Latin and speak for the congregation in Latin. He has fond memories of pretending to be a priest and celebrating Masses with a homemade altar and white Nesbit candies. Although he felt the priests were patient and willing to explain, he frequently got into mischief with his teachers. His Catholic education "inspired" him in many parts of his life, especially his decision in later years to

become a deacon.

For his career, Ed worked for Oklahoma Gas and Electric (OG&E), but his passion is sharing his faith. After taking many years of theology classes, he is an ordained deacon at his parish. His concern is young people do not understand their faith. He gives the examples of present-day young people do not believe in the real presence or the holy trinity. In his mind, too many young Catholics view the Eucharist as symbolic, in addition to not comprehending the three parts in one about the trinity. He expressed that Catholic education is a lot different today because the students lack structure without the nuns and the priests. Furthermore, he asserted that he would not have been an ordained minister or married for forty-six years if it had not been for the gift of his Catholic education.

Luke

Luke attended Catholic elementary and high school in the Oklahoma City area. His schools only had about twenty students in each grade. The elementary school was originally built in 1942 and consisted of first through ninth grades. His mother was Catholic while his father was not Catholic. Luke had an older brother and sister, who were fourteen and eleven years older than him, respectively. In fact, he felt like his sister was a second mom due to the age gap. Since his siblings were finished with their schooling, most days his father would drop him off at the school, and then he would ride his bicycle back home. Through his sister, he met his wife, another participant in this study named Claire, on a blind date. They had three children (one died at the age of two). As both a child and adult, Luke loved the intercessory prayers that he was taught by the nuns. He frequently prays to Saint Jude, who represents

"hopeless cases."

During Luke's school years, Dominican nuns from Sinsinaw, Wisconsin, had taken over his parochial school from the Sisters of Mercy. At this time, many schools needed Sisters of Mercy to establish new schools, and this was not uncommon for another order to come in and carry on the teaching duties. One of his favorite school memories was being a "Junior Policeman." Only boys were selected for this position. They were allowed to begin when they entered the sixth grade. Duties included helping children across the streets, stopping the cars, and putting out safety flags. Despite being over fifty years past his Catholic school days, he demonstrated an extraordinary memory when he recited verbatim passages from the *Baltimore Catechism.*

Luke's life has highlighted ways to serve. After he earned his Ph.D., he was a professor of vocational and technical education for thirty-three years in the Department of Adult Education and Safety Sciences. Now he owns a jewelry business to help people design unique and specialized jewelry. He is the long-time chair of the building committee for the establishment and development of a suburban parish. In addition to helping at various church events, he is in charge of cleaning the church's candles and holy sacramentals.

Claire

Claire grew up in a Catholic elementary school in the Oklahoma City area. She was too young for first grade, but her parents went ahead and sent her because her older brother was only one grade above. Both her parents were Catholic and sent all six of their children to Catholic schools. Their family was poor, but Catholic

education was a necessity in her parent's eyes. Her father worked long hours as a butcher. Claire repeatedly expressed thankfulness for her moral education by explaining her parents could not have taken the time to teach everything that the nuns taught, as well as her parents did not have the nuns' spiritual knowledge to give to their children.

Sisters of Mercy from Leavenworth, Kansas, were sent to teach at her Catholic school. The nuns assigned at least one prayer every week for memorization. Claire hated the religion classes because of the many memorizations. She acknowledged that she fell away from her Catholic foundation during young adult years. Nonetheless, when difficulties came, she clung to these practices "learned as a child." She particularly likes to ask intercessory prays to Mother Mary. She feels a special relationship and a comforting presence from the Blessed Virgin, which was learned at her Catholic school.

Claire has embraced a lifetime of teaching in many areas. After she earned a Doctorate in Education, she was a professor at a mid-size university for ten years. Specifically, she taught trade and industrial education. Now she is the secretary of Adult Faith Enrichment and conducts different classes of Adult Studies on Saints, Biblical Timelines, Women in the Bible, etc., at her church. She and her husband, Luke, pioneered a new parish and have continued to volunteer in the community.

Martin

Martin went to Catholic schools in the Kansas City and Chicago area. Both his parents were Catholic and wanted their three children to have a Catholic education. Martin and his two younger sisters attended Catholic primary schools, which was

challenging since the family moved frequently. His father worked for Transamerica Insurance Company. He stressed to his family the importance of community. His parents stressed awareness and care for the community as a way of life. Martin's family prayed rosaries aloud when they would travel on vacations, which is still a habit of his now.

Sisters of Mercy taught him during his early Catholic education. The nuns emphasized a school policy of etiquette. Students were not allowed to run while they were inside the school. That is, they were ordered to walk to the cafeteria and other destinations. When students were in line, they were not allowed to talk or touch. His school did have a cafeteria, but most children took lunches that their mothers had made. If a student got into trouble, then the student would have to stand in the corner and miss lunch. Thus, as soon as the student got home and the food was untouched, parents would know that there had been trouble at school. Martin recalled the nuns communicated with the family in order to monitor each student's behavior. They made sure the family knew if misbehavior had occurred, such as sending home notes or calling parents after school.

He felt a calling to serve others from an extremely young age. After working emergency medicine for several years, Martin went to a private law school in Oklahoma. Currently, he is a full-time attorney. At times, he serves as a special judge at the municipal court. His particular practice is injury law that helps people who have had automobile accidents, fire burns, or wrongful deaths. Since he has a background in martial arts from his childhood, he volunteers at a karate studio to instruct children. Also, he serves on his local Catholic Education Board and Finance Committee.

According to Martin, this passion for helping others was inspired by a "foundation from Catholic education."

Conclusion

These participants explained various aspects of their lives: demographics, family, schools, career, hobbies, and service. Specifically for this study, they examined distinguishing characteristics of their Roman Catholic schools in the 1950s and 1960s. Every participant remembered defining traits of the school, such as the order of nuns and traditional practices. The nuns and priests were a critical part of the culture. From the cumulative essence of these stories, the parochial schools were considered rigorous and advanced. Moreover, their parents, as well as the nuns and priests, wanted to ensure that crucial moral training was learned in their parochial schools.

CHAPTER 6

FINDINGS

Background and Setting

Outside the classrooms, the home was considered an important context for moral learning. The participants saw their parents praying before meals and praying at nighttime. Family rosaries were also common. Each family valued its Catholic identity and viewed parochial education as an important part of their children's lives. In fact, participants remembered that serious consequences resulted from problems in school. The parents respected the teachers and supported their strict practices.

School experiences were rich with moral lessons where the four cardinal virtues could be learned. Although they recalled many places of moral development, such as extracurricular activities, confessional boxes, school plays, playgrounds, and churches, the classroom held the ability for students to directly interact with priests, nuns, and lay teachers. Priests made frequent surprise visits to evaluate classroom environments, and often they would quiz students and ask questions from the *Baltimore Catechism* learning curriculum. Interviewees remembered how nuns taught classrooms with the strictest rules and regulations. Talking was forbidden while students were listening for instructions. When assignment time began, students were expected to be fully focused on their assignments. Participants vividly recalled physical punishments from nuns if students were caught talking,

The four cardinal virtues were used as a framework for organizing participant experiences: first, memories that related to reflection, observation, analysis, and action

were subsumed under prudence; secondly, stories of justice centered around issues of fair treatment that showed characteristics of honesty and integrity; thirdly, stories overcoming difficult circumstances were categorized under fortitude; and lastly, accounts revealing restraint or moderation were benchmarks for describing temperance. Ironically, some participants learned to appreciate the virtues despite situations where educators' behaviors proved to be less than virtuous.

Prudence

As mentioned earlier, prudence is the only intellectual virtue that rightly directs human acts toward a good end. In order to behave well, humans need to think and make good judgments. According to Aquinas, this overarching virtue fosters mercy and compassion as it guides the other three, and when people learn from their past mistakes, forgiveness can become an important component of prudence.

Independent Thinking

Many narrator stories showed analytical thought processes toward situations of their childhood (6 of 11 participants exhibited this). In fact, some of the participants smiled and chuckled as they recalled experiences and the literal meanings they felt as children. Lawrence explained that often he and his schoolmates were afraid of the nuns and priests. Students who caused problems always disappeared! Then, they would speculate that school troublemakers had gone to hell. He said, "The interesting thing about this is that collectively the school thought that he [the troublemaker] went directly to hell, because we never saw him, heard of him. He disappeared." Lawrence chuckled at the idea that children believed in this "power" of the nuns. Gradually, from close contact with priests in high school, he learned that they were not infallible

and that they, too, made human mistakes. His uncle was a priest whom he admired, and so he entered the seminary. However, Lawrence ultimately decided not to finish seminary school after he realized laypeople can achieve holiness too. Instead, he took his own path and became an ethical business man (see his story under justice).

Anne divulged a story in which as a young child and beginning student, she interpreted the Biblical story of "Adam and Eve" in a literal and personal way. Over a period of weeks, the children studied the popular Christian story of the first man and woman, as well as humanity's fall from grace. During this time, Anne had grown upset and devastated by the story. She also was afraid to ask any questions about Adam and Eve's disgrace, and at home she barely ate and refused to speak to her parents. Finally, fearing something had happened at school, her mother went to talk to the nun. Anne said, "Mom went to see the nun and ask[ed], 'What is going on?' because something was wrong." Indeed, the nun and mother deduced that Anne actually believed her parents were responsible for original human sin—Anne's parents' first names happened to be Adam and Eve! Anne exclaimed, "I thought that was my parents and look what they did!" Anne had spent several weeks believing that her parents had been the people to disgrace all of humanity! "It was a real joke of the family," she laughed while describing the memory. Her parents had never guessed that their names would be the source of such confusion for young Anne during her first year of school. After this experience, Anne realized that initial impressions could be inaccurate and that there was nothing to fear in asking questions to seek greater understanding especially for drawing informed conclusions.

In another story, Lucy recalled that her grandmother's fear of not following

church protocol led to her own intellectual growth. One religious holiday when she was in fourth grade, Lucy forgot her lace veil. Her grandmother hastily pulled out her lace handkerchief to put on her head. The priest walked by and sarcastically asked, "Why would you put a snot rag on that child?" Lucy laughed loudly at the way her grandmother "whipped that sucker right off me. It was Easter!" She continued to chuckle at the memory of everyone being overly concerned and worried about the acceptable decorum throughout the Easter mass. It was a humorous memory because even she had panicked, "Oh, man, I am going to die and go to hell! I don't have a hat on!" Looking back today, Lucy thought this situation was absurd. Nevertheless, the experience opened her eyes to thinking more deeply about Church doctrine.

Like Lucy, some participants questioned parts of the traditional sacraments and doctrine, such as matrimony, holy orders, and especially confession. Many priests' style of confession was too formal for some participants, and they did not realize a teleological purpose of seeking humbleness and examining conscience. Lawrence vividly remembered and mockingly described a priest's attitude during confession: "The priest was always right…. They could look crosswise at you, and scare the hell out of you. They were God's representatives. The nuns were God's representatives. They could do no wrong. Everything that they said was right." He sarcastically declared, "You know that I got my finger smacked by the nun. Had no idea what I did wrong, but there must have been something." However, Lawrence said the experience helped him realize that some nuns and priests behaved arbitrarily as do other types of leaders regardless of their occupations or professions.

Confession was another ritual that Lawrence began to question. He explained

that most students merely tried to recall typical sins, such as "arguing with a sibling or being disrespectful to their parents," because they did not want to be "chastised for not remembering their sins." He "found as a child that confession was horrendous…. You had to come up with something. You were not taught to go into the confession and just talk. It was more scripted." In fact, he explained that if you did not think of "something," you would be given a "strong lecture." Students were sternly reprimanded for not telling their sins, considering their sins, or forgetting their sins. Conversely, they were not necessarily shown the tools of deep meaning in confession. Lawrence did not like the rigidness in the process, and he thus questioned the meaning. Ultimately, he found closeness with God by not participating in Confession and developing a direct form of communication with God. He considers himself to be a good Catholic and is comfortable not practicing this sacrament. Moreover, he trusts himself and his relationship with God.

Peter explained that for anonymity he goes to different parishes for confession because priests still judge confessors from a human perspective. He added that priests are not perfect, and Catholics should expect human behavior from them, too. He also thinks that adult confessions should concentrate on "serious [mortal] sins" and "not kid stuff," such as fighting with siblings or telling a lie. He asserted, "I appreciate and respect the process [reconciliation]. Okay? Yeah."

Lucy has not been to confession in over thirty years now. She does not believe in the idea that one must go through a priest for absolution, which is a traditional part of the sacrament. "I think, if you go to Church and state [a confession] in your mind, you do a confession of what your week has been and start over on Sunday

afternoon…. I just don't believe in the formal… 'I did this, and I did that….' It's between you and God." Additionally, she commented on the fact that she never liked the mandate of confession every week when she was a child. As revealed in many testimonies, children did not understand the habit of examining conscience and humbling oneself. Gradually, she learned to examine and critique certain practices when she could find no obvious meaning in them.

Forgiveness

Peter recounted a life-changing story about a priest who reacted with uncontrolled anger. The incident led Peter to contemplate and learn the power of forgiveness. He explained that sometimes he and other boys were mischievous as altar boys. For example, they would use the poles for lighting candles and then draw on the ceilings or play around with the incense. One day he was "cutting up," and the priest, whom he described as a "down-to earth and approachable priest," showed no tolerance. Peter was about twelve-years-old at the time. He recalled, "I can remember getting slapped across the face…. It shocked me. It scared me…. It shocked me. It embarrassed me." He remembered the humiliation he felt at being slapped by a priest in front of his friends. A priest who used excessive punishment surprised him then and still does today. Interestingly, Peter articulated how much he liked this "down-to earth and approachable priest." Yet, the idea that a priest became so angry and "red-faced" to hit a child caused Peter to feel angry toward him in return. He had believed a priest would be patient and "turn the other cheek" and felt "a couple days of hatred." Since Peter was a daily altar boy and had constant interactions with this man, he decided that he would have to emotionally get past

this incident. "He [the priest] seemed to have put it behind him," Peter concluded that the priest probably reacted without thinking first, and he had to find a way to forgive the priest and move forward. Peter knew the priest's actions were neither logical nor right, and he also knew that he had to move on, because he would be continuing to see the priest. This experience reinforced that priests are not the only ones close to God, and that he could have a personal relationship with God. Peter began to think more independently, and he learned to forgive and move on—something he values today.

Humaneness

Participants mentioned specific nuns and priests who interacted in more friendly and compassionate ways, often giving counsel to students (7 of 11 participants indicated this). They recalled how, through kindness and support, these special priests and clergy were a positive force in students' lives. Some of the nuns were even willing to share their own passions about doctrine, arts, and life. They related to and cared for their students, which is what students loved, and these participants learned and grew from clergy's willingness to share their own passions about doctrine, arts, and life.

Claire recalled a nun who positively impacted her life. This sister's formal name was Sister Mary Cecilia and all the students called her Sister Cecilia. She was a sister of charity, who was "very sweet and very artistic." The school was located in an urban location, and it was a "struggling school" where two grades were typically in the same classroom with one teacher. Through creativity and imagination, this nun inspired Claire and other students to love art.

When Claire was in third grade, Sister Cecilia had a nervous breakdown. A male substitute came in for the rest of the year. Vividly, she remembered this new teacher, Mr. Potter, and laughed that he was just "mediocre" in comparison to Sister Cecilia. All the children loved this nun, and they never wanted to disappoint her. According to Claire, she pushed them to attain a "higher moral value level" and showed the students how to live their faith. She wanted her students to find personal meaning and happiness from their Catholic practices. Her life was a model for Claire's moral development when it came to "learning how to be polite and respectful." She lit up with joy and excitement while talking about her, "Um, I just loved her. She was awesome…. As a matter of fact, we still communicate." Sister Cecilia later returned to the school when Claire was in sixth grade, and they were able to keep up a correspondence after graduation. She emphatically stated, "I really think the moral issues were more drilled by the moral example of the teachers [such as Sister Cecilia]. How to be polite and respectful." Claire's behavior for treating others with respect and compassion was shaped from these observations. Interactions with this spirited nun became a powerful influence. She observed how this nun lived her faith as a gifted artist and brilliant musician.

All stories about nuns were not positive. Elizabeth told a story that showed a lack of prudence from a nun who wanted her class of twelve-year-old girls to evaluate her teaching. Instead of using the evaluations as a way to professionally grow, the nun "got her feelings hurt" about the comments. According to Elizabeth, these twelve-year-old girls had been absolutely "ruthless" when they were given the power to evaluate and in an attempt to punish and control the students, the nun said there would

be no class assignments. As soon as the girls heard there would be no work, they were "thrilled to not have assignments." Thus, the nun's intention backfired, and she lost control of the class. She "begged" Elizabeth to ask for assignments and "not tell the other the girls." When Elizabeth agreed to pretend that it was her idea to ask for homework, the nun swore her to secrecy. "She [the nun] did something that she should not have done…. I knew that she should not have done that," reflected Elizabeth as an adult. However, she felt "proud that she kept the promise" even if she had been put in the middle. She had to be "strong enough to withstand peer pressure" from the other girls and the nun's mistake of getting too emotional. But as she thought about it, she became convinced that she had to do as the nun requested, because it was best for their class—the right thing to do. She was able to forgive the nun's poor decision and realized nuns had human moments too. "I thought my education built responsibility and dependability and lot of things that had nothing to do with the classes being taught," said Elizabeth.

Justice

For Aquinas, justice regulates human relationships. It means that people show a willingness to give to a person what is merited. Stories grouped under this virtue demonstrated honesty and fair-mindedness. Justice is experienced in social settings, especially in participants' work and church communities. This virtue emphasizes proper respect and care to both God and neighbors.

Fairness and Honesty

Martin believed his Catholic teachings led him to be concerned about fair treatment. When he was sixteen years old, those teachings inspired him to stand up

for others during a school incident. Martin mused, "I think from the standpoint… my Catholic background helped me define what kind of person I wanted to be," and he was inspired by stories of Catholic saints who protect others. For example, at his public high school, a few students had destroyed school property in the gym. Martin and about eight other friends had been nearby when the students had caused the damage to the gym floor. He recalled, "I was in government class at this time and learning about rights." Coincidently, their class had been examining constitutional rights. Martin felt he had to "protect the other students who could not stand up for themselves," and even though he was a student, he stood up to the administration. He told them that the punishments were unethical, and the administrators should not punish students who had nothing to do with the destroyed school property. Still, the administration ordered physical discipline. Approximately three hundred students were ordered to run until someone provided information about what they had witnessed. Martin felt, "You [school authorities] can't punish us for something you should figure out yourself." Before he knew it, he started leading all the students toward the superintendent's office to protest punishment. When the kids made it to the office, Martin asked to speak directly to the superintendent. He remembered using some of the language he had learned from his government class about personal rights. "I was fighting for the rights of everyone else who was to be punished. No one else would have…. Those students might have gotten hurt." He remembered how passionate he was about stopping the physical punishment of running. The superintendent had Martin present his case at the School Board Meeting about protecting the students who were not involved.

The students were eventually told they would have to complete four laps for not aiding the school authorities. The contract of the government teacher who had helped Martin was not renewed the next year. "Never could prove it," Martin reflected about his teacher, who was not re-hired back after supporting his students, but he suspected the teacher's contract was not renewed because he had facilitated Martin's fight for the students' rights.

This experience was a springboard for Martin to become interested in law and to ultimately decide on being an attorney. Looking back he said that his Catholic background and the government class on constitutional rights were aspects that drew him to the law profession, and today his practice helps protect people against entities such as corporations. In addition, his education influenced him to practice a particular type of law—injury law. It also motivated Martin to study restorative justice. According to his life mantra, one should feel responsibility to help those in need. Although this experience had some negative outcomes, he learned fairness from the incident.

Lucy explained that keeping promises and honoring truth are important to her identity as a Catholic. She expressed, "Something about your moral makeup comes through," she claimed. "It [Catholicism] is a way of life. You just treat people the way you want to be treated." She shared a story about complete honesty to illustrate her thoughts. One day she was going to Little Caesar's Pizza to buy some pizzas and discovered money outside of the shop. It was money from Little Caesar's deposited checks. The manager could not fathom why she returned the money and did not keep it for herself. Lucy told me, "Your character is what you do

when no one knows." In her mind, every person should be treated with honesty, which is a natural obligation to justice.

Her husband Lawrence agreed with her during the interview. They share the belief that honesty and care are critical cornerstones to their lives. He owns a steel fabrication business, and he believes that truth is the foundation of his business dealings. He and his business partner, another active Catholic, make pressure vessels for refining chemicals and gas processing. Described as a person with a "values system that won't quit," this business partner had a minister for a father but converted to Catholicism after he met his wife. Lawrence described, "We have been partners for twelve years, owning this business…. We run a values-based business." They treat all customers with "honesty and integrity and respect." By the same token, he shows regret that they do not evangelize as much as he thinks they should, but the business helps the greater community by selling necessary industrial equipment (pressure vessels) through honest and fair business practices.

Anne explained that she tries to be fair and not pass judgment when it comes to people's beliefs. This came from her experiences. Living in Utah, other religious groups were critical of her Catholic practices. She said, "We had an itty-bitty church that had eighteen people in in the congregation." Despite the small number of Catholics in Utah, she wanted to show her faith among the secular community. Hostile community members would tell her that Catholics did not know the Bible, and that they relied on confession—a ridiculous practice since they could sin again. They saw it as a way to sin and "turn around and do the same sin again." She passionately told them:

> All you do is quote the Bible. What are you worried about? I trust that I give something to God. I trust that He will help me. So I do not need to keep being reassured. No, I do not know the Bible like you do. But there is everything else about my Church that I do know, and that's why I go there.

She felt the criticism was based from "ignorance" and lack of evidence, and today she strives to be fair when it comes to considering religious practices of all types. In her mind, until a person explores and understands another religion, he or she should suspend judgment.

Service

Almost all participants (10 of 11) said their volunteer service to others in need was critical in their lives. Many types of work were mentioned: Unbound Prayer Partners, Mobile Meals, Birth Choice, Church Adoration Prayer Hours, and Community Thanksgiving Meal Preparations. Indeed, Bernadette remembered, "Old classmates of mine have discussed how at McGuinness we got the clear message of service—that we are here to help others, not just accumulate wealth." Bernadette and other participants emphasized hands-on care. For instance, Unbound Prayer Partners is a way to sponsor children, youth, or the elderly from developing nations who have not had opportunities due to their circumstances. Some participants support this organization by not only donating money but sending letters and prayer cards. Claire is supporting her young sponsored friend to attend college. She pays for her books and materials, and she has learned that respect and support are necessary to empower members of the global community to reach their full potential.

Peter continues to practice justice through his volunteer work. He explained, "I like to do my charity in private so to speak." He recently bought beds and made a

private donation for a group of older nuns who could not afford to buy bedding since nuns take a vow of poverty, he wanted to give to a group in need.

Anne believes in the dignity of and respect for all individuals. She pointed out that it is meaningful to be involved in the "town too." For over twenty years, she and her husband have provided service through their community work with Mobile Meals. This group serves any religion, race, or age. It embraces the concept of community responsibility, which Anne asserted that she learned from her Catholic education. She strongly believes in fairness to serve these homebound people who are having health issues or recovering from an accident. She and her husband also provide free marriage counseling. She said, "That [involvement] is part of why we are here. To serve." In fact, she professed a passionate dislike at how unfair it is when people, including clergy, take advantage of others. Anne believes that all people deserve support and stated "to serve" is a great calling in her life.

Maria explained how she is an active member and head chair of the "Martha and Mary's Daily Bread Ministry" at her Catholic parish. This ministry cares for parishioners and their families by providing meals in times of illness, hospitalization, or death of a family. She and other volunteers support church members if there are special circumstances, such as unemployment or a new baby. In order to give comfort to others, they cook and bake to support families of the community. Maria laughed, "That's my thing! The food thing!" She is proud that her daughter started the Martha and Mary's Daily Bread Ministry at her own Catholic parish. Maria also stated, "Well, it's [service] part of your upbringing. My

parents were extremely involved." She discussed "hands on" care from school priests that positively influenced her belief in supporting others.

Fortitude

Fortitude includes the ability to have courage and confidence in the face of intimidating circumstances. Participants told stories of staying true to their principles and finding the strength and confidence within themselves in order to make good choices. One has to embrace a certain boldness and endurance to be true to oneself, according to Aquinas. Questioning the doctrine of the Church is not a typical method that is encouraged. Yet, some participant accounts put them in such a position.

Courage in Questioning Church Doctrine

Religious education classes were mentioned by 8 of the 11 participants as the type of instruction that did not allow time for questioning. Yet, they recalled having many questions about church rules and practices that they wanted to have answered. Some of them recalled accounts how they mustered up their courage to boldly ask for answers to questions when they felt uncertain or conflicted. As a teenager, Claire attended a silent retreat at where questions were stifled, because the students were expected to pray and think all day. She remembered that it was difficult to stay quiet for such a duration especially being around friends. Finally, at the end of the day, the boys and girls were separated so that they could ask questions. The girls were hesitant about asking questions, but Claire had a lot of questions, and one was particularly controversial at that time: She wanted to know if it was wrong to watch the television show "Johnny Belinda." The popular drama had originally been a play and a movie based on the real life incident of a girl who had been raped and became pregnant. The

movie examined multiple aspects of honor, lies, and rape. In fact, rape was a new and controversial subject for films/shows at that time. Her question was considered extremely "brazen." The priest acted judgmental toward Claire and asked, "Why are you watching that?" which it communicated to her that she should not be watching it much less asking the question. Then he said, "As long as you don't have sexual feelings," it was okay to watch. Although she was the only student to openly ask questions that day, she was glad that she did. She learned to trust herself and felt empowered by asking personal questions on a moral topic.

Peter also discussed not being allowed to freely question the clergy on religious teachings. Nevertheless, he did continue to ask questions in religious classes. He stated, "You may ask questions to learn material, but not to ask questions in some sort of [moral] educational discussion, you know? We didn't do it in any of the [religious] topics really" because they were presented as factual and absolute. Peter continued to ask questions during his Catholic education, and the courage to question and to form educated opinions became an important attribute for him as an attorney.

Lawrence told the story of how he attended an all-boys seminary thinking that he would enter the priesthood. He was drawn to the idea for multiple reasons, but especially the mystery of the priesthood. He described being an altar boy and watching the priest throughout mass, "The mystery of mass. Being in Latin. It seemed exotic. The changing of the bread and wine. All that seemed to have a shroud of mystery." He wondered who these people were to dedicate their lives to God. He still spoke with wonder, "The priest was even turned around. You looked at his back…. So it was just a fascination thing for me." He spent his childhood in close

contact with priests and pondered his vocation. The mystery attracted Lawrence to the priesthood. He reflected, "[The priests] seemed to be giants of men…. The respect, yeah." He decided to attend a six-week Priestly Formation Program. The first seven days were a silent retreat for prayer and meditation, which required self-discipline. After six weeks of grueling subjects, such as history of the mass and theological history, Lawrence had finally "made up his mind" not to enter the priesthood. Although his family was disappointed, he knew it was the right decision for him. He showed courage in his choice to leave the seminary, because it was not his calling even though it disappointed his family. His girlfriend, and future wife, was called a "seminary robber."

Endurance

Others (9 out of 11) talked about how much endurance and persistence were required to reach their professional/career goals. Bernadette recalled, "I had wonderful nuns," and one nun frequently told her that you "can do anything that you want." She eventually chose a career as a counselor and pastoral associate for her church. Although she admitted to having past doubts that her daughter increased by criticizing Bernadette and telling her that she believed in "fairy tales," she stated that her faith became stronger than ever, and today she lives it through her profession. However, she remembered the family struggles. She explained, "So I went to the desert. This doubt. Everything I did…. Is this a fairy tale?" She questioned if her life was built around a false idea. Then one day she took her Confirmation students to a large national Catholic function where they had a mass reconciliation. She recalled how shocked she was when the priest mentioned to her that he could not stop thinking

about St. Grace while they were having the sacrament of confession. Said Bernadette, "Well, Father, I happen to be a pastoral associate at St. Grace's, and she is my 'go-to-girl' on intercessory prayer." The priest heard her story about doubts planted from her daughter's unforgettable words and replied, "The truth is that faith is what is real. Everything else is make-believe." She said those words "shook me to the core" as she recognized the ability to positively connect everyday with young people. Moreover, she had a "rush of knowing that everything powerful, awesome, deep, [and] joyful that ever happened to me, happened around my faith. And that desert just went away." Today she particularly enjoys giving guidance to children and adolescents, who seek spiritual reflection. From those experiences, she internalized what it meant to have a work ethic and persevere.

Ed has chosen to be a Catholic deacon. The position required years of rigorous study in order to take on the different functions in the Church. He had considered the possibility for a while after a respected church official, Bishop Parker, asked him. He stated, "People then started to tell me that I should be a deacon." After five years of classes, he was ordained a deacon and greatly appreciated all the people who told him that they loved his leadership. He explained that by serving the church's needs, the deacon takes on a "servant role" to perform baptisms, give homilies, visit the sick, travel for missions, and so forth. For instance, he gives food to local people in need and writes letters of encouragement. Although deacons can be married, they cannot get married after they are ordained. He was married before he was ordained, and the church continues to support his marriage of over forty-six years. Ed claimed that his Catholic education helped him to work hard and not give up his goal to become a

deacon in the Church. It gave him a sense of commitment. In fact, he takes great pride in the special support he received from Bishop Parker. He feels honored to be considered as a leader of the Church and recommended as a deacon, and he values this "servant role" of being helpful to the people around him.

Other participants showed endurance in situations not related to their professional goals. They felt the resolve to follow and reach their goals regardless of hurdles. Anne showed patience and forbearance when she had to change schools, but she still wanted to perform as a baton twirler. It required hard work to convince the school that they needed a twirler for football games. Her endurance paid off as she became not only a performer but a leader at her new school.

Married Catholic parents make a promise to God that they will pass down their faith to their children. Maria said that there was "no debate" in her marriage about raising children to be Catholics even though her husband had "no religion" and will not go to Church with her; however, he has honored his promise and signed the official papers to raise his children in the Catholic faith. She has kept her patience and has had the stamina to raise her children as Catholics without support from her spouse. Maria explained her challenges:

> With my husband not being Catholic at all, I know when the kids were younger, um, my daughter said, "Daddy, we're not going to church. We don't want to go to church. You don't have to go to church, so we don't have to go to church." His reply was "You will be going to church. I will be taking you because I promised God that you will continue to go to church."

Bernadette spoke of her daughters who often ridicule the Catholic faith, despite attending Catholic schools. Yet, in her perseverance, she has never given up her beliefs even though one daughter battles drug addiction and has been back on the

street these last five years. She had been sober for fifteen years but, again, lost her sobriety. Bernadette was devastated when her daughter ended up "choosing meth and a man over her three daughters." At this point in time, the children live with Bernadette and her husband, and they are making plans to adopt them. Furthermore, she has not given up her hope that her daughter will regain her sobriety.

She also expressed sadness about her other two daughters: the youngest is living an unstable life with an unemployed musician and the other daughter has no faith. Bernadette and her husband continue their daily prayers to God that their daughters will find their faith again. "God, if it is my death or my illness… whatever it takes to bring her back to God" she whispered with moist eyes. She continues to believe and hope her daughters will embrace the Church again. Now, as a spiritual counselor, she guides other children to find faith. Through these family struggles, she has held onto her resolve and determination.

Temperance

Individuals practicing this virtue have learned how to avoid extremes in their tastes and activities. They strive to find balance and moderation when it comes to human pleasures without, as Aquinas warned, imposing their standards on others. Some participants grew up as second-generation immigrants in the 1950s and 1960s in families that lived frugally, and indulgence was not an option. In fact, none of them mentioned owning many materials things, and they grew up learning habits of self-control that they still try to practice today.

Moderation

Participants recalled that meals were simple, and most of them remembered

having gardens for growing their own vegetables and herbs. Eating at a restaurant was a rare event, because it was considered too expensive for the entire family to eat. Fridays were easier to prepare within a tight budget since they were always meatless. Lawrence described his family's dinners when they fasted each week:

> Now listen. We were a poor family, and our Friday [family] meals consisted of spaghetti…. Or pancakes was a big one. No eggs…. Let me describe our spaghetti. It was a kind of homemade sauce. It was kind of like stewed tomatoes, and they would throw some peppers in it. And that was it…. That was the food. A big pot of it.

As an adult Lawrence was not as frugal but recognized how to budget expenses and provide healthy food and other material items for his own family. Lucy agreed that she learned how to spend wisely from growing up in those years.

Several of the participants described their parents' lifestyle as modest. They made sacrifices to put their children in Catholic schools. Yet, participants spoke about treasuring time with their families and being thankful for the small indulgences. As children, they did not expect to have new family cars or even new clothes. Today, even though participants can afford some luxuries, they tend to err on the side of modesty and frugality over extravagance. Maria softly reflected, "It's a good way to grow up…. Just because you liked something, did not mean that you got it."

Balance in Life

Most of the participants thought back fondly as a life that balanced work and play. To be clear, life in the Catholic community gave them access to religious experiences and socialization. Maria remembered special times that included walking back to school in the evening for the adult church activities and children's playtime. She thought it was "really cool" that the school and church, which were together on

the property, allowed them to use their pool tables, playground equipment, and sports courts. Children were encouraged to play and socialize on the playground since they did not have these types of luxuries at home. They were not concerned about material items since everyone enjoyed being together at the school and church. In fact, she laughed happily about all the "fun" that she and her friends had in those days. These experiences taught her a lot about the work and play of a community. The school was rigorous, but this time was meant for developing relationships. The children especially "loved playing pool and basketball." Maria learned that families do not need to accumulate money and objects because the community emphasized sharing. Now she shares her money by paying for grandchildren's parochial schooling. This balance of resources is still a habit of hers as she strives to share money and time with others, rather than just accumulating possessions for herself.

Anne's father emigrated from Germany and was grateful that he had a job. He had earned an engineering degree in Germany, but his credentials were not recognized in the U.S. Therefore, working in America meant he had to "shovel coal for fourteen to sixteen hours a day." Despite the little that they had, he often reminded the family that opportunities were what people made them. While Anne remembered fun times and joyous occasions, she learned that hard work was important in order to have a proper balance in life. Her parents sacrificed to give money and food to their daughters. Good nutrition is something she values today along with exercise for a healthy lifestyle.

Using time wisely for work and play was a component of balancing life in order to learn self-control (7 of 11 participants emphasized this). Martin recalled that

sometimes students were pushed into extracurricular activities. When he was eight years old, the nuns wanted him to be more involved. He explained, "I got volunteered to be in a school production." Distracted with baseball, Martin did not want to be involved in this school function because he "had no interest." However, it became a memorable experience as he learned to enjoy both and balance his schedule for the school play while participating in school sports too. Also, he learned that both school activities united the Catholic community for work and play.

Role of the *Baltimore Catechism*

The *Baltimore Catechism* as an adult guide for life experiences turned out to play an ongoing role in the participants' lives: although they resented having to memorize most of this standard text, as adults it played a vital role in bringing deeper meanings to their moral development. In addition, its importance crossed all four virtues. Described as a little, brown paperback, they remembered disliking what they regarded as boring memorizations from the book that was organized in a question and answer format with no relevance to social settings. The participants openly admitted to neither liking the memorizations nor understanding some sets of questions and answers. However, as they grew into adulthood and beyond they began to find comfort in having the recitations at their fingertips. They ultimately found orientation throughout their lives from these learned-by-heart prayers and lessons as they developed their moral compasses.

To illustrate, Peter shared an analogy of building with proper equipment in order to describe parochial school lessons and the *Baltimore Catechism* memorizations. He reflected, "As a child, you couldn't put those tools to work. You

were given the tools. You were handed the tools, [able to] described [sic] the tools, but you just didn't know how to use the tools…as a child…" Life experiences gave meaning to these moral lessons, and 7 of 11 participants explained how they used the teachings of the catechism as a life guide, believing that it had indicated directions like a compass needle.

Conclusion

The purpose of this qualitative study is to add to the knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon of moral experiences in the 1950s and 1960s as perceived by those who have been Catholic parochial students, and who perhaps "live" it now to some extent in their present and future lives. Four major themes of the Catholic cardinal virtues were featured: (1) prudence; (2) justice; (3) fortitude; and (4) temperance. Through deliberation and reflection, participants were able to learn from positive and negative experiences. The majority of participants showed evidence of independent thought, and a few participants did not. However, they shared stories of growing in the virtues and how the meaning of the virtues meant more than Church doctrine. All in all, the four central themes of the cardinal virtues were embedded in the testimonies of moral experiences that the participants shared, and the use of illustrative quotes and powerful narrative examples vividly support the perceptions of these experiences.

All participants recognized that their current religious life practices and views on moral experiences had directly evolved from earlier moral experiences in their parochial education. Many of the participants perceived their own decisions for careers and parenting as a direct attribution of their moral experiences from parochial

schooling. They strived for fair-mindedness when they interacted with all types of people. Courage and balance were also central components to important events that had shaped their moral being. Even though they recalled negative experiences, they expressed thankfulness for the consistent structure, work ethic, and devoted teachers in their Catholic education. Moreover, it is a noteworthy result that many participants regarded early grievances from their Catholic moral experiences as a key influence for their present-day moral compass.

Throughout the interviews, participants were able to engage in the process of narrative anecdotes, self-reflection, and, to a greater or lesser extent, indicated that they had internalized the four virtues. Thus, they had constructed a moral bridge between their didactic education and a more fluid use of it. The following chapter returns to the literature review and illustrates how the participants' moral education and adult choices reflect much of the moral development theory.

CHAPTER 7

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Overview of Discussion

This study utilized in-depth interviews with older Catholic adults to better understand how parochial schooling affects moral development later in life. All the participants traced aspects of their moral development to their Catholic educational experiences. Most of them learned to develop independent thought from positive and negative experiences. Along with the development of independent thought, other values such as fairness, honesty, courage, and balance in life emerged as important factors in their moral formation. These findings dovetail with the general theological cornerstones of Catholic education. This work supports the notion that an individual's moral development evolves due to conflict or frustrations, and several other findings in the selected literature on moral development.[154]

Theological and Theoretical Perspectives on Moral Development

Aquinas observed that moral reasoning is fundamental for happiness in life and the object of happiness, for him, is the essence of God.[155] Conflicts with both nuns and priests helped participants to develop their own personal relationships with God, thereby ignoring some Church doctrine and bypassing the roles of the clergy as "God's Representatives." Instead most participants sought moral reasoning as a way

[154] Jean Piaget, *The Moral Judgment of the Child* (New York, NY: The Free Press, 1966); Lawrence Kohlberg and Daniel Candee. (1984). "The Relationship of Moral Judgment to Moral Action." In: L. Kohlberg (Ed.), *Essays in Moral Development: Vol. 2. The Psychology of Moral Development* (pp. 498–581). New York: Harper & Row; Graham Rossiter, "Catholic Education and Values: A Review of the Role of Catholic Schools in Promoting the Spiritual and Moral Development of Pupils," *Journal of Religion in Education*, Mater Dei Institute of Education, no. 4 (2003): 105-136.
[155] ST I-II, Q. 2, A. 7; ST I-II, Q. 3, A. 8.

to have closeness with God even though they had conflicts with nuns and priests who behaved arbitrarily at times. These participants learned to recognize when this behavior occurred and learned the importance of advocating for honesty and fairness. Still, many participants mentioned special nuns and priests who touched their lives. As a result, participants felt a "debt"[156] of gratitude. They valued the mentorship of the priests and nuns who had expertise in theology. Although some clergy may not have treated students with fairness, participants supported Catholic teachings for their children and grandchildren and thus have taken on roles of mentorship.

Results from the present research also supported the influential work of Maritain,[157] whose extensive body of work on issues of moral education has identified pervasive care as a critical issue for moral experiences. Some participants stated more than once that they received a special level of care from nuns, especially in comparison to the lay teachers. These nuns believed in their parochial schools and worked extensively with students while they received no salary. Participants often reminded me that nuns taught without pay yet cared in ways similar to their parents. Since nuns and priests do not have children, several participants asserted that they had been loved as their children. This rationale could certainly be applied to understanding the emotions of the participants when they claimed they still trusted religious teachers. The findings fit with Maritain's ideas about the positive impact of care and Catholic education "in its wholeness and as a lifelong process" that starts in childhood.[158]

As Thomist follower Gilson put it, educational instruction should "cause a

[156] McManaman, *A Treatise on the Four Cardinal Virtues,* 73.
[157] Jacques Maritain, *Education at the Crossroads* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1943).
[158] Jacques Maritain, *The Education of Man*, 133.

personal discovery in the mind of the pupil."[159] These findings supported Gilson's writings in that from the participants' childhood interactions, they recognized and explored their Catholic moral upbringing and how they reached personal understanding. Martin believes, for example, that his education supported him to evaluate critical issues for himself. Finally, the findings suggested that for moral development students are intrigued and capable of understanding social and ethical issues, especially controversial topics, for moral development.

Other theories in the literature have demonstrated that young students should be aware of, focus on, and practice with their moral consciousness within the greater diverse community, all of which are findings in this study. The present research study revealed data that moral education provides a foundation that is valued as an adult. As mentioned in Chapter Two, Piaget and Kohlberg emphasized how significant advances in human capacity to understand different perspectives occur between ages four and twelve. Ethical teachings, which happen daily in Catholic schools, occur during these formative years and encourage students to think and act conscientiously.

According to Piaget, "the habit must be frustrated" so that a person can grow in moral development.[160] These moral experiences in parochial schools happened during early years, yet negative experiences became significant in shaping thoughts and behavior. The current study demonstrated that participants encountered difficulties and learned to internalize the moral teachings, despite the human mistakes from clergy. Peter explained, "The teachings were real" even when teachers were not modeling the correct behavior or setting a good example, or when their actions lacked

[159] Gilson, *Disputed Questions in Education*, 25
[160] Piaget, *The Moral Judgment of the Child*, 87.

virtue. Lawrence was another student who recognized "God's representatives" could be formal and judgmental. However, he and other participants questioned the meaning of Church doctrine and decided that they could be good Catholics and not practice certain tenets in order to reach Piagetian "harmony." Indeed, Piaget wrote, "Moral consciousness appears when the self is no longer in a state of harmony, when there is opposition between the various tendencies that constitute it."[161] When nuns and priests acted in arbitrary and unfair ways, many participants were pushed to explore their moral consciousness. Many participants grew in moral development by taking their own path and seeking independent thought. Their moral compasses were shaped by finding freedom within the Church to be themselves.

Related Research Studies

This study supported some of the results of Gilligan's research study in the areas of care and compassion[162] as critical components of moral experiences in order to develop virtues. Participants' stories about Catholic education and community life in the 1950s and 1960s expressed "we live in connection with others"[163] and they learned about fairness and other moral values important in human relationships. Participants were not always treated fairly, such as the story of Martin's student protest, and yet the Church teachings emphasized respect and dignity toward all individuals. These ideals of human relationships influenced his and others' moral development. The participants felt that the nuns cared deeply for them, and despite punishment they believed their teachers had the best intentions.

According to Kohlberg and Candee's theory of moral judgments and actions,

[161] Ibid., 388.
[162] Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 97.
[163] Ibid., 63.

when a person evaluates a moral choice as his/her best, then he/she will behave accordingly.[164] Participants discussed the responsibility to make right decisions with little regard to pain or pleasure. In this study, being responsible was a value that ran through the teachings and community life. Students had many opportunities to accept responsibility. For example, many of the participants described how important it is for them to give back to their communities through their service activities—a responsibility that they learned in their school years especially as they dealt with issues of fairness.

In a study by Colby and Damon, they found childhood memorizations grew into deep moral reasoning and high standards for self, which supports this study's results.[165] Some people do care and have the "ability to learn from their experience all throughout life."[166] This reasoning stems from situations that needed to be self-examined and provide meaning. For instance, Anne drew conclusions from the "Adam and Eve" experience that led her to reason and avoid assumptions. The majority of participants learned how to think critically about practices and internalize their own standards.

Moral principles must be communicated, examined, and evolved to have a profound impact in a person's life as reflected in the literature.[167] In the same way, these participants emphasized a variety of experiences, which supported their moral development, and how the recollections have meaning within their memories many years later. Many participants asserted that their faith held much more meaning now.

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[164] Lawrence Kohlberg and Daniel Candee, "The Relationship of Moral Judgment to Moral Action," 56.
[165] Anne Colby and William Damon, *Some Do Care*," 5.
[166] Ibid., 8.
[167] Kohlberg and Hersh, "Moral Development: A Review of Theory," 57.

They relied on their early practices in new ways with a more fluid use. These participants did reflect and analyze principles so that the memorizations evolved and became internalized in their later lives. On the other hand, some of the prior results reported in literature, such as moral development improves with socioeconomic status[168] or rigid training lacks meaning,[169] may have been collected without the probing inquiry of in-depth interviews for accurate, defining descriptions of moral experiences.

Although Armon's longitudinal study showed that adult thinking evolved dramatically throughout their lives, the majority of the participants felt they had strong roots in their Catholic education. [170] The majority of participants indicated that they questioned and refined their ideas about moral tenets of faith. They discussed prayer memorizations and spiritual practices as having more meaning now. When participants encountered difficulties, they embraced what were once mere recitations of spiritual texts. Several participants applied these teachings and now act in educative roles within the church community to help children and adults learn them. They spoke of Church seasonal practices, and that they look forward to lighting the Advent wreath, saying the community rosaries, or attending the Stations of the Cross. Participants did refine ideas with life experiences and examined more deeply the Church doctrine. Therefore, one key conclusion is that they did take to heart the broad strokes of Catholic virtues from their parochial schooling as a core of their being.

This study's results supported Rossiter's work about the role of Catholic

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[168] Colby, Kohlberg, Gibbs, and Lieberman, "A Longitudinal Study of Moral Development," 70.
[169] Lopez and Lopez, "The Improvement of Moral Development through an Increase in Reflection. A Training Programme," 239.
[170] Cheryl Armon, "Adult Moral Development: Experience and Education," *Journal of Moral Education* 27, no. 3 (1998): 345-370.

schools emphasizing social and ethical issues, rather than institutional issues.[171] The inclusive research assumption about the phenomenon of moral experiences was that most, but certainly not all, of the former parochial students would indicate some detrimental effects from their schooling. Still, participants felt they received a successful issue-oriented education in order to become self-reliant thinkers. Participants recognized proper manifestation of the virtues. They also learned much from what was not explicitly discussed and gleaned moral lessons from subtle wordings, which supported Seidler's findings.[172] Hence, they learned that people's actions are powerfully connected to their moral reasoning.

Significance of the Study

Overall, the present findings on the moral experiences of older adults who were students in parochial schools during the 1950s and 1960s were significant in several regards. First, many of the participants learned to think independently and critically about meaning of many of the Church doctrines in relation to their own moral growth. Second, the results filled an academic gap in the contemporary literature for reflective explanations and descriptions of personal experiences with Catholic education and moral development. Third, by utilizing the particular technique of narrative vignettes from in-depth interviews, the findings gave voice to moral issues in all types of educational settings and shed light on the moral experiences of those who were parochial students in the 1950s and 1960s. Fourth, the research outcomes provided valuable insights into the various social, cultural, and even emotional effects of participants' moral experiences in parochial schools as children and throughout their

[171] Rossiter, "Catholic Education and Values: A Review of the Role of Catholic Schools in Promoting the Spiritual and Moral Development of Pupils," 105-106.
[172] Seidler, "Troubled Memories and Fractured Identities," 304.

lifetimes. Finally, the present findings were a starting point for additional research into this critical issue of school morality from former students' memories. This important research is missing in current life-history moral experience literature.

The finding that all the participants recognized their Catholic education as resulting in fundamental beliefs still continues to shape their daily lives. Multiple times in the personal recollections of the participants, moral "foundation" was discussed as the most distinctive effect of Catholic parochial schools' moral experiences. Almost all participants described how their personal and professional choices were guided from lessons learned while they were children. This finding should be of significant interest to educators and parents because young children can learn what type of person is considered virtuous from both negative and positive moral experiences. Furthermore, the implication of these findings was revealed by the use of lived testimonies and original quotations which showed the deep value of their moral experiences in Catholic parochial schools with personal anecdotes.

Recommendations and Suggestions for Practice and Future Research

One recommendation is for parents, classroom educators, and school policymakers to appreciate and implement a pervasive means of moral learning. With the numerous long-term effects of moral experiences in Catholic education, it is suggested that any type of teacher be able to approach moral issues from a position of increased awareness about the appreciation that students ultimately feel for being given a strict moral structure. Briefly put, a strict moral structure within a caring environment revealed children grow into adults who respect and value that rigor.

Another recommendation is for school counselors to be informed and active with instructing school personnel about the various ways to incorporate moral experiences into the school classroom to hold personal meaning and further application. These findings can be used to inform policymakers on the numerous positive long-term effects of moral experiences on children when teachers consistently and expectantly implement rules, and it also showed the effect when teachers cherish their students and want them to understand moral concepts being taught. For that particular reason, it is recommended that parents, classroom educators, and school policymakers should encourage children to consistently practice moral habits in each and every area of the school community.

Suggestions for future research in the area of moral experiences with Catholic education are to look at the mentoring relationships in parochial schools, examine the role of Catholic priests during this distinctive time period, and investigate a collection of the myths and lore surrounding nuns and priests. There is a possibility that clergy are especially influential teachers because students observe them in deeply personal times, such as weekend Masses and other outside religious events. These teachers left impressions on their students. Strong mentoring relationships appear to be a powerful component of learning with moral education. Another recommendation for future research is to explore the sociological connections between moral experiences of participants who attended Catholic parochial schools of the 1950s-1960s and their children's generation who also attended Catholic parochial schools, but roughly twenty years later, in American society. Lastly, one more suggestion would be to use

James Rest's quantitative instrument, the Defining Issues Test, to examine older adults' specific levels of Kohlbergian cognitive moral development.

Conclusion

To conclude, this research study revealed how moral lessons during this time period created a lasting impact on the research subjects. The participants did not find the schoolroom memorizations as engaging at the time, and they also did not like religion classes. Yet, all found these lessons to be critically influential later in their adult lives. Even though clergy taught morality in customary approaches, the participants developed the skills to be reflective and independent about religious practices. At some point, these former parochial students, now adults, realized how much the memorizations from the *Baltimore Catechism* meant to them. From life experiences, they found direction in this stored knowledge. In fact, these teachings guided them through their social settings when they encountered difficult times. The primary objective of Catholic schools is for members to uphold their doctrine and ideals. However, many participants found ways to be Catholic and think independently but also remain loyal to the Church in general. Therefore, they realized that faith was important but had to be lived with personal meaning.

In order to become more skilled at living with habits of the cardinal virtues, students should have opportunities and life experiences to build upon. This perspective is seen perfectly when Aquinas noted, "The word *cardinal* comes from hinge, that on which a door opens… so the cardinal virtues are those on which the entrance to humane living turns."[173] Students crave moral moments in various school settings where teachers guide them in truth and kindness. Similarly, Aquinas began

[173] Aquinas, *Disputed Questions on the Cardinal Virtues*, 1

his *Summa Theologica* with an acute observation that all people long to be happy. His examination into morality expressed contentment as the last end. A moral component to education is essential not only to social progress but to individual happiness as well. To achieve this, educators could find implementation of the cardinal virtues as a beautiful path to learn balance, feel gratitude, and attain happiness in this world.

Thus, moral teaching is not constructed by specialists. It takes a dedicated community of support and love to raise children. As the present research study points out, teachers of Catholic education despite their own shortcomings were able to wholeheartedly believe in the value of the moral lessons and provide direction for their moral compasses. It would be a failure of any school to not teach virtues. Society cannot share a solitary vision, of course, of what is morally wrong or right. Nonetheless, there is hope that each and every school will focus on navigating students to develop moral compasses, which could guide their minds and hearts for a lifetime.

We have now come full circle to answer the inquiry that was raised at the start of this dissertation: how did Catholic parochial schooling affect moral development in later life? This study's participants felt that they had learned essential, moral knowledge from their Catholic education, based upon their distinctive memories. Each person felt empowered to act well in different areas of life: making rational choices (prudence), relating to other people (justice), facing challenges (fortitude), and desiring pleasures (temperance). The finding of this research indicated that former parochial students valued the positive and even the negative experiences to develop independent thought and shape their moral compasses. The future holds promise that

not only religious schools provide moral instruction and experiences, but also that all forms of education could embrace cardinal virtues which students could then apply across their lifetimes. At that point happiness—in this world as well as beyond—could be complete.

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APPENDIX

Interview Questions

I. What do you remember most about the type of Catholic school that you attended?

A. Religious orders

B. Demographics

1. Specific locations

2. Size of community and school

3. Socio-economic status

C. Ethnic backgrounds/Family structures

D. Routines of the school

E. Community Activities

II. Describe or tell about the types of teachers that you had.

A. Behavior of the religious and lay teachers

B. Dialogues and Experiences

1. Messages that were spoken

2. Public and private conversations

III. How would you explain the learning environment?

A. Learning by Baltimore Catechism

1. Effects of questions and answer memorization

2. Verbatim style of learning

3. Indoctrinated style

B. Teaching styles of priests and nuns

C. Inspiring learning experiences

D. Restrictive learning experiences

IV. What did you find intriguing about your Catholic Education?

A. Saints stories

B. Sacramentals and traditions

C. Extracurricular Activities

D. Particular Theology

V. How did the moral and religious instruction affect you for the rest of your life?

A. Attending mass

B. Catholic sacraments

C. Career

D. Future generations: children and grandchildren