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**For the common good: The Catholic
educational mission in transition 1943-1965:**

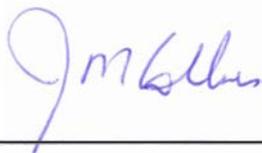
Jenny Collins

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Education at Massey University, 2005.

Candidate's Statement

I certify that the thesis entitled For the Common good: The Catholic educational mission in transition, 1943-1965 and submitted as a part of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Massey University, Palmerston North, is the result of my own work, except where otherwise acknowledged, and that this thesis (or any part of the same), has not been submitted for any other degree to any other university or institution.

Signed



Date

28/2/06

Abstract

This thesis examines the complex historical and political processes that helped to forge, shape and renew the Catholic educational mission during a period of significant change, 1943-1965. It utilises a qualitative methodology, including a “situated reading” of documentary, archival, visual and oral accounts to illustrate how Catholic educators worked to improve the educational standards of their schools and to promote the examination success of pupils while protecting distinctive religious and cultural values and the autonomy of the Catholic education system from state control.

The nineteenth-century mission to provide a basic primary schooling to all Catholic pupils and a secondary schooling for the select few was shaped by an Irish and Roman inheritance, diocesan structures, the characteristics of teaching orders and by distinctive religious, cultural and pedagogical values, gendered practices, and the religious formation of Catholic teachers. From 1943 to 1965, the educational mission expanded to provide a secondary schooling for all Catholic pupils. It encompassed four goals: the transmission of faith and cultural practices; the social and educational advancement of all Catholic pupils; their successful integration as citizens in New Zealand society; and the promotion of religious and intellectual leaders. In the context of the 1944 Thomas reforms, Catholic educators defended the autonomy of their schools from state interference and the distinctive characteristics of Catholic education from “secular” values. In the post-war years Catholic teachers resolved tensions between religious and secular goals by infusing curriculum subjects with religious values and promoting a Catholic world view. At the same time they utilised state models of teacher training and the expertise of inspectors to improve the educational standards of Catholic schools while incorporating pedagogical and curriculum advances to ensure the “secular” success of Catholic pupils.

This thesis demonstrates issues that cross State-Catholic educational boundaries: the process of educational policymaking, the role of the State in education, issues of citizenship, power, identity, gender and difference. By exploring the political, cultural and religious context of teachers’ and pupils’ lives, the location of Catholics in New Zealand society and conflicts over educational values it reshapes understandings about the nature and compass of education in New Zealand.

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Abbreviations

ACDA	Auckland Catholic Diocesan Archives
ASMA	Archives of the Sisters of Mercy Auckland
ATL	Alexander Turnbull Library
CCDA	Christchurch Catholic Diocesan Archives
CFC	Christian Brother
CM	Canterbury Museum
FMS	Marist Brothers of the schools
HCSA	Holy Cross Seminary Archives
MAW	Marist Archives Wellington
HL	Hocken Library
NA	National Archives
n.d.	no date
NZDSA	New Zealand Dominican Sisters' Archives
O.P.	Order of Preachers
RSCJ	Religious of the Sacred Heart
RSM	Religious of the Sisters of Mercy
SSHA	Sisters of the Sacred Heart Archives
SM	Society of Mary
STA	Secondary Teachers' Association

Archival Sources

Archives of the Sisters of Mercy Auckland
Archives of the Marist Brothers
Auckland Catholic Diocesan Archives
Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington
Christchurch Catholic Diocesan Archives
Canterbury Museum and Research Library, Christchurch
Holy Cross Seminary Archives, Auckland
Marist Society Archives, Wellington
Hocken Library and Archives Dunedin
National Archives, Wellington
New Zealand Dominican Sisters' Archives, Dunedin
Sisters of the Sacred Heart Archives, Auckland

Part One

Overview

Not for profit, God knows,
Nor for fame,
Had we such woes.
Dearth's shame
Was nothing to the irk
Of but a pittance
When an alms was asked.
We have not feasted and we have not basked.
We had the work
And asked not quittance -
We had the work.
Brothers, the sowing
Was worth it then and now;
The heavy going,
The stones beneath the plough
Were light for love's sake.
(From *Dit L'Écrivisse Mère...* by Eileen Duggan¹)

¹ Eileen Duggan. "Dit L'ecrivisse mere." in *Eileen Duggan: Selected poems*. ed. Peter Whiteford (Wellington, 1994), 103.

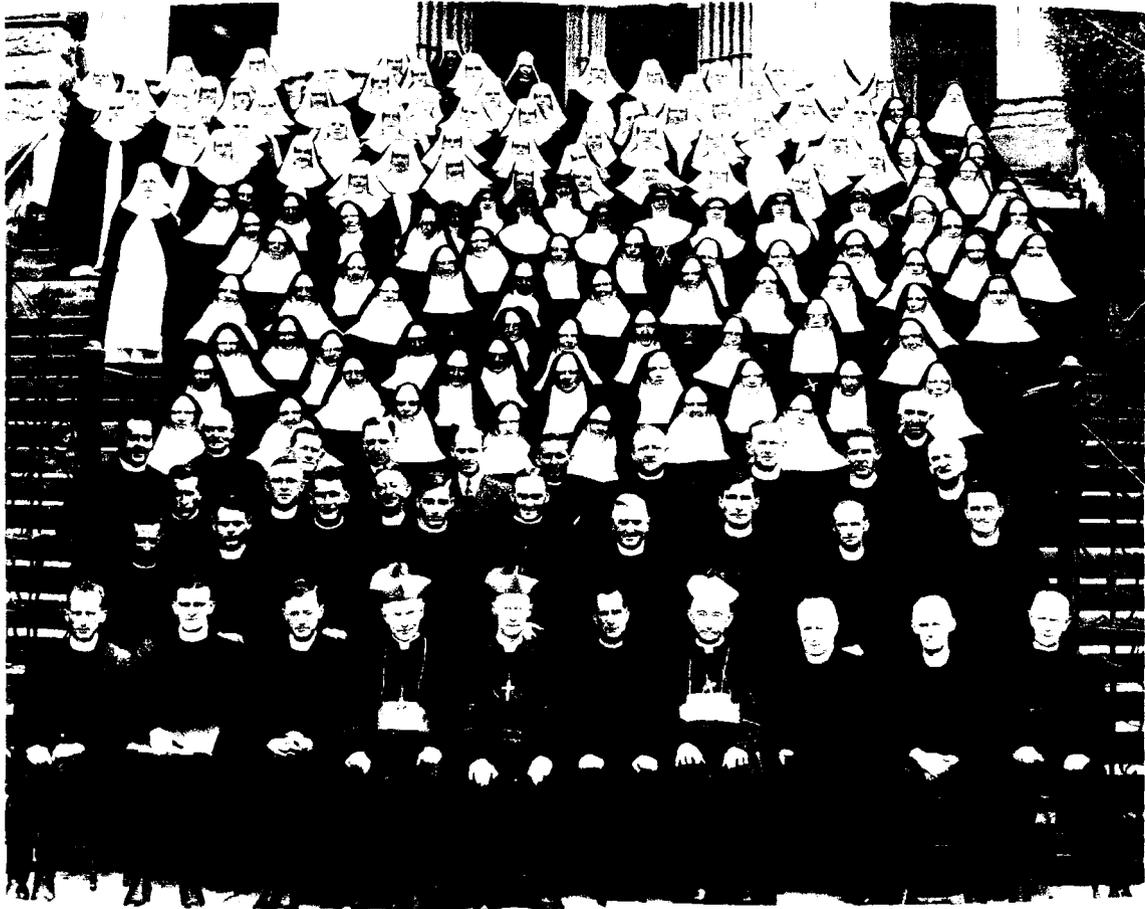


Photo 1.1: In January 1944 Catholic teachers in the dioceses of Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin met with a number of bishops and leaders of teaching religious orders to consider the implications of the Thomas Report for the Catholic educational mission. This photo records a meeting of Catholic teachers in Dunedin about that time. *Courtesy of Auckland Catholic Diocesan Archives*

Zealandia

[Incorporating THE MONTH]

"The highest Faith makes still the highest man,
For we grow like the things our souls believe,
And rise or sink as we aim high or low."

HONORARY BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

The Rev. L. T. Buxton, M.A., D.C.L. (Chairman),
Messrs G. F. Joseph, H. C. McCoy, J. P. O'Connor, C. K. Smith,
H. Wright, sen., and J. M. Simson.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 3, 1944.

A Travesty of Education *

THE Education Department proposes to introduce in 1945 important changes in the post-primary schools. Subjects and time-tables are being rigidly fixed, and first place is to be given, it would seem, to the subject labelled Social Studies, a mixture of history, geography and government.

The Inspectors of the Department in the course of their visits to schools this year are insisting on the prime importance of Social Studies and are strongly recommending as Book Number One, "Man and His World," by Mainwaring.

I must protest to the Prime Minister and the Minister of Education against the use of this anti-Christian book in the schools of the Dominion and draw the attention of parents to the poisonous effects the reading of it would have on the Christian beliefs of their children.

Here are some of its features, which I can only describe as unscientific in history and insulting to our sacred convictions. There is no mention of God in the creation of the world: somehow it just happened. No mention of the supreme book in the history of man, the Bible. Imagine telling school pupils the story of the Jewish people, whose contribution during 4000 years to the highest welfare of mankind is above all reckoning, without a word of the Sacred Scriptures of the Old Testament!

Imagine telling them the story of Christ and the Infant Church without a word of the Gospels and the other books of the New Testament! Chapter IX lumps together for the enlightenment of our Christian children Gautama Buddha and Jesus Christ, Christ who for almost all their fathers and mothers is none other than the Son of God, the Divine Teacher and Saviour. The book of course never speaks of Him as God and makes no reference to His claim to be the Son of God, or to the belief of His first followers and of countless billions since in His divinity. "The rumour spread that Jesus Christ had on the third day risen from the dead." "Later was added the story that He had been seen disappearing into the skies." The rumour! The story! That's all! And this for Christian children. The outline of Christ's teaching is a travesty and the account of His trial, condemnation and death is ludicrous. Briefly, Christ and the Christian Church are dismissed with contempt. The book has many gibes at the Church and shows no understanding of its priceless and imperishable services to men.

If parents allow the Education Department to impose this book on teachers and pupils our country will pay the penalty. I do not believe they will allow this, for I find with great satisfaction on all sides a strong and growing desire among parents for religious instruction and training in the schools of the Dominion.

[* The foregoing is an excerpt from an address delivered at Whangarei on Sunday, July 30, by the Most Rev. G. S. Liston, B.D., Bishop of Auckland.]

Illustration 1.2: In 'A Travesty of Education', *Zealandia* 3 August 1944, Bishop James Liston, the Bishop of Auckland, describes the prospect of the Thomas reforms as a threat to "the schools in the Dominion" ,expressing consternation at the prospect of "subjects and timetables [being] rigidly fixed" and the introduction of "anti-Christian" curriculum values. A social studies textbook called *Man and his World* by Professor Mainwaring became the focus of considerable alarm as the Catholic educators held the view that textbooks for subjects like botany, physiology, geography and history needed to reflect the presence of God in the world (see also chapter eight).

Chapter One

Introduction

The photograph at the beginning of this chapter (photo 1.1) depicts a group of one hundred and fifty six priests, brothers and nuns from various teaching orders assembled at a conference of Catholic teachers in Dunedin sometime around the mid-1940s. When I first located the photo in early 2002, it was with other miscellaneous items in a cardboard box in the Auckland Catholic Diocesan Archives; it was unnamed and still to be catalogued. On the same day I came upon a large bound collection of the Catholic newspaper the *Zealandia*. There on Thursday 3 August 1944 and over many subsequent issues was extensive coverage of the issue that prompted a major reconsideration of the Catholic educational mission: the proposal by the Thomas Committee to introduce a major reform of New Zealand post-primary education (see illustration 1.2). A fascination with the meaning of these photographic and documentary “traces of history” and unanswered questions about the untold stories of the teachers who lived through those years prompted me to undertake a journey that has consumed my waking (and sleeping hours) for the last four years: a pilgrimage into the world of New Zealand Catholic education at a time of significant institutional and educational change.

As an historian, I attempt to understand the past by studying artefacts that have been deliberately or accidentally kept such as documents and photos, or, if the events are within “living” memory, the oral accounts of the people who were part of them. Each form of evidence can be “read” in different ways and prompts its own questions. The photograph was taken sometime in the mid-1940s. The forms of religious habit particular to the 1940s also suggest the era. The bishops wear distinctive head dress, full length soutanes (black soutanes with purple sash and buttons, although that is not apparent in a black and white photograph), while the brothers and priests wear black rabats or stocks and white clerical collars under black suits.² In contrast, the different religious orders of women wear distinctive starched wimples, face obscuring veils and full length habits that hide and contain the body. The photo suggests questions about the operation of authority and gender and the diverse values of religious orders. As a visual text located in a particular historical context it offers insights into the complexities of meaning that relate to teachers’ lives and contributes to our understandings of the 1940s’ world of Catholic education.

Documentary evidence can enhance our understanding of the issues that were likely to be the concern of this group of Catholic teachers. In January 1944 Catholic teachers in the dioceses of Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin met with a number of bishops and leaders of teaching religious orders to consider the implications of the Thomas Report for the Catholic educational mission. While it seems unlikely that the photograph is a record of the Dunedin

² A rabat or stock is a vest front traditionally worn over a collarless white shirt. It could be worn with the style of clerical collars particular to each religious order.

meeting, (given the presence of Bishop Matthew Brodie who died in October 1943) it includes leading Catholic educators such as Bishop James Liston, Dr Noel Gascoigne and Dr F.H.K. Terry, all of whom took a prominent part in the public debates around the Thomas Report. As there seems to be no documentary record of these meetings, the views expressed by Catholic teachers present at it are unknown. However an editorial “A Travesty of Education” published in the 3 August edition 1944 of the *Zealandia* (see Illustration 1.2) presents the views of Bishop James Liston, the Bishop of Auckland. He describes the prospect of the Thomas reforms as a threat to “the schools in the Dominion”. Liston expresses consternation at the prospect of “subjects and timetables [being] rigidly fixed” and the introduction of “anti-Christian” curriculum values. The prospect of state interference and the incursion of secular values into Catholic schools was the cause of long-running disputes between Catholic and state educational authorities. The photograph and the editorial are important forms of visual and documentary evidence, exemplifying, as I will demonstrate, slightly different aspects of the Catholic educational mission. They highlight a paradox – one that I will return to later in this thesis – between the apparently submissive, orderly and hierarchical world of the religious in the photo and the impression of a militant crusade against secularism illustrated in the editorial in illustration 1.2.

A third form of evidence, the oral account, offers the researcher an opportunity to gather evidence about historical events from those who participated in them. While most if not all of the teachers in the photo are now dead, there are a number of Catholic religious who remember what it was like to teach in Catholic schools in the 1940s. As an historian I see the value of

including teachers' accounts in historical narratives. Life history narratives provide useful contextual data for historians of education; they can illuminate the lives of lives of teachers and provide insights into educational history not available to those using documentary and visual texts alone.

A situated reading of the evidence of documentary, visual and oral texts from the 1940s' world of Catholic education enables a consideration of issues such as the nature of the Catholic educational mission, tensions between educational and religious values, Catholic-State relations and the impact of educational reform on the lives of Catholic teachers. Although historians have often assumed that written texts provide a truer account of history than in oral or visual evidence, Derrida has argued that meaning does not reside in a text but in the writing or reading of it.³ As Hodder suggests, text and context are in a continual state of tension, each defining and redefining the other, saying and doing things differently through time.⁴

The research focus

This study focuses on the complex political, religious, educational and cultural influences that helped to form the distinctive Catholic educational mission and shape the lives of Catholic teachers and pupils during the years from 1943 to 1965. It illustrates how Catholic educational values depended on the construction of a "ground of difference" and how Catholic educators challenged

³ J Derrida, *Writing and difference* (London, 1978).

⁴ Ian Hodder, "The interpretation of documents and material culture," in *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials*, ed. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln (Thousand Oaks California, 2003), 156-57.

state power in education from that “ground of difference”.⁵ The fundamental issue here centres on a Catholic educational mission that provided the basis for a distinctive Catholic identity and the justification for a separate school system, one which set the tone for power relations with the State, the dominant force in education in New Zealand. It was crucial, during the years of this study, for Catholic educators to emphasise the distinctive values of the Catholic educational mission and the historical differences between the Catholic education system and state education. By challenging the notion that education was primarily a state enterprise, they challenged state supremacy from that “ground of difference”.⁶

This research focuses on the processes that helped to forge, shape and renew the Catholic educational mission. I detail how, in the years after 1850, the historical traditions of the Catholic Church, came together with a number of political, religious and cultural factors to forge a distinctive Catholic identity, a separate education system and an educational mission to provide a basic education in faith and Catholic culture for all Catholic pupils and a secondary education for social mobility for the select few. I examine ways in which the religious formation of Catholic teachers worked to transmit the faith and maintain Catholic cultural and educational values. I demonstrate how the Catholic educational mission came under pressure as a result of burgeoning secondary rolls, disputes over the secular and educational values of the 1944 Thomas reforms and concerns to maintain Catholic autonomy from state control.

⁵ Joan W. Scott, *Gender and politics of history* (New York, 1988).

⁶ I have drawn here on conceptions of “difference” explored in Yoshiko Nozaki and Hiromitsu Inokuchi, "Ethnic minority students and social studies education: Learning from resident Korean education in Japan," *DELTA* 53 (2001): 139-52.

An expanded educational mission in the post-war years included a secondary education for the social and educational advancement of all Catholic pupils. Catholic educators worked to protect the educational standards of Catholic schools by incorporating state expertise in the training of Catholic teachers while they maintained distinctive Catholic religious and cultural values and the “secular” success of their pupils.

This study seeks to broaden the contours of New Zealand education history by considering issues that cross State-Catholic educational boundaries: the ongoing struggle over educational values, the role of the State in education, issues of citizenship, power, identity, gender and difference. It explores the processes at work in Catholic education, the political, cultural and religious context of teachers’ and pupils’ lives, the location of Catholics in the New Zealand community and the relationship between education and wider New Zealand society. I dispute hegemonic understandings that “New Zealand education” can be represented by historical accounts that are limited to an analysis of state schooling and challenge binary categories such as “Catholic” and “State”. This is not to argue that Catholic educators are the same as those of the State, rather I argue that differences – “differences that confound, disrupt, and render ambiguous the meaning of any fixed binary oppositions”⁷ are part of the differences that already exist within education. In this way I argue for a reconceptualisation of “Catholic” and “State” education based on the argument that education has always been built upon differences that arise because of the diverse origins, cultures and educational values that come together to inform

⁷ Scott, *Gender and politics of history*. 188.

understandings of education in particular historical contexts. To include narratives of Catholic education history then, is to enable the dominant group to learn the history and experiences of a “minority” group and to reformulate understandings about the nature and compass of education in New Zealand.⁸

The background to the research

The research questions suggested by documentary and visual texts do not arise in a vacuum. I came to this research topic “on the shoulders” of my Masters’ thesis on the teaching and religious lives of Dominican Teachers.⁹ Questions about the “larger issues” prompted me to consider a broader approach to the study of Catholic education history. I wanted to examine the distinctive characteristics of Catholic education, the interaction between religious and secular values, relations with the state education system and to consider the role of gender, authority and power in the lives of both male and female Catholic teachers. As a narrative historian I am interested in the way different kinds of evidence can work together to illuminate the complex tapestry of Catholic education history. As a result of my Masters research I was impressed by the vast array of documentary and archival sources still waiting to be mined, and the dearth of historical accounts of Catholic education in this country. It was particularly important to record the accounts of Catholic teachers, now in their seventies, eighties and nineties, while these narratives are available.

⁸ See Nozaki and Inokuchi, "Ethnic minority students," 139-52.

⁹ J Collins, "Hidden lives: The teaching and religious lives of eight Dominican Sisters, 1931-1961" (Master of Education, Massey, 2001).

Research issues in Catholic education history

Although the formal beginnings of a distinctive Catholic education system go back to 1850¹⁰ there have, until recently, been relatively few attempts to examine the history of a schooling system that has educated hundreds of thousands of New Zealand pupils. Catholic scholars have only begun to systematically preserve and to write the unique and important history of their church. Catholics continue to be the “invisible” or peripheral players in historical accounts of “mainstream” New Zealand schooling.¹¹ This can partly be explained by the limitations on access to historical source materials on Catholic education as well as a tradition of filiopietism among Catholic historians, but it also relates to hegemonic understandings about what constitutes the study of “education history” in this country which have relegated the concerns of Catholic educators to a place on the margins of educational research.¹²

¹⁰ In April 1850 nine Sisters of Mercy arrived in Auckland with Bishop Jean Baptiste Francois Pompallier. They began teaching 60 children at St Patrick’s School the following week. M.D. Kirk, *Remembering your mercy: Mother Mary Cecilia Maher and the first Sisters of Mercy in New Zealand, 1850-1880* (Auckland, 1998).

¹¹ To illustrate: in the following histories, issues relating to Catholic education, where they are considered at all, are given only brief mention. I Cummings and A. Cummings, *History of state education in New Zealand: 1840-1975* (Wellington, 1978); A.H.W. Harte, *The training of teachers in New Zealand from its origins until 1948* (Christchurch, 1972); Roger Openshaw, Gregory Lee, and Howard Lee, *Challenging the myths: Rethinking New Zealand’s educational history* (Palmerston North, 1993); Roy Shuker, *The one best system? A revisionist history of state schooling in New Zealand* (Palmerston North, 1987).

¹² It is not only Catholic education that has been elided from mainstream historical accounts. The study of denominational education has also languished on the periphery, with the important

Those seeking to examine Catholic education history face particular challenges. The idiosyncratic nature of the Catholic historical source material and its wide dispersal among formal and informal archives means that access to relevant material can be a mixture of good luck and informed intuition. The difficulty of finding relevant Catholic sources is illustrated in their location. The following highlights the complexities involved:

- Diocesan archives (photographic collections, files relating to diocesan committees, bishops, prominent clerics, correspondence – the Auckland archive contains a collection of the *Month*, later renamed *Zealandia* – a Catholic newspaper). Some diocesan archives are well catalogued, others are small informal collections);
- Seminary archives (a collection of the *NZ Tablet* – a Catholic newspaper);
- The archives of religious orders;
 - National
 - International
 - Local (convent, monastery and diocesan);

exception of the work of historians such as Tanya Fitzgerald, Kuni Jenkins and Kay Morris Matthews. See for example Tanya Fitzgerald, "Creating a disciplined society: CMS women and the re-making of Nga Puhi women," *History of Education Review* 32 (2003); Tanya Fitzgerald, "Fences, boundaries and imagined communities: rethinking the early mission schools and communities in New Zealand 1823-1830," *History of Education Review* 30 (2001): 84-98; Kuni Jenkins and Kay Morris Matthews, *Hukurere and the politics of Maori girls' schooling* (Palmerston North, 1995).

- Alexander Turnbull Library (some school collections, collections relating to prominent Catholic New Zealanders, miscellaneous);
- Hocken Library (local school collections – some Department of Education material);
- National Archives (a large Department of Education holding but no “Catholic” listings, some inspection reports, references to Catholic issues in other material – serendipitous discoveries);
- Canterbury Museum (*NZ Tablet* and other photographic collections, school collections – some still to be catalogued).

In contrast, the historian of state education is able to find a wide range of well catalogued education resources in locations such as the National Archives. The nature and quality of source materials on Catholic schooling are varied. School histories can be useful because they often contain primary material that is not otherwise easily available.¹³ In some locations, the material is abundant and easily accessed; in other places there are few materials. As Timothy Walch notes, it is somewhat ironic that a denomination with a reputation for bureaucracy and

¹³ See for example Graeme Donaldson, *To all parts of the kingdom: Christian Brothers in New Zealand, 1876-2001* (Dunedin, 2002); John Paul Kane, "The Marist Brothers in New Zealand education, 1917 to 1967" (Diploma in Education, Massey University, 1972); Kirk, *Remembering your mercy*; Augustine McCarthy, *Star in the south* (Dunedin, 1970); Anne Marie Power, *Sisters' of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart: New story, 1883 - 1997* (Auckland, 1983); Paul Scott, "Marist Brothers New Zealand province 1939-1970 (A personal history)," (Christchurch, 2003); Tony Waters, *Confortare: A history of Sacred Heart College, Auckland, 1903-2003* (Auckland, 2003).

standardisation would do such an uneven job of preserving the documentation of its work.¹⁴

For the most part efforts to record Catholic educational historiography in New Zealand (as internationally) have followed what Walch calls the “seed to fruition” model. These tend to focus on the biographies of founders, the development of religious orders and the histories of schools. A tradition of filiopietism has resulted in a focus on the “great works” of individual founders and the “achievements” of schools and religious foundations. Few histories engage in critical analysis of the complex political, cultural and religious factors at work in Catholic education. While the volume and variety of books on Catholic education is slim indeed, the new era of freedom and self-examination within the church after the Second Vatican Council encouraged a small number of scholars to explore Catholic history in a critically reflective manner. A number of articles and chapters have illuminated selected aspects of New Zealand Catholic education history, particularly the significance of Irish traditions and culture, the relationship between Church and State and the controversies surrounding the teaching of religion in state schools.¹⁵ However,

¹⁴ Timothy Walch, *Parish school: American Catholic parochial education from colonial times to the present* (New York, 1996).

¹⁵ See for example Donald Harman Akenson, *Half the world from home: Perspectives on the Irish in New Zealand* (Wellington, 1990); Hugh M. Laracy, "Bishop Moran, Irish politics and Catholicism in New Zealand," *Journal of Religious History* 6 (1970): 62-76; Gregory Lee, "The 1975 private schools conditional integration act: Issues and controversies," in *Godly schools? Some approaches to Christian education in New Zealand*, ed. Bryan Gilling (Hamilton, 1993), 40-59; Colin McGeorge and Ivan Snook, *Church and state in New Zealand education*

until this study, there have been few attempts to provide a comprehensive historical analysis of Catholic education. Father Noel Gascoigne's *A treatise on the private schools of New Zealand with special reference to their relations with the state from the earliest times* is typical of the "report" format written by a Catholic Director of Education for the Catholic Bishops. Like many documents of its kind, it focuses narrowly on Catholic "achievements" and the issue of state aid.¹⁶ A more ambitious survey and analysis commissioned by the bishops but never published, was A.E.C.W. Spenser's 1972 *The organisation of Catholic education in New Zealand: Interim Report*.¹⁷ I have drawn on this material extensively as it provides unique historical data on Catholic schools including growth in school rolls, pupil-teacher ratios, interview material and extensive analysis of pedagogic and resource issues.

(Wellington, 1981); Kevin O'Reilly, "Roman Catholic reactions to the Thomas Committee Report," *New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies* 12 (1977): 124-27; Ivan Snook, "Religion in schools: A Catholic controversy, 1930-1934," *New Zealand Journal of History* 6 (1972): 169-77.

¹⁶ Noel Gascoigne, "A treatise on the private schools of New Zealand with special reference to their relations with the state from earliest times," (Wellington, 1959). Fr. Gascoigne Collections, Auckland Catholic Diocesan Archives - hereafter ACDA.

¹⁷ I am grateful to Professor Ivan Snook for making a copy of this report available to me. Other copies can be found in the Auckland Catholic Diocesan Archives and the MacMillan Brown Library Canterbury University. A.E.C.W. Spenser, "The organization of Catholic education in New Zealand: Interim report," ((unpublished personal copy), 1972). The report was rather critical of Catholic educational authorities and this may account for its failure to be published.

A number of recent publications have made an important contribution to contemporary Catholic historiography. Rory Sweetman's *A fair and just solution? A history of the integration of private schools in New Zealand* reflects on the negotiations that lead to the integration of private schools into the state school system.¹⁸ Diane Streven's illuminating *In step with time: A history of the Sisters of St Joseph of Nazareth, Wanganui, New Zealand* is one of the few works to include a critically reflective account of the contributions of women religious teachers.¹⁹ *The character and culture of the Catholic school* by Susan O'Donnell is an ethnographic study of the culture of contemporary Catholic schools.²⁰ My own research, including papers published as part of this research project, is the first of its kind to focus on the teaching and religious lives of women religious, gender and power issues within Catholic education and the process of educational reform.²¹

¹⁸ Rory Sweetman, *A fair and just solution? A history of the integration of private schools in New Zealand* (Palmerston North, 2002).

¹⁹ Diane Strevens, *In step with time: A history of the Sisters of St Joseph of Nazareth, Wanganui, New Zealand* (Auckland, 2001).

²⁰ Susan O'Donnell, *The character and culture of the Catholic school* (Wellington, 2001).

²¹ J Collins, "Apprentice to professional: The training of Catholic teachers 1945-1965," *History of Education Review* 34 (2005); Collins, "Hidden Lives", J Collins, "Ideology and accommodation: The Thomas Report and Catholic secondary education," *Education Research and Perspectives* vol. 30 (2003): 9-25; J Collins, "Revisiting the Foucauldian account of power: Constraints and opportunities in the leadership experience of Dominican teachers'," *DELTA* 1 (2005); J Collins, "Schooling for faith, citizenship and social mobility: Catholic secondary education in New Zealand 1924-1944," *Journal of Educational Administration and History* 37 (2005); J Collins, "Strategies for survival and success: The teaching and religious lives of eight

Although the abundance of primary and secondary source material on Catholic education provides seemingly limitless opportunities for the historian of education, the dearth of scholarly work on critical issues in New Zealand Catholic education history continues to make research in this area a pioneering activity. This research seeks to inform current debates between educational historians on the nature and function of Catholic education. I have attempted to address the shortage of critical analysis in New Zealand Catholic education history by drawing on the work of international scholars from Australia, Canada, France and the United States. These publications provide insights and a comparative lens in areas such as Catholic educational values, relations with the State, assumptions regarding gender and the Irish influence. The Australian-New Zealand link is particularly relevant in light of the historical institutional associations, the Irish connection and the Australasian coverage of many teaching religious orders.²²

Dominican teachers, 1931-1961," *History of Education Review* 3 (2004): 1-13; J Collins and R. Openshaw, "'● call back yesterday, bid time return': How oral accounts and archival investigations can inform professional practice today," in *Refereed proceedings: Informing our practice. Special volume. Selections from the 2002 TEFANZ conference*, ed. D Fraser and R Openshaw (Wellington, 2003), 45-58.

²² See for example Sarah Ann Curtis, "Educating the faithful: Catholic primary schooling and the teaching congregations in the diocese of Lyon, 1830-1905" (Doctor of Philosophy, Indiana University, 1994); Marta Danylewycz, *Taking the veil: An alternative to marriage, motherhood and spinsterhood in Quebec, 1840-1920*, The Canada social history series (Toronto, 1987); Ronald Fogarty, *Catholic education in Australia, 1806-1950: Catholic education under the religious orders*, vol. 2 (London, 1959); Katharine Massam, *Sacred threads: Catholic spirituality in Australia 1922-1962* (Sydney, 1996); Thomas A. O'Donoghue, *Upholding the faith: The*

The scope of the study

During 2002 I talked with a number of people in the Catholic education community in order to get some indication of the kind of issues that might be significant in Catholic education history and the individuals who might be suitable subjects for interview. The people included Dame Sister Pauline Engel, the Vicar for Education in the Auckland Diocese, Sister Carmel Walsh of the Dominican Sisters, Brother Henry Spinx of the Marist Brothers, Brothers Paul Robertson and Norm Gillies of the Christian Brothers, Sister Marcienne Kirk of the Sisters of Mercy, Sisters Margaret D'Ath and Joan Vickers of the Religious of the Sacred Heart, a Sister of St Joseph and Father John O'Neill of the Society of Mary. I also visited a number of archives including the Auckland Catholic Diocesan Archives and the Hocken Library and spoke to diocesan archivists and archivists from the religious orders. This enabled me to do a preliminary scoping exercise and to check on the availability of resources. I also consulted with Professor Ivan Snook and Dr Colin McGeorge, historians who have done seminal work in the area of Catholic education, religion in schools and the debates around state aid to Catholic schools.²³

process of education in Catholic schools in Australia (New York, 2001). 97-113; Elizabeth Smyth, "Much exertion of the voice and great application of the mind: Teacher education within the Congregation of the Sisters of St Joseph of Toronto, Canada, 1851-1920," *Historical Studies in Education/Revue d'Histoire d'Education* vol. 6 (1994) 97-113; Walsh, *Parish school: American Catholic parochial education from colonial times to the present*.

²³ See for example McGeorge and Snook, *Church and state in New Zealand education*; Snook, "Religion in schools: A Catholic controversy, 1930-1934."

I began with a research topic that centred on the impact of the Thomas Report on the Catholic education system. After a preliminary analysis of the archival, documentary and oral evidence, it became clear that the period of Catholic education history from 1943 to 1965 was a significant one which encapsulated fundamental issues facing Catholic education in New Zealand. On reflection it seemed to me that the debates around the nature and function of post-primary education prompted by the Thomas Report, the pressures of an expanding secondary school system, disputes over Catholic autonomy and the threat posed by the secular values of the new curriculum revealed new questions about the complex and evolving nature of the Catholic educational mission in the years after the Second World War. As a consequence I broadened my research focus to include an analysis of the historical influences on the formation of the Catholic educational mission, a consideration of the pressures faced by the mission in a period of educational reform and an examination of the process of maintenance and renewal of the mission in the post-war years. In this context, the oral sources began to assume increasing prominence, partnering the written sources to highlight the importance of political, religious and cultural influences and the impact of educational policy-making on the lives of Catholic educators, the wider Catholic community and the Catholic educational mission during the years of this study.

The research aims

The principal aims of this research study are:

1. To explore the political, religious, educational and cultural influences that helped to form a distinctive Catholic educational mission on:
 - a. the creation of a Catholic spiritual and cultural identity;

- b. the construction of a Catholic educational system;
 - c. the religious formation of Catholic teachers.
2. To examine the impact of the Thomas Committee's reform of post-primary education on:
 - a. relations between Catholic educational authorities;
 - b. the Catholic educational mission.
3. To investigate the expanding educational mission of Catholic schools in the years from 1943 to 1965 focussing on:
 - a. changes in the professional training of Catholic teachers;
 - b. ways in which Catholic schools maintained a distinctive religious and cultural identity;
 - c. strategies used by Catholic educators to inculcate Catholic values in the secular curriculum while working to ensure the educational success of their pupils.

Profiles of the Catholic teachers in this study

Thirty one participants took part in a formal interview including two Marist priests, three Marist Brothers and five Christian Brothers. Three Religious of the Sacred Heart, six Sisters of Mercy and ten Dominican Sisters took part as well as two former Diocesan Directors of Catholic Education. I conducted informal interviews with two other Mercy Sisters. I also interviewed my father who had attended various Catholic primary schools and the Christian Brothers High School in Dunedin and discussed the experience of Catholic schooling with a number of adults who had attended Catholic schools in the post-war years. All the participants had also attended Catholic schools. By including their stories this

research is able to go beyond documentary and visual evidence and to present unique insights into the “ordinary lives” of those who experienced the world of Catholic education in the period under study.

A system of codes has been used to protect the privacy of the participants in this study while enabling the researcher to identify the source of the interview extract being used in a particular instance. These codes are made up of two letters and a number: one letter refers to the religious order in which the participant is a member; the second identifies the individual while the number/s refers to the page number in the transcript from which the quote is derived. In this way I am able to attribute interview material to a male or female member of a religious order while protecting the privacy of the individual. As in any research where privacy needs to be protected there is a tension between revealing too many details and not revealing enough about the contribution made by these educators to New Zealand Catholic education. In order to protect the privacy of the men and women in this study, the following details about Catholic teachers are presented in summary format. The information recorded here is already present in the narratives in the study.

Table 1.1: Profiles of Female Catholic teachers in study

Order	Date of Birth	Schools attended	Year Entered	Teaching Qualification	Level taught	Subjects taught	Leadership roles 1943-65
RSCJ	1911	RSM/RSCJ	1931	TC	Secondary	RE/Geog/Eng/Science/Maths/French/Latin	AP
OP	1913	STATE/OP	1939	TC/LTCL speech	Primary	all primary subjects	Principal
OP	1913	OP	1938	BA/MA	Secondary	Latin/French/RE/Maths/Science	Principal
OP	1914	OP	1944	Dip H. Science	Secondary	Science/ Social Studies	DP
RSCJ	C1918	RSCJ	1943	TC/Dip Ed	Secondary	RE/Eng/Hist/Latin	Principal
OP	1920	OP	1949	LTCL/LRSM/Teachers B	Primary	Music/Social Studies	DP
OP	1921	STATE/OP	1950	TC/Univ papers	Primary/sec	Art/Social Studies	Principal
OP	1922	OP	1950	FTCL/BA	Secondary	English/Speech and drama	Principal
OP	1922	BJ/STATE	1957	TC/Dip in RE	Primary	all primary subjects	Principal
OP	1925	OP	1955	TC	Primary	all primary subjects	Principal
RSM	1927	BJ/RSM	1948	BA/MA	Secondary	RE/Eng/Hist/Geog/French/Latin	Principal
RSM	1933	RSM/MISSION	1956	TC	Secondary	RE/Geog/Acc/Bio/Economics	HOD
RSM	1934	RSM IRELAND	1949	TC/Higher Dip Ed/ Dip School Man/ Dip RE	Primary	all primary subjects	Principal
RSM	1934	STATE/PRES IREL	1951	TC	Primary	all primary subjects	Principal
RSM	1933	RSM IRELAND	1951	TC	Primary	all primary subjects	Snr teacher
RSM	1935	RSM	1952	TC/Dip Teaching/ BSc	Secondary	Science/Biology/ Chemistry/RE	AP
RSCJ	1935	RSCJ	1956	TC/BA	Secondary	RE/Bio/Science/Hist/Art	M. Discipline
OP	1938	OP IRELAND	1954	TC/ Dip Catechetics	Primary	all primary subjects	DP
OP	1938	OP IRELAND	1956	TC	Primary	all primary subjects/middle curriculum	DP

Key:
O.P. Dominican Sister
RSCJ Religious of the Sacred Heart
RSM Mercy Sister
BJ Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart (Brown Josephites)
TC Teacher's Certificate
PRES Presentation Sisters

Table 1.2: Profiles of Male Catholic teachers in the study

Order	DOB	Schools	Entered	Teaching Qualifications	Level	Subjects	Leadership roles 1943-65
SM	1913	OP/SM	1931	BSc	Secondary	Chemistry/ Physics/ Maths	Principal
FMS	1922	BJ/FMS Jnrte	1939	TC/BA	Secondary	Chemistry/ Physics/ Maths/App Maths	Principal
CB	1923	CFC Jnrte	1938	TC/ M.Shop Engineers Cert LRSM/FTCL	Secondary	M.Shop/ Draughting/ Eng/Math /Music	Principal
FMS	1926	FMS	1944	TC/BA/MA/BSc	Secondary	Latin/Maths/ Science/ Chemistry/ Physics/RE	DP
SM	1926	SM	1943	MA (2)	Secondary	Maths/RE	DP
FMS	1931	OP/FMS	1949	Dip T/BA	Secondary	Geography/RE	Principal
CFC	1933	RSM/ CFC	1950	TC	Secondary	Eng/Math/ Latin/Com.P/ Sc/Econ	DP
CFC	1935	BJ/ CFC Jnrte	1950	TC/BSc	Secondary	Chemistry/Bio/ Science	Principal
CFC	1939	CFC Jnrte	1957	BSc/Dip Ed	Secondary	Chemistry/ Physics/ Maths/Bio/ Science	Principal
CFC	1939	RSM/ CFC Jnrte	1955	TC/BA	Secondary	RE/Eng/Hist/ Geog/SS/ J.Math/ J.French	Principal

Key

- CFC Christian Brother
- SM Society of Mary (Marist Father)
- FMS Marist Brother
- TC Teacher's Certificate
- Jnrte Juniorate

A note on sources

As well as the life history narratives of the participants, this study has utilised a variety of sources including archival and documentary sources many of which are only recently available to the historian. These include Catholic publications such as the *Tablet*, the *Month* and the *Zealandia*, papal encyclicals, Catholic school journals, manuals of studies and hymnals, photographs, census and data

from the Australasian Catholic Directory, each of which offer particular insights into contemporary Catholic thinking. I have been granted access to the private archives of a number of religious orders, including the Dominican Sisters, the Sisters of Mercy Auckland, the Marist Archives in Wellington and the Auckland Archives of the Religious of the Sacred Heart. I have found valuable material in the Catholic diocesan archives in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch as well as material from the Hocken Library, the Turnbull Archives, the Canterbury Museum and the National Archives.

The inclusion of oral accounts provides particular difficulties and challenges for the researcher, which I will explore further in chapter two. New Zealand women and men who chose a life time vocation of teaching in the period of this study chose a religious vocation subject to vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. They do not fit easily into existing discourses of men's and women's lives, in part because their lives have so seldom been studied. Yet the opportunity to include their stories offers insights into the lives of a unique group of teachers, adds new perspectives to our understandings of Catholic education and adds some of the missing narratives to New Zealand education history.

The organisation of the thesis

Part one

This thesis is organised into four parts. Part one consists of two chapters which function as an overview for the thesis. Chapter one consists of the introduction while chapter two looks at methodological considerations.

Part two

Chapters three, four and five consider the complex of historical, political, religious and cultural factors that helped to forge the Catholic educational mission. They provide an historical perspective on the formation of the spiritual and cultural identity of New Zealand Catholics, the construction of a separate Catholic education system and the religious formation of Catholic teachers. In chapter three I outline historic trends in Catholic spirituality from the late nineteenth until the mid-twentieth century. It is important for the reader to understand these trends as they enable a clearer appreciation of the nature of the issues Catholic educators faced in the post-World War Two period. The chapter analyses the significance of policies that promoted the transmission of faith and devotional practices that strengthened assumptions of a dependent and submissive laity. I consider the impact of shifting discourses of the Church's role in the world on new and more active forms of spirituality and the faith practices of Catholics as well as Catholic understandings about the role of men and women in the Church's salvation mission. I conclude by examining the rationale for a Catholic school system whose mission was to transmit the faith and maintain the complex of religious practices that characterised the Catholic identity in the first part of the twentieth century.

In chapter four I consider the key historical influences on the construction of a separate Catholic education system in nineteenth-century New Zealand. The chapter examines the characteristics of diocesan and pontifical teaching orders and the influence of Irish teaching orders on the development of a Catholic educational mission to provide a basic primary education to the children of the Irish working-class and a classical and accomplishments secondary education to

the select few. I consider the distinctive pedagogies that underpinned the educational missions of religious orders and their complex relationships with the diocesan-based education system. The chapter examines the influence of discourse shifts from a classical and accomplishments model of education to a utilitarian examination-based framework. The redefinition of the Catholic educational mission to include post-primary education from the 1920s was justified on the basis that it would protect the increasing numbers of Catholic pupils from going on to secondary education from state secular values. The chapter highlights changes in the educational mission of Catholic educators who increasingly worked to ensure the citizenship, social and economic mobility of the increasing numbers of pupils going on to a secondary education and their success in the state-mandated examination system.

In chapter five I consider ways in which new religious were socialised into particular religious and cultural practices and their construction as “expert” teachers capable of transmitting the faith and Catholic cultural practice to the next generation of pupils. The process of religious formation was influenced by a number of factors including notions of mission, service and sacrifice and the distinctive pedagogies of different religious orders. The chapter outlines the organisation of novitiate training before detailing initiation practices underpinned by a mix of authoritarian and regulatory practices, particular constructions of gender and the distinctive spiritual traditions of religious orders.

Part three

Having introduced the reader to the historic and enduring nature of the issues confronting Catholic educators, part three of this thesis shifts its focus to an

examination of some of the pressures facing the Catholic educational mission in a period of expansion and educational reform. The four chapters in part three consider the historic relationship between the Catholic Church and the state educational authorities, the background to the 1944 Thomas Report, Catholic reactions to the proposed reforms and the impact of the reforms on the work of Catholic teachers.

Chapter six examines the nature of relations between the Catholic hierarchy and the state educational authorities, arguing that this relationship was predicated on protecting the autonomy of the Catholic school system from state interference, the incursion of secular values and the maintenance of a “ground of difference” founded on the transmission of distinctive religious and cultural values and the success of the Catholic educational mission. I outline historic influences on that relationship including the significance of the 1877 Education Act, the role of Bishop Patrick Moran, the Bible in Schools debate and the hotly contested issue of state aid to Catholic schools.

In chapter seven I examine the process of educational policy-making and debates about the role of education within the Catholic community and amongst liberal state educators in the years leading up to the Thomas Report. The chapter details the way the prospect of the curriculum reforms focussed Catholic fears on the incursion of secular values into Catholic schools and raised yet again the spectre of state surveillance and control and threats to the distinctive Catholic educational mission.

Chapter eight utilises a variety of documentary sources to consider Catholic reactions to the release of the Thomas Report, an event which prompted an extended period of consultation within the Catholic education community followed by a complex series of negotiations between the Catholic hierarchy and state educational authorities. The Catholic response to the Thomas Report was led by the hierarchy and senior representatives of teaching religious orders, and involved a process of consultation with Catholic teachers in all four dioceses. Catholic objections centred on opposition to the values of “new education”, fears about the impact of state control and the lowering of academic standards. I examine the process of consultation within the Catholic community, the negotiations between the Catholic hierarchy and state educational authorities and the nature of the compromise that was reached by the end of 1945.

In Chapter nine a consideration of teachers’ views of the reforms highlights the complex pressures facing Catholic educators in the years after 1945. Teachers’ accounts illustrate the impact of the Thomas reforms and underline tensions between teachers of academic classes who wished to preserve the values of a liberal education and teachers of general classes who saw advantages in the new common core curriculum. The chapter then moves to a consideration of ways in which the focus of the Catholic educational mission shifted to the provision of a post-primary education “for the common good” of all Catholic pupils.

Part four

Having demonstrated the significance of the politics of educational reform and the pressures resulting from the expansion into post-primary education the focus turns to what in many ways is the core issue under consideration. Part four

consists of three chapters that utilise the life history accounts of Catholic teachers to examine the fundamental processes that operated to maintain and renew the Catholic educational mission in the years from 1943 to 1965 and a conclusion. Chapter ten examines the process of professional training utilised by religious orders to “form” Catholic teachers. In chapters eleven and twelve I consider the importance of religious and cultural practices in Catholic schools, how these underpinned the teaching of secular subjects and worked to ensure the success of the Catholic educational mission.

In chapter ten I detail how the Catholic education system increasingly incorporated state models of teacher training and professional development in the years of this study. Drawing on a variety of archival and documentary sources and interviews, the chapter outlines the pressures on the Catholic educational mission in the years after 1945, pressures that resulted in changes in the training of Catholic teachers and an increased focus on state certification. The chapter examines the implications of an expanding secondary system and the establishment of a “national” teacher training college at Loreto Hall in Auckland. It details moves by Catholic teachers in the late 1950s and early 1960s to develop contacts with their peers in state schools, to take part in professional associations and to become part of an integrated state-led approach to professional development.

Chapter eleven examines the teaching of Catholic faith in Catholic schools that moved in the years of this study from a traditional model of catechesis to a kerygmatic catechesis which incorporated selected pedagogical developments

and progressive ideas. The chapter considers the informal practices of Catholic culture: the construction of a Catholic “atmosphere”, the intersection of culture and manners and the practice of discipline and punishment as well as the tensions between conservative cultural values and new understandings of the Catholic educational mission.

In chapter twelve I examine the influence of religious values on the “secular” curriculum and the tensions between the desire to safeguard Catholic values in areas such as History and the need to protect the educational advancement of Catholic pupils. The chapter considers the relationship between state educational authorities and the Catholic school system and the ways in which Catholic educators worked to maintain distinctive religious and educational values while utilising state surveillance in the form of school inspections to ensure the maintenance of standards in Catholic schools and to compete with state schools to provide a secondary education that would give their pupils access to and success in the state-mandated examination system. The discussion also considers the way Catholic teachers protected the distinctive values of their schools and a working relationship with state inspectors.

Chapter thirteen, the conclusion, draws together the main findings of this study. It considers the implications of this research for New Zealand education history, for a broader study of Catholic education history and its relevance for contemporary Catholic education issues.



Photo 2.1: The author on her first communion day. Note the medal hanging on a ribbon around my neck and the missal – both religious symbols presented to commemorate the occasion. The dress and veil were made by my mother. *Author's collection.*

Photo 2.2: The author at St Dominic's College, Dunedin, c. Form Six. Note the silver coloured "optima badge" on my jersey – presented to a pupil achieving three of the cloth "optima bars" (see directly below the badge) for academic success in consecutive terms in the same year. I reached the giddy heights of an optima badge only once in my five year secondary career. "Veritas" or truth is the motto of the Dominican order. *Author's collection*



Chapter Two

Methodological considerations

Introduction

Qualitative research is a situated activity that consists of a wide range of interconnected methods that aim “to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them”. Qualitative researchers utilise a variety of empirical methods, “interconnected, interpretive practices” that help achieve a better understanding of the subject matter and “make the world visible in a different way”.²⁴ As a qualitative researcher I do not align myself with any one discipline; rather, I use methods or practices such as narrative, archival and documentary analysis, life history accounts, statistics, tables and graphs to provide “important insights and knowledge” into the subject I am studying.²⁵ Historical research using such a qualitative methodology can illuminate the structures and “taken for granted” assumptions of our contemporary world, by demonstrating that these have developed historically, and that they emerged out

²⁴ See Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, "Introduction: The discipline and practice of qualitative research," in *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials*, ed. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln (Thousand Oaks, California, 2003), 4.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 11.

of particular social, economic and political contexts.²⁶ For example, in order to understand the political, religious and cultural context of the Catholic educational mission during the years of this study, it is necessary to understand the nineteenth-century Catholic view that a separate school system was the best way to transmit the faith and Catholic practices to the next generation of Catholics and to protect a distinctive Catholic spiritual and cultural identity from “secular” values implicit in a state education. This study, which focuses on a period of expansion and educational reform in the years after 1943, utilises a multi-method approach including documentary, archival, visual and oral accounts to “make visible” the processes of change and continuity in Catholic schools during a period when the original educational mission was undergoing significant changes. In this way, a situated reading of the evidence of documentary, archival, visual and oral texts enables an examination of the complex forces at work on the Catholic educational mission and an understanding of the role of historic religious, political and social influences on post-World War Two Catholic schooling. It also provides a framework for a consideration of the significance of the research findings for contemporary Catholic education (see chapter thirteen).

The focus of this chapter is on the methods and practices of this research. In it I consider methodological issues and the research process. The chapter begins with an examination of my location as a researcher, and a discussion of the documentary, archival and visual sources and the life history narratives that constitute the main data sources of this project. I examine the process involved in

²⁶ Gary McCulloch and William Richardson. *Historical research in educational settings* (Buckingham, 2001).

the three phases of my research: design, data collection and data analysis. I conclude with a consideration of ethical issues and the process of verification.

Locating myself as the researcher

As a feminist narrative historian, I contend that gender is a central category of historical analysis and that political and economic as well as social and cultural histories are constituted in gendered terms.²⁷ I believe it is important to uncover my own background assumptions and beliefs and to begin by explaining my position as an “explanation” of the stance from which I come.²⁸ I am currently teaching in a post-graduate educational administration and leadership programme at the Auckland campus of Massey University. My reading about issues of educational leadership, organisational change and the processes of educational reform has helped to shape the questions in this research about the impact of educational reform and the complex relations between state and Catholic educators. Previously I was a teacher of English in three secondary schools, an experience that included a leadership role as head of department in State and Catholic schools. As a consequence of those experiences I found myself asking questions about the characteristics of Catholic religious and cultural values and the nature of the Catholic educational mission. I grew up as the oldest of seven children in a family who strongly adhered to the spiritual, educational and cultural values of contemporary Catholic society (see photo 2.1). Like my

²⁷ See P Maykut and R. Morehouse, *Beginning qualitative research: A philosophic and practical guide* (London, 1994).

²⁸ Marjorie Theobald, *Knowing women: Origins of women's education in nineteenth-century Australia* (1996).

siblings I attended Dominican primary schools at a time when all the teachers in these schools were religious Sisters. The secondary schools my sisters and brothers attended were all staffed by women and men religious; the “lay” teacher was a rarity; in a girls’ school she was usually the physical education teacher. As a “convent girl”, I experienced first-hand the religious and cultural values that characterised a Dominican secondary education (see photo 2.2). My parents belonged, as did many of their generation, to that cohort of “Irish” descended Catholics who had sufficient education to move from their working-class roots into public service occupations.²⁹ In my fathers’ case, he passed his “matric” and eventually “joined the bank”; my mother trained as a nurse.³⁰ A generation on from my own schooling, the ethnic and class composition of the Catholic community has changed and my children attend Catholic primary and secondary schools that are taught by an entire staff of “lay teachers”.³¹ As someone whose own history encompasses the pre-Vatican II world of Catholic schooling and the post-Vatican II era I am aware that “the past is a foreign country, they do things

²⁹ See Michael King, *God's farthest outpost: A history of Catholics in New Zealand* (Auckland, 1997); Anna Rogers, *A lucky landing: The story of the Irish in New Zealand* (Auckland, 1996); Christopher van der Krogt, "More a part than apart: The Catholic community in New Zealand society 1918-1940" (Doctor of Philosophy, Massey University, 1994).

³⁰ Like many of my parents’ generation, their career aspirations were interrupted by the Second World War.

³¹ Donald Harman Akenson, "No petty people: Pakeha history and the historiography of the Irish diaspora," in *A distant shore: Irish migration and New Zealand settlement*, ed. Lyndon Fraser (Dunedin, 2000), 13-24.

differently there”.³² By undertaking this research I have made a personal journey into that foreign country bringing my own history with me. In taking that journey I have been granted access to exceptional archival, documentary and photographic sources and the privilege of recording the stories of a unique group of teachers and incorporating those stories in an historical account of Catholic schooling in the years from 1943 to 1965, before they are lost forever.

Documentary, archival and photographic sources

In comparison with the “official” sources available to those studying state schooling, the historian of Catholic education faces particular conceptual and practical difficulties. This research draws on the unique and idiosyncratic range of “official” and “unofficial” sources including archival and documentary sources, many of which are only recently available to the historian. These include Catholic publications, papal encyclicals, Catholic school journals, manuals of studies and hymnals, photographs, census and the Australasian Catholic Directory. These sources provide data on general issues relating to Catholic education and offer particular insights into contemporary Catholic thinking. I have drawn extensively on contemporary Catholic publications such as the *NZ Tablet*, the *Month* and the *Zealandia* as they contain accounts of the “official” voice of the institutional, hierarchical Church, as well as some indication of the variety of opinion that existed in the wider Catholic community on issues relating to education.³³ As I have already detailed in my introduction, the evidence available to the historian of Catholic education is located in a range of formal and

³² The source of the quote is L.P. Hartley, *The go between* (Harmondsworth, 1958). 1.

³³ See Nicholas Reid, Evan, *The Bishop's paper* (Auckland, 2000).

informal libraries and archives. I have been granted access to the private archives of a number of religious orders, including the Dominican Sisters, the Sisters of Mercy Auckland, the Marist Archives in Wellington and the Auckland Archives of the Religious of the Sacred Heart. They have a range of school, convent and monastery-based sources. I have found useful material on issues such as the debates around educational policy in the Catholic diocesan archives in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch. The Hocken Library and Turnbull Collections hold invaluable school records and photographs, the Canterbury Museum has a unique collection of *NZ Tablet* photos and the National Archives has a variety of material including Department of Education files and school inspection reports.

Life history narratives

While archival, documentary and photographic evidence are important sources for this research, particularly in areas such as curriculum reform and the public debates concerning the Thomas Report, the life history narratives of teaching Sisters, Brothers and Priests provide an essential component of the research narrative. These are historical accounts that are not available to those who rely on documentary texts alone. The material from these interviews provides unique insights into Catholic education in the years from 1943 to 1965. The stories illuminate the complexity of the Catholic world and challenge, for example, understandings that dismiss the Catholic viewpoint of the Thomas reforms as “conservative”.

Life history research is primarily qualitative in nature. It is concerned with the way people make sense of their lives, their experiences and their constructions of the world. As a qualitative researcher I am the primary instrument for data collection and analysis. Conducted successfully, the life

history interview challenges the quantitative assessment and theoretical constructs of social science methodologies that can so easily service powerful constituencies within the social and economic order.³⁴ A close study of the lives of individuals reveals new perspectives on culture and history that are not accessible “when one remains on the formal cross sectional plane of observation”.³⁵

Thus a study of the life history narratives of Catholic educators enables a consideration of the intersection of individual lives with the “social structure, or cultural and organizational processes”³⁶ operating within Catholic education and in the wider New Zealand educational context. In this way the participants’ stories are positioned alongside a broader contextual analysis. By including oral, documentary, archival and visual forms of evidence in an account of Catholic education history, this study offers unique perspectives on a system that has historically been seen as “different” from the mainstream state education system. As I have already asserted in chapter one, it challenges the hegemony of accounts of education history that have excluded Catholic educators from consideration.

Research journal

From the beginning of the research process I kept a personal research journal. This took the form of an A4 exercise book and folders full of handwritten notes,

³⁴ Ivor F. Goodson and Pat Sikes, *Life history research in educational settings: Learning from lives*, ed. Pat Sikes, Doing qualitative research in educational settings (Buckingham, 2001). 8.

³⁵ Dollard, 1949, cited in Ibid.,8-9.

³⁶ G. Hitchcock & D. Hughes, 1989, 184, cited in McCulloch and Richardson, *Historical research in educational settings*. 16.

some of which were dictated in the wee small hours. It (intermittently) recorded the progress and frustrations of my research as well as observations and comments as I struggled to make sense of theoretical questions and practical issues. It also acted as an account of the development of the research questions and a record of all my excursions into unmapped territory. The journal had a number of advantages. First, it provided a platform for first impressions, reactions to ideas and events. It functioned as an informal planner and (frequently revised) timeline and a location for field notes on interviews and archival visits. Second, as an educator and former English teacher, I was practising the process I preached in the classroom for so many years. Like those engaged in the writing process in an English class, I was demonstrating the learning involved in writing this thesis. Third, writing often helped me to overcome writer's block. It enabled me to engage with ideas when I became confused by the interweaving of theoretical concerns or overwhelmed by difficulties. It is part of my aim as a feminist narrative historian to be honest. The research journal helped me to make visible my own processes as a writer and to acknowledge the positioning of my own history alongside the other narratives in this study.

The research process

Documentary and Archival Searches

Documentary and archival searches were an important part of my research. In Auckland a visit to the Catholic Diocesan Archives produced Catholic periodicals such as the *Month*, later renamed the *Zealandia*, an extensive collection of photos and a file containing the personal correspondence of Dr Noel Gascoigne, the negotiator for the Catholic Bishops at the time of the debates

around the Thomas Report (1944). The Catholic Seminary at Vermont St has a complete collection of the *NZ Tablet*. There is an extensive archive too run by the Marist Brothers and I was able to access selected items in a small informal collection of archival material kept by the Christian Brothers. The well-catalogued archives of the Sisters of Mercy hold a wealth of information regarding the education of Catholic girls. I found some valuable sources of information about Loreto Hall, the Catholic teachers' college, in the archives of the Religious of the Sacred Heart.

In Wellington I visited the National Archives finding a limited amount of information on Catholic education in Department of Education files including selected inspection reports for Catholic schools. The Turnbull Library has extensive material on particular aspects of Catholic education such as school records for Erskine College, a school run in Wellington by the Religious of the Sacred Heart. The archives of the Society of Mary are impressive. I was given access to material on Marist educational values, jubilee collections from schools and previously uncatalogued files on the debates around the Thomas reforms.

In Christchurch, a visit to the diocesan archives in a (very cold) turret in the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament unearthed three file boxes labelled "Education" which contained a goldmine: the correspondence between Dr Noel Gascoigne and the Catholic Bishops during the 1943-1944 Catholic-State negotiations over the Thomas reforms. A visit to the Canterbury Museum produced the recently catalogued photos of F.E. McGregor, a unique visual history of the world of Catholics in the 1950s and 1960s taken when he was the photographer for the *NZ Tablet*. I have been given permission to use some of these photos in this thesis.

A visit to Dunedin found me on home ground. The Dominican Sisters' Archives, now meticulously catalogued, provide an extensive range of source material on religious life. Another visit to the Hocken Library revealed even more of its marvellous collection of material on Catholic schools in the Otago-Southland area. I was able to access material on Christian Brothers' schools and schools run by the Dominican Sisters.

Selecting the participants

Research samples for life history are usually relatively small. Where the aim is to reveal shared patterns of experience or interpretation within a group of people who have the same characteristic, attribute or experience in common, a sample size will be adequate when "sufficient data have been collected and saturation occurs and variation is both accounted for and understood".³⁷ Thus, adequacy is dependent on the richness of the data rather than quantity.³⁸

The thirty-one life histories in this research are made up of twenty-nine male and female Catholic teachers and two Diocesan Directors of Education; all have lived their lives as Catholic educators. Taken together they represent more than thirty-one isolated life stories. When combined with documentary and visual evidence they make up a strong body of evidence: a narrative history of Catholic education. The research population of religious who taught in Catholic schools in the years from 1943 to 1965 is made up of a relatively small (and diminishing) number of women and men most of whom are now in their seventies, eighties and nineties. I wanted to include female and male participants from a wide range

³⁷ Morse, 1994, cited in Goodson and Sikes, *Life history research in educational settings*. 23.

³⁸ Ibid.

of teaching orders so I approached three female and three male religious orders for permission to undertake interviews with their members. A contact in each order suggested individuals who might be willing and able to be interviewed. I approached these individuals by letter and followed this with a telephone call. In the end I had twenty-three new participants; twenty-one teachers and two members of the diocesan clergy who had been former diocesan directors of Catholic education. I was also able to draw on relevant interview material from eight interviews done as part of my Masters research and notes from two informal interviews with Sisters of Mercy and an interview with my father who attended Catholic primary and secondary schools in the 1930s and 1940s. Only three individuals decided not to take part in this research. Because of the age of the participants I decided to undertake the interviews early in the research process. The majority were completed in 2003 including five interviews with Sisters of Mercy and Dominican Sisters who had retired to Ireland.

Preparation for the interview: The questionnaire and focus questions

The Sisters, Brothers and Priests who expressed an interest in taking part in an interview received an information sheet and an invitation to take part in the research (see appendix one). Those who wished to become participants were asked to complete a questionnaire giving biographical details and information about teaching, professional and leadership experience (see appendix two) and to sign a consent form (see appendix five). An outline of possible interview questions was sent to the participants before the interview (see appendix three). These acted as a general framework for the interview. Before the interviews took

place I made phone contact with each of the participants and arranged a suitable time and location for the interview.

The interview process

The interview process involved the tape-recording of each interview and the production of a verbatim transcript. This was checked by the participants. At the time of interview ten of the Sisters were resident in the North Island, four in the South Island and five lived in Dublin, Ireland. Five of the Priests and Brothers were resident in the North Island and seven lived in the South Island. I was lucky enough to have an opportunity to travel to Ireland in May 2003. Because of the limitations of travel, the amount of time for interviews was sometimes fairly limited. In Dublin I was able to spend an afternoon with two Dominican Sisters and an evening with three Sisters of Mercy during which group interviews were recorded. These “group interviews” acted as another strand, an opportunity to record a “collective life history” which focused on the “common background characteristics” of participants by means of a collective study of their lives.³⁹

I experienced a number of practical difficulties associated with doing life history research – faulty tape recorders, microphones placed a little too far from the participants, and noise interference. The worst moment came in Ireland when (still suffering from jetlag after a 27 hour flight) I pressed “play” instead of “record” for the second part of one of the interviews. Although I made extensive field notes and the Sisters sent me notes on the questions I had missed, it was a salutary experience and one I never wish to repeat.

³⁹ See Stone, 1987, cited in *Ibid.*,29.

The privilege of life history interviewing is in being offered the gift of someone else's story; the difficulties relate to the inevitable human error that accompanies the process of interviewing. Participants were sent a general framework of questions (appendix three); most participants had particular events and insights that they wished to include and I was happy to let them take the lead. Their responses acted as a prompt for in-depth questions on particular topics that I wished to explore. In the end the interview was shaped by the questions but not restricted to them.

A number of participants expressed initial anxiety when faced with a microphone and recording equipment but all seemed to relax once the interview was underway. Two participants asked me to turn the tape-recorder off so that they could tell parts of their story "off the record". Some breathed audible sighs of relief when the recording button was turned off. Much fascinating information was added at the end of the interview after the recording had finished.

Transcribing

Professional typists transcribed the interview tapes. To protect the privacy of the participants they signed a confidentiality clause (see appendix four). In addition all references to the participants' names have been removed and a code used to protect their identity. Nevertheless, because of the small size of the religious communities that each belonged to and the likelihood that the participants would be well known in the wider Catholic community, the participants were informed that though their confidentiality would be protected it could not be guaranteed. Each participant was informed that the tapes and transcripts would be kept securely during the course of the study and that I would comply with their wishes for their disposal at the end of the research process (see information sheet –

appendix one). Most of the participants requested a copy of the tapes and the final version of the transcript. Some participants expressed concern at the quality of the verbatim interview transcript. A reworking of the transcript that “tidied up” the “mistakes” of spoken English seemed to resolve the difficulties. Participants then had an opportunity to “member check” their transcripts and make their own corrections and deletions. The “final version” then formed the basis of the data analysis.

Data analysis: the analysis of narratives

Data analysis is an emergent process that is integrated with the other tasks in qualitative research design. As an inductive researcher I don’t always know ahead of time the people to interview, the questions that might be asked or the kinds of documentary and archival sources that I might find. A process of reflection and the development of working hypotheses focus my attention on particular data and then on refining or verifying hypotheses. This process is recursive and dynamic. It becomes more intensive as the study progresses, particularly once all the data is gathered.⁴⁰

This research employs an approach called “analysis of narratives”. In this approach a data base consisting of archival, documentary and life history texts is examined to discover themes that appear across the sources. Two types of paradigmatic analysis are possible: (a) one in which the concepts are derived from previous theory or logical possibilities; and (b) one in which the concepts are inductively derived from the data. This latter approach involves the

⁴⁰ See Sharan. B. Merriam, *Qualitative research and case study applications in education* (San Francisco, 1998).

development of concepts from the data rather than the imposition of previous theoretically derived concepts. It is the model for data analysis used in this study. A process of inductive analysis moves from identified commonalities in the data to the development of categories and concepts. Through a recursive process, the concepts are reshaped until they reach a “best fit”. In this way new knowledge is generated from a wide range of oral, documentary, visual and archival evidence. This method has some links to Grounded Theory with its emphasis on the development of theoretical categories directly from an analysis of the collected data.⁴¹ In this study, however, I used a wide range of “historical” methods of data collection including a preliminary scoping exercise, a process of data collection from archival, documentary and oral sources followed by a situated “reading” of the written, oral and visual texts and narratives, rather than the simultaneous collection and analysis of data, coding and sampling processes involved in Grounded Theory research.

Coding the data

In coding the data I read and reread the interview transcripts and documentary and archival data and assigned shorthand designations which identified information categories and the interpretative constructs that related to analysis. Each interview transcript was colour coded. Three primary codes were further broken down into different subcategories. Once colour coded, the transcript data for each category was identified by name code and page number for ease of checking before being cut out and transferred into plastic storage bags.

⁴¹ See Kathy Charmaz, "Grounded theory: Objectivist and constructivist methods," in *Strategies of qualitative inquiry*, ed. Yvonna S. Lincoln (Thousand Oaks, 2003), 249-91.

- Green The educational reforms:
- Debates over issues of state surveillance and control;
 - Secular versus religious values;
 - The views of Catholic teachers; and
 - The impact on classroom practice.
- Yellow The formation of Catholic teachers:
- Religious values;
 - Professional training; and
 - Gender issues.
- Orange Curriculum:
- Secular;
 - Religious and cultural values; and
 - Gender issues.

Developing theory

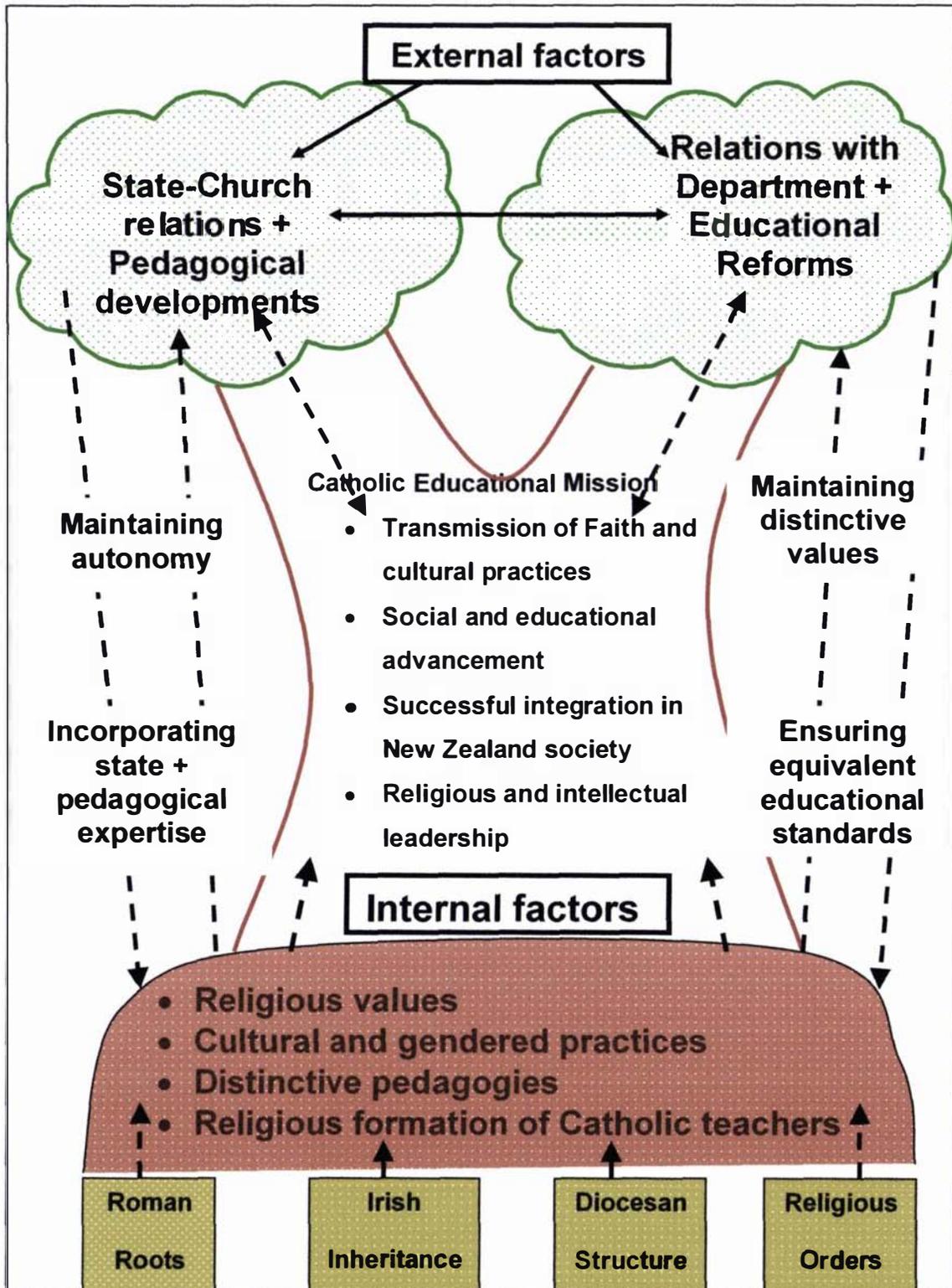
The data in this research required continued analysis beyond the formation of categories. Initial analysis of the oral, documentary and archival data pointed to a number of key issues in New Zealand Catholic education history that went beyond my original focus on the impact of the Thomas reforms on the lives of Catholic educators. The evidence suggested a number of important questions about the distinctive religious, cultural and social values implicit in the Catholic educational mission in the years 1943 to 1965, a period of significant expansion and educational reform.

A model of the Catholic educational mission

In developing this model (see diagram 2.1) I have represented the Catholic educational mission as a pohutukawa tree with roots, a base, a trunk, branches and canopy, and aerial roots. While there are tensions and complexities that are simplified in such a diagram, my intention is to convey the mission as a dynamic one which grows, changes and adapts to differing circumstances while drawing sustenance from its roots and renewal from the environment in which it stands. The roots represent the historic influences on Catholic education to be considered in detail in part two of this thesis: Roman roots, the Irish influence, the diocesan structure and the characteristics of teaching religious orders in New Zealand. The base, fed by the roots, presents the durable values that permeate the educational mission: religious values, cultural and gendered practices, the distinctive pedagogies of teaching orders and the religious formation of Catholic teachers. Together the roots and the base represent “internal” factors. The trunk of the pohutukawa, which represents the mission itself, draws strength and sustenance from the base and the roots and the ability to adapt and renew itself from the branches, canopy and aerial roots. In the years of this study, 1943 to 1965, this mission had four goals: the transmission of faith and cultural practices; the social and educational advancement of Catholic pupils; their successful integration as citizens in New Zealand society; and the promotion of religious and intellectual leaders for the Catholic community. Together, the branches, canopy and aerial roots represent the “external” or environmental factors that help to shape the goals of the educational mission in a particular historical context. In the years from 1943 to 1965 these included the relations between Church and State, the impact of pedagogical ideas and educational policy-making, particularly the Thomas Report, which I will discuss in detail in part three. The Catholic

educational mission in these years was influenced by pedagogical ideas and shaped by the nature of Church-State relations. In order to protect the distinctive identity of Catholic schools, Catholic educators worked to maintain their autonomy from state control. At the same time they incorporated selected pedagogical developments and utilised state expertise in order to ensure the ongoing viability of the educational mission. In their relations with the Department of Education and in the context of the educational reforms they worked to maintain the distinctive religious and cultural values of Catholic education while working with to protect the educational standards of Catholic schools (see part four of this thesis).

Diagram 2.1: The Catholic educational mission, 1943-1965 as a “pohutukawa tree”: A dynamic model of growth and adaptation.



Verification

Decisions about whether an account of events is “true” are guided by criteria such as objectivity, which checks that the methodology is largely free from researcher bias, and “representativeness”, that the study’s sample of people, places and events accurately represents the characteristics of the population of people and events to whom the findings will be applied.⁴² Qualitative researchers have historically maintained no single stance or consensus on issues such as validity and reliability in qualitative studies.⁴³ Nevertheless, as a qualitative researcher I value accuracy, generalisability and the possibility of replication as the hallmarks of a scholarly qualitative account. In this study I used a number of verification tools to ensure the accuracy of my information and the reliability of the data collection process.

Internal validity

Internal validity is concerned with the accuracy of the information in a study and whether it matches a given reality.⁴⁴ In this study triangulation was used in six ways to ensure internal validity.

Triangulation

1. Data source triangulation: The life histories provide a baseline of thirty-one sources of information that can be matched against each other. Other

⁴² See R. Murray Thomas and Dale L. Brubaker, *Theses and dissertations: A guide to planning, research, and writing* (Westport, Connecticut, 2000). 14.

⁴³ See John.W. Creswell, *Research design: Qualitative & quantitative approaches* (Thousand Oaks, 1994).

⁴⁴ Merriam, *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*.

sources of evidence include letters, documents, photos, statistical data and education reports.

2. Member checking: Participants were given the opportunity to check the content and accuracy of the interview transcripts.
3. Peer triangulation: At several points in the research, material was sent for checking and comments to other people with research skills or knowledge about this field. I have consulted widely within the research and Catholic education community and have taken the opportunity to have independent coding and checking of the interview transcripts.
4. Peer review: I have presented papers at national and international education and history of education conferences and submitted three articles based on different chapters in my thesis to international refereed journals (see chapter one). The feedback on these and their consequent acceptance for publication has functioned as an external audit of the research process.
5. Methodological triangulation: The research used interview, questionnaire, research journal, archival, documentary and photographic sources.
6. Supervision: The research methods and processes were closely scrutinised by my supervisors, Professor Roger Openshaw and Professor John Codd, who were in close communication at all stages of the research. Sections of the work were submitted for comment and feedback at regular intervals.

External validity - reliability

While the intent of qualitative research is to form a unique interpretation of events, some generalisability may be possible for the categories or themes that

emerge from the data analysis. The research categories in this thesis might be applied with a different group of teachers to explore the validity of specific findings such as my contention in chapter eight that Catholic teachers held a range of views about the impact of the Thomas reforms. The data collection protocol outlined in this chapter might also be replicated. However there are limitations on the reliability of qualitative research – the replication of investigations using the same processes in different contexts.⁴⁵

Because life history research occurs within a specific context, this makes it difficult to replicate it exactly in another context. It is unlikely that interviews with a different group of Catholic teachers would produce the same responses. And another researcher is likely to produce different conclusions even from the same evidence. However statements about my position as a researcher – the central assumptions, the selection of participants, my biases and values– all enhance the study’s chances of being replicated. My use of life history narrative alongside other documentary and archival evidence should enable a consideration of whether the same patterns, events or thematic constructs can be replicated in a different context. I have reported a detailed protocol for my data collection in order to facilitate the replication of a similar research process or a comparative study in another setting.

Ethical considerations

There is a wide body of literature on research processes that discusses the importance of considering the ethical issues in studies involving human

⁴⁵ Creswell, *Research design: Qualitative & quantitative approaches*.

subjects.⁴⁶ As a researcher I have an obligation to treat the research participants with care, sensitivity and respect. This is of particular concern in life history research, which is intrusive, invading as it does the life of the participants who frequently reveal sensitive information. Issues such as access and acceptance, anonymity, confidentiality, informed consent, codes of practice and ethical dilemmas must be addressed. The following safeguards were put in place to protect the participants' rights. First, this research was guided by the Massey University *Code of Ethical Conduct for Research and Teaching involving Human Subjects*. Second, before the research began, each of the participants selected to interview was contacted by phone to find out whether they were interested in taking part in the research. The purpose of the study was discussed, the parameters of the interview process and a general indication of the interview questions was given. Third, a letter further outlining the process and including an Information Sheet and Consent Form followed this (see appendices one and five). Fourth, once the consent form was returned an interview time was arranged to suit the convenience of the participants and focus questions for the interview were sent. Fifth, the people who transcribed the taped interviews signed a Confidentiality Agreement (see appendix four).

Participants were informed of their rights:

- to decline to take part and to withdraw at any time until the completion of the interview process;
- to refuse to answer any particular question at any time;

⁴⁶ Ibid, Merriam, *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*; Donna M. Mertens, *Research methods in education and psychology: Integrating diversity with qualitative & qualitative approaches* (Thousand Oaks, 1998).

- that the participant's name would not be used unless permission is given;
- to ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- that any issues raised during the course of the interview that require support or counselling, may be more properly dealt with by a trained counsellor;
- that confidentiality will be ensured as far as possible although as participants may know each other this cannot be guaranteed. However the researcher would take the following steps:
 - only the researcher and the typist who transcribes the tapes would listen to the tapes. He/she will sign a confidentiality agreement;
 - the tapes and transcripts would be stored in a secure place;
 - the participant's name would not be used unless he/she gives permission;
 - living persons mentioned in the interview would not be named.

Referencing

This research study used the Chicago 15th B style for bibliographies which is based on the Author-Date citation described in the 15th edition of the Chicago Manual of Style.⁴⁷ Full given names of authors are used except for authors who always use initials only (for example E.B. Cubberley). I used the Chicago 15th Note style for references that are included in footnotes and the Endnote 6 software to format the bibliography and the footnotes.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ *The Chicago manual of style: The essential guide for writers, editors and publisher*, 15th ed. (Chicago, 2003).

⁴⁸ EndNote, Version 6.0.2 1998-2002, Thompson ISI Researchsoft www.endnote.com

I have chosen to use footnotes rather than the APA (American Psychological Association) style of referencing for two reasons. Firstly the restrictions in the APA format make it difficult for the essential information to be recorded in such a way as to be accurate and accessible and secondly the essentially idiosyncratic style of much of the source material warrants the use of footnotes which (because of the detail possible in Chicago footnoting style) makes it easier for future historians to locate the sources.

Glossary of terms

I have included a glossary of terms in appendix six as a way of assisting the reader to become familiar with the specialist terms used in this thesis. In this way the reader can fully understand something of the concepts that underpinned the Catholic world view, the issues that were important to the Catholic community and the assumptions that were integral to Catholic life during the period of this study.

Part two:

Forging the Catholic educational mission

Introduction

In Part two of this thesis I will present an historical perspective on the religious, cultural and political factors that shaped the Catholic educational mission in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. It is important for the reader to understand these trends as they enable a clearer appreciation of the historic influences on the Catholic educational mission and the nature of the issues Catholic educators faced during the years of this study.

Chapter three analyses the significance of policies that promoted the transmission of faith and devotional practices that strengthened assumptions of a dependent and submissive laity. I consider the impact of shifting discourses of the Church's role in the world on new and more active forms of spirituality and the faith practices of Catholics as well as Catholic understandings about the role of men and women in the Church's salvation mission. The chapter examines the rationale for a Catholic school system whose mission was to transmit the faith and maintain the complex of religious practices that characterised the Catholic identity in the first part of the twentieth century.

In chapter four I examine the key historical influences on the construction of a separate Catholic education system in nineteenth-century New Zealand, the

development of a Catholic educational mission to provide a basic primary education to the children of the Irish working-class and a classical and accomplishments secondary education to the select few. I consider the redefinition of the Catholic educational mission to include secondary education from the 1920s as Catholic educators increasingly worked to ensure the citizenship, social and economic mobility of the growing numbers of pupils going on to a secondary schooling.

In chapter five I consider ways in which the religious formation of Catholic teachers worked to ensure the maintenance of Catholic values and the success of the Catholic education mission. New religious were socialised into particular religious and cultural practices and were constructed as “expert” teachers capable of transmitting the faith and Catholic cultural practices to the next generation of pupils. The chapter will consider the values implicit in the process of religious formation including notions of mission, service and sacrifice, values that were handed on in the schools.

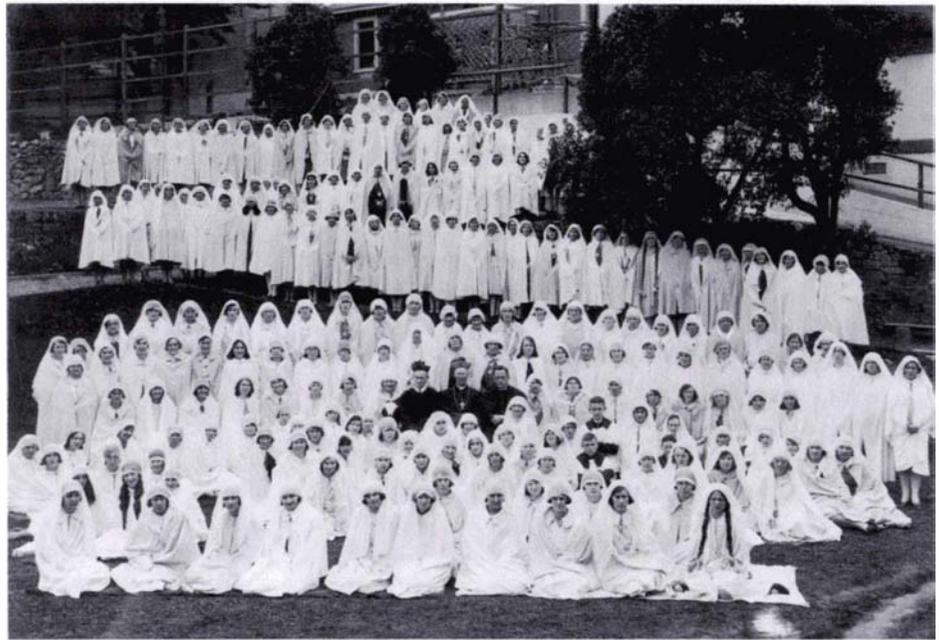


Photo 3.1: Girls in Catholic schools were encouraged to join the Children of Mary seen here at a gathering with Bishop Whyte, St Dominic's Dunedin, c.1933 *Hocken Library, Uare Taoka o Hakena, University of Otago, NZ*



LEGION OF MARY

Back Row: Fr. John P., Fr. J. McDonnell, Rev. Fr. Bunney, Fr. DeFolien, Fr. Wilson, Fr. G. H. H. Rev. Fr. J. J. J.
 Front Row: Fr. J. J. J., Fr. J. J. J.

Photo 3.2: Veneration of Mary and respect for the family were reinforced in organisations like the Legion of Mary seen here at Christian Brothers' High School Dunedin c.1950s *Hocken Collections Uare Taoka o Hakena*



Photo 3.3: Dedication of family home to Sacred Heart. Throughout New Zealand homes, schools and parishes were placed under the protection of the Sacred Heart. F.E. *McGregor Photograph Canterbury Museum*



Photo 3.4: First communion was an essential “rite of passage” for Catholic children. Girls dressed as “brides of Christ” while boys wore white shirts and ties, and, as in the case on one boy at St Dominic’s Helensville c.1931, white shoes. *Hocken Collections Uare Taoka o Hakena*

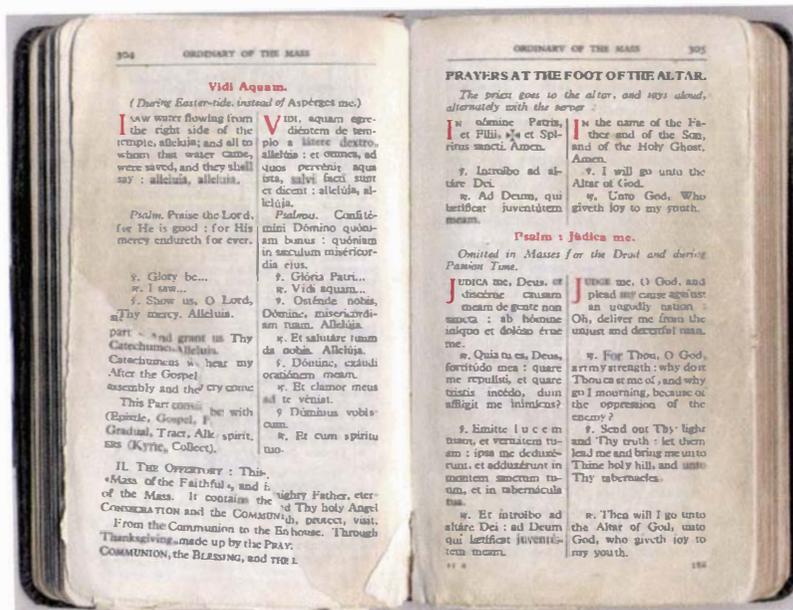


Photo 3.5: By 1939 the “recited” or, more accurately, the “dialogue Mass” was being offered to pupils in New Zealand. The photo shows a “New Sunday Missal” with the ordinary of the Mass in Latin and English (1957) *Author’s collection*



Photo 3.6: The convention that men would take the public roles while women served privately and remained hidden from view applied more strongly to Nuns than to other women as is evident at the opening of St Dominic’s convent at Helensville in 1930. On this occasion Bishop Liston and representatives of the clergy are on the veranda while the Dominican Sisters remain out of sight in the parlour. *Courtesy of the Dominican Sisters.*

Chapter Three

Creating a Catholic spiritual identity:

The matrix, the embracing, pulsating womb of his religion. The ritual, that was the first thing you thought of.⁴⁹

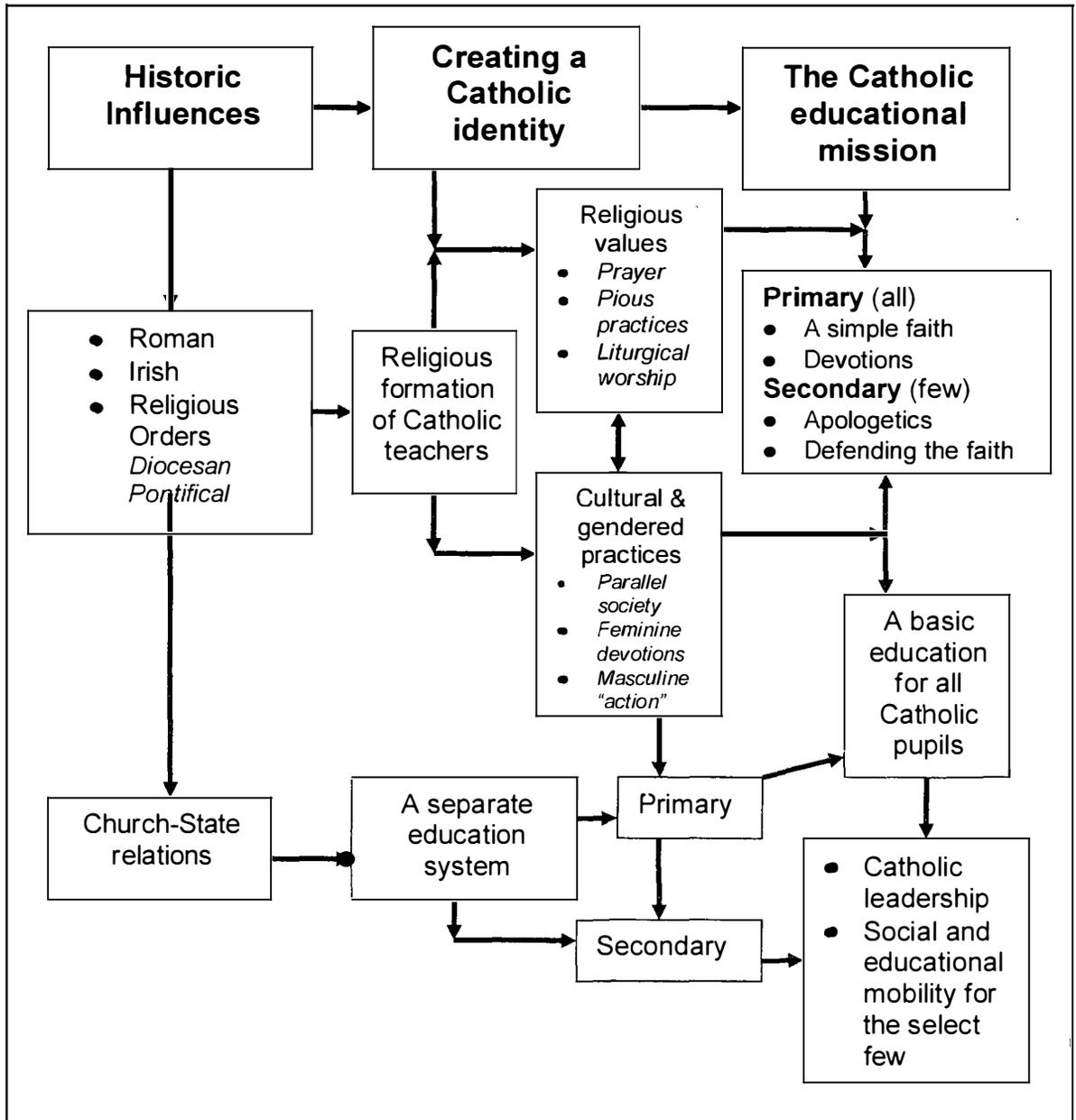
Introduction

The following chapter is divided into seven sections, each detailing principal historic trends in Catholic spiritual and religious identity in the period from the late nineteenth until the mid-twentieth century. As this chapter is concerned with nineteenth century and early twentieth century influences on the identity of Catholics, it relies for the majority of sources on primary and secondary archival, documentary and photographic sources. I have also utilised selected extracts from life history accounts where they relate to the themes highlighted in the chapter. The chapter examines the significance of Roman-based policies that reflected a deep suspicion of the secular world and provided the justification for an education system that would ensure the transmission of the faith and the maintenance of religious and cultural values. It considers the influence of an austere, authoritarian Irish inheritance that was clerically dominated and worked to protect Catholic schools from the incursion of secular values and the spectre of

⁴⁹ Maurice Duggan, "Faith of our fathers," in *Maurice Duggan: Collected stories*, ed. C.K. Stead (Auckland, 1981), 29.

state interference and control. It examines the significance of pious devotional practices that aimed for a basic religious awareness among Catholics and promoted aspects of belief and practice which most distinguished Catholics from other Christians. The chapter considers the impact of liturgical reforms and new and more active forms of spirituality that reflected a twentieth century Church increasingly concerned with the social, economic and educational advancement of Catholics. The chapter then examines Catholic understandings of gender including the influence of distinctive beliefs about men and women's role in the Church's salvation mission to humanity and concludes by arguing that the Catholic educational mission was founded on the desire to maintain a distinctive spiritual and cultural identity among New Zealand Catholics. The model of the Catholic religious and spiritual identity in the years 1850 to 1924 as discussed in this chapter is presented in diagram 3.1.

Diagram 3.1: A model of the Catholic education mission, 1877-1924



Roman roots

The Catholic Church, an organisation that was “at home in a feudal, patriarchal, agrarian society”,⁵⁰ faced by the late nineteenth century the challenge of an

⁵⁰ Massam, *Sacred threads*. 17.

increasingly industrialised urbanised world and the loss of its temporal power.⁵¹ In New Zealand, as in other countries, the Church responded to attacks on its previously privileged position in European countries by developing a conservative and dogmatic ideology which was termed ultramontanism.⁵² The anti-modernist dogma of Pius IX, (1846-1878), in particular, reflected a deep suspicion of the secular world and was a major influence on Catholic educational values. The 1864 *Syllabus of Errors*, for example, included Proposition 48, which condemned any “system of teaching youth which is separated from the Catholic faith and from ecclesiastical authority” and which “totally, or at least primarily, sees as its purpose the knowledge of natural science and of the social life of the world”.⁵³ The Catholic Church in New Zealand, by insisting on having its own schools, mirrored the defiance articulated by the international Church.⁵⁴

⁵¹ In September 1870 Pope Pius IX lost political control of the Papal States and with it his remaining political power. He became “the prisoner of the Vatican”. It was not until the Lateran Treaty of 1929 that the rights to the Vatican territory were acknowledged, and not until 1958 that Pope John XXIII made pastoral visits outside that territory. Richard P. McBrien, *Catholicism*, 2 vols., vol. 1 (Minneapolis, 1980).

⁵² Ultramontanism, literally those who look *beyond the mountains*, the Alps, (to Rome) refers to a movement which originated in France which was distrustful of all rational reflection in theology and looked to the pope for direction. It was part of a reaction against attempts by commentators like John Henry Newman to develop a theological and philosophical engagement with the modern world.

⁵³ Pope Pius IX, The syllabus of errors condemned by Pius IX (www.papalencyclicals.net, 1864 [cited 1 June 2005]), available from <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Pius09/p9syll.htm>.

⁵⁴ Terence J. Fay, *A history of Canadian Catholics: Gallicanism, Romanism and Canadianism* (Montreal, 2002); O'Donoghue, *Upholding the faith*; Spenser, "Interim Report."

As one of the participants in this study, a former diocesan director of Catholic education who attended a Catholic school in the 1930s, put it, the Church responded to what it saw as a “hostile world” by creating an education system that would ensure the transmission of the faith and the maintenance of religious and cultural values:

What we were doing was, what they are still doing is proposing a faith which is, in many ways denied by the culture in which we live. We’ve always done that... what the Catholic schools were trying to do was trying to show, quoting St Peter in his epistle, if anyone asks you, you must give a reasonable account of your faith... inculcating a faith that went far beyond in significance and particularly in relationship to human destiny.⁵⁵ (DJ7-8)

The purpose of Catholic schooling was to provide an education for the whole of life, to “guide man to the highest state of perfection of which he is capable”.⁵⁶ In order to enable the correct development of the child’s whole character of mind and heart this education must take place in an environment infused by a religious atmosphere. It was not sufficient to rely on the direct teaching of Catholic doctrine: the school must be infused by a Catholic atmosphere and a spirit of prayer. And while the Church stressed the importance of the educative roles of parents, it argued that many Catholic parents lacked the education and expertise necessary to fulfil their responsibilities.⁵⁷ As a Dominican Sister explained it:

⁵⁵ I have used Times Roman font, indented, single spacing to identify interview extracts.

⁵⁶ See John Redden, D. and Francis Ryan, A., *A Catholic philosophy of education* (Milwaukee, 1956). 130.

⁵⁷ Many nineteenth century Catholic parents were of working-class Irish origins and had only a rudimentary education – if any. See Noel Gascoigne, *The book of the congress, 1940* (Wellington, 1941).

The parents sent their children to school and trusted them to our care... they accepted this type of teaching. They wanted the Sisters to teach their children... they handed over the children and the attitude was, you know, wait until you get to the nuns. You see if they were having any troubles at home... they trusted the teachers to teach their children but they trusted us too much. (OC6)

Because education was crucial to human destiny and integral to the Church's salvation mission to humanity, it would not and could not surrender its authority to impart religious instruction and to ensure that parents discharged their responsibility to educate their children in the faith.⁵⁸ A deep suspicion of secular values meant that state education, even when it included religion as an additional subject, was seen by the Church hierarchy as fundamentally flawed.

While recognising that the ultimate aim of education is "salvation", Catholic philosophy also recognised that there were other more immediate aims, the right to education and training for "the successful pursuit of [a] temporal vocation" to enable each young person to take his or her place as "a worthy member of society" – a vocation that was seen as having moral and spiritual implications.⁵⁹ The aim to integrate Catholic pupils as successful members of New Zealand society was to become a key part of the expanded educational mission to secondary schools. It was an ambition that would result in some tension between the religious and the "temporal" goals of Catholic education as we shall see in the context of the Thomas reforms in part three of this thesis.

⁵⁸ Patrick O'Farrell, *The Catholic Church and community: An Australian history*, revised ed. (Kensington NSW, 1985).

⁵⁹ Redden and Ryan, *A Catholic philosophy of education*. 134.

An Irish inheritance

The character of the Catholic educational mission in New Zealand was formed not only by direct Irish immigration but also by French, English and Australian influences – the last partly a result of the large numbers of Irish who arrived in the country via a stopover across the Tasman. However from the 1880s, the association between Irishness and Catholicism had strengthened as a result of the arrival of large numbers of Irish clergy, and teaching religious (see diagram 3.1).

⁶⁰ For New Zealanders of Irish descent, Christianity in the form of the Catholic faith was fundamental to Irish identity. Patrick O'Farrell has depicted the Irish style of Catholicism which came to prominence in New Zealand (and Australia) and which was reinforced in the schools for so long as being clerical,

authoritarian and non-intellectual:

In the new century, earlier, from the 1880s, with the influx of the Irish teaching orders, male and female, the lay Irish were pursued for their own religious good not only by their priests, but by these religious teachers often working to that end through the children parents placed in their charge.⁶¹

Nevertheless until 1869, the Catholic Church in New Zealand had two French bishops and a French clergy who followed a policy of cooperation with civil authorities. However, by 1872, Bishops Jean-Baptiste Pompallier and Philip Viard had gone and the Church had two Irish bishops, Patrick Moran, who seemed intent on stirring up sectarian feeling between Irish-Catholics and

⁶⁰ Rogers, *A lucky landing*.

⁶¹ This quote is from Patrick O'Farrell, *Vanished Kingdoms: Irish in Australia and New Zealand* (Kensington NSW, 1990), 78. I have used Courier New 11 point font, indented and single spacing for quotes from documentary and archival sources.

Protestants and Thomas Croke. The choice of two Irish bishops was in part a result of demographic changes, yet it also resulted from advice given by Cardinal Paul Cullen, former Archbishop of Dublin, one of a number of Irish prelates on whom the Vatican came increasingly to rely when developing educational policy. At the same time, the numbers of French clergy coming to New Zealand began to diminish, while the numbers of Irish priests, nuns, and brothers increased. These changes in ecclesiastical personnel combined with the explosion in the Irish population as a consequence of the gold rushes and the government-sponsored immigration programmes in the 1870s, produced a change in the character of the New Zealand Catholic Church.⁶² The move towards an “Irish” model of Church was endorsed by Roman authorities who saw the provision of Irish clergy and religious for Irish laity as part of the work of catching up with the Catholics who had travelled ahead of the Church in the vast population movements of the nineteenth century. The migrants’ religious needs had to be ministered to and the normal structure of the Church – its institutions and crucially its discipline – had to be built around them.⁶³ As a Dominican Sister explains, in the 1870s and 1880s the religious needs of her Irish immigrant forebears were served by Irish clergy such as the newly elected Irish bishop for the Dunedin diocese, Bishop Patrick Moran:

We were lucky because Central Southland was very Irish. My grandmother, my mother’s mother was one of the first white women to come to Central Southland. She came from Galway and my grandfather came from Wicklow... In Wrey’s Bush in the early days... Bishop Moran went there for Mass. My grandfather served Mass and he asked him where did you come from? And the bishop said, “Wicklow, Ireland”. (OC3)

⁶² King, *God’s farthest outpost*.

⁶³ Laracy, “Bishop Moran, Irish politics and Catholicism in New Zealand.”

A crucial part of Bishop Moran's responsibility and one that was to become central to the Catholic mission in nineteenth-century New Zealand, as I shall demonstrate in chapter four, was the creation of an autonomous schooling system that would maintain Irish cultural and religious values and transmit the faith to the next generation of Catholics. "Irish" clergy also brought with them from Ireland a determination to maintain the independence of Catholic education from the spectre of state interference and control.

The version of Irish Catholicism that emerged in New Zealand in the 1880s was characterised on the one hand by an austere, authoritarian and puritanical outlook and on the other by pious devotional practices. French Jansenistic ideas which became influential in the training of Irish priests by the middle of the nineteenth century stressed the sinfulness of human beings, the fallen state of human nature and the necessity to control the body through discipline, surveillance and control of sexuality. The Jansenistic inclinations of the diocesan clergy combined with the new civilising role of the religious orders to become the dominant worldview of Irish society in the context of the 1845 to 1848 Great Potato Famine.⁶⁴ Puritanical attitudes to sex outside of marriage were reinforced in the years after the Great Famine by the growing authority of the clergy and rigid patterns of inheritance that demanded that large numbers of men and women married late or not at all. By the late nineteenth century the Irish-Catholic Church had become a clerically-dominated hierarchical organisation, its population "moulded into a thoroughly sacramental and Mass-

⁶⁴ T.Fahey, 1994, cited in O'Donoghue, *Upholding the faith*. 133.

going Church”. It was a Church which produced sufficient numbers of nuns, brothers, and priests to spread this brand of Catholicism throughout most of the British Empire, including Australia and New Zealand (see diagram 3.1).⁶⁵

The particular characteristics of the predominantly Irish religious orders that brought these Irish cultural practices to New Zealand will be considered in more detail in chapter four. What is relevant at this point is that the Irish clergy and teaching orders who accompanied the Irish migrations to the farthest corners of the globe came with a particular educational mission: to ensure the maintenance of faith among Catholics of Irish descent and to provide a basic schooling for the children of the poor, one designed, as we shall see in the following, to promote pious practices and to prepare them for their humble state in life.

Preserving the faith: pious works and devotions

The Irish clergy and teaching orders that came to serve in the New Zealand educational mission brought with them a range of “pious practices” designed to transmit the Catholic faith and to maintain Irish cultural values. It was a spirituality that emphasised prayer and pious practices, as distinct from the contemporary Protestant stress on salvation by faith alone (see diagram 3.1). For Irish-Catholic families, the rituals of prayer and devotion were an important part of family life as a Dominican Sister, who grew up in Southland in the 1920s and 1930s, recalled:

My parents had a strong faith and we were a very Catholic family. They didn't have the opportunity that is available today but they had strong faith... spirituality was stronger than what you get today, because you

⁶⁵ J.J. Riordáin, 1980, cited in *Ibid.*, 134.

automatically said your morning prayers, grace at the table and evening prayer. Dad always had the trimmings on the end of it. You took your turn with the lovely glass bottle and took holy water around the family when you were old enough. (OC2)

Young Catholics were encouraged to join sodalities, such as the Sacred Heart and the Legion of Mary. These associations of lay Catholics were formed under the direction of a priest and while they aimed to sanctify the individuals in them through prayer and good works, they also provided a Catholic cultural and social life away from the temptations of secular society (see diagram 3.1).

E.R. Simmons has commented that the sodalities “strengthened the links between family and Church, reinforcing the work of the parish Mass, priestly visitation and Catholic school”.⁶⁶ Catholics also developed their own sports clubs, dances and card evenings. A Dominican Sister recalls that shortly before she entered religious life in 1936 she took part in a carnival run by a Catholic social club:

I was in the social club up there at St Mary’s. The way it worked was you ran a euchre party in your own home. You rolled up the carpets and had games and charged one shilling entry. You provided the prizes and supper and you moved from house to house to raise the money... I happened to be the queen of spades in the queen carnival we were running. I didn’t come top because Cath McConnell who was the queen of hearts had perhaps more wealthy sponsors than I had and she raised more money. (OW6)

These clubs provided a kind of parallel society to the general New Zealand community, the ultimate aim being to make it more likely that good Catholic boys married good Catholic girls.⁶⁷

⁶⁶ Ernest Simmons, *A brief history of the Catholic Church in New Zealand* (Auckland, 1978).

87.

⁶⁷ King, *God’s farthest outpost*.

Perceptions of Catholics as poor, uneducated and working-class influenced the kind of spirituality promoted in New Zealand. The New Zealand hierarchy, working on the assumption that a simple flock required a simple faith, encouraged those aspects of Catholic belief and practice which most distinguished Catholics from other Christians. Devotional practices learned in school were part of a spirituality which aimed to promote a basic level of religious awareness among Catholics and to protect them from the secular values of the outside world (see diagram 3.1). This current of “feminine” devotional Catholicism drew on an individual’s capacity for emotion and affective experience (see diagram 3.1). As the following will illustrate, New Zealand Catholics were encouraged to honour the Blessed Virgin Mary, to take part in public veneration of the Blessed Sacrament and to focus on the redemptive power of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Devotions to Our Lady were designed to instil a “simple faith in and submission to Christ”.⁶⁸ Pupils were encouraged to see Mary as a powerful intercessor on behalf of humankind, a mother figure

who is in labour again until Christ be formed in us, for her office is to be the nurse of our childhood in Him, to be the guardian and protector of our growth... as formerly on earth she watched over and fed and taught and tended Him in Nazareth.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ “Devotion to Our Lady” *New Zealand Catholic Secondary Schools Journal*, April-May 1947, 51, Hocken Library, Uare Taoka o Hakena, University of Otago, NZ - hereafter HL.

⁶⁹ “Devotion to Our Lady” *New Zealand Catholic Secondary Schools Journal*, April-May 1947, 50. HL.

Mary “in labour again”, is a reference to St Paul’s letter to the Galatians — “my little children, for whom I am again in the pain of childbirth until Christ is formed in you”.⁷⁰ In an extended metaphor the extract suggests that by bringing Christ into the world, Mary becomes mother to all humanity. She was also venerated as Virgin and Queen, the model for religious communities, the protector of Catholic women and the safeguard of marriages. As I will detail later in the chapter, women, as mothers, could share in Mary’s role of bringing salvation to humanity. Mary was honoured in the 1950 definition of the Assumption,⁷¹ in special celebrations to commemorate her appearances at Fatima and Lourdes, and in devotional practices such as the rosary. Mary’s role as intercessor on behalf of humanity is clear in the first verse of the hymn “Hail Queen of Heaven” written by John Lingard and sung by generations of school children:

Hail Queen of heav’n, the ocean star,
Guide of the wanderer here below;
Thrown on life’s surge, we claim thy care –
Save us from peril and from woe.
Mother of Christ, star of the sea
Pray for the wanderer, pray for me.⁷²

⁷⁰ See St Paul to the Galatians Chapter 4, Verse 19. *The Holy Bible: New revised standard edition – Catholic edition*. (Nashville: Catholic Bible Press, a division of Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1991).

⁷¹ The Assumption is a dogma defined in 1950 by Pope Pius XII that the body of the Blessed Virgin Mary was taken directly to heaven after her life on earth had ended. See McBrien, *Catholicism*.

⁷² Newman (ed.) *The Living parish hymn book*, no 104.

The unique status of Mary was underscored by the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception proclaimed in 1854 by Pius IX, and confirmed by her appearance to Bernadette Soubirous at Lourdes in 1858⁷³. Girls in Catholic schools were encouraged to emulate the submissive other worldly Mary, the paradoxical virgin and mother.⁷⁴ A sodality for girls – the Children of Mary – was given papal approval in 1847. Established in Auckland and Dunedin during the 1870s, the Children of Mary flourished throughout the country during the first half of the twentieth century.⁷⁵ Its popularity is evidenced in the 200 strong gathering of women who celebrated the 1933 diamond jubilee reunion of the St Joseph's branch in Dunedin⁷⁶ (see photo 3.1) and the presence of more than 1200 Children of Mary at the women's Mass during the 1938 centennial celebrations in Auckland.⁷⁷ For boys, the veneration of Mary was reinforced through organisations like the Legion of Mary, which for adolescents had single-sex membership and met after school (see photo 3.2). Boys learned notions of purity and modesty and to expect their wives to be like Mary, all of which served to reinforce Catholic boys' emotional commitment to the family. It was a

⁷³ In 1854 Pope Pius IX defined the dogma that held that the Blessed Virgin Mary was free from sin from the very first moment of her existence. In 1858 a peasant girl, Bernadette Soubirous, claimed to have visions of the Virgin Mary. At the same time a spring appeared, and miraculous healings were reported. See *NZ Tablet*, 22 November 1939, 7.

⁷⁴ O'Donoghue, *Upholding the faith*.

⁷⁵ van der Krogt, "More a part than apart". 74.

⁷⁶ *NZ Tablet*, 22 November 1933, 6.

⁷⁷ See also *NZ Tablet*, 16 March, 1938, 33.

masculinity which differed in important ways from contemporary expectations as I will illustrate in chapter four.⁷⁸

Traditional Catholic values emphasised Mary's role as a protector against evil, yet as the fear of communism grew during the Cold War years, devotion to Our Lady of Peace took on an increasingly political tone. The 1944 edition of *Our Studies*, an instructional magazine for Christian Brothers, identified immorality, communism and the war as the most pressing of the problems faced by the modern world and pointed to Fatima as the divine remedy for them all.⁷⁹ A preoccupation with communism had been a growing feature of Catholicism since the Spanish Civil War of 1936 when General Franco was portrayed as defending Catholicism against the persecutions of atheistic materialism. Paradoxically, a more "active" participation by the laity was associated with devotion to the Blessed Virgin who was also portrayed as submissive and other worldly. By taking on a more "masculine" political tone Marian devotion became an important signal to Catholics that action in the world could be a legitimate expression of "action" and spiritual values (see diagram 3.1). Thus, devotion to the cult of Our Lady of Fatima was promoted alongside the merits of joining a trade union and upholding Catholic moral values. Both came to be seen as valid ways of living out a Christian commitment in the world. The expectation that the laity would engage with the world, even if it was only to do battle with it, contrasted with an earlier spirituality that emphasised non-involvement with the

⁷⁸ O'Donoghue, *Upholding the faith*. 109.

⁷⁹ "Fatima" *Our Studies* May 1944, 7, Christian Brothers' New Zealand Archives - hereafter CBA. The 1917 apparitions at Fatima in Portugal where Mary was identified as Our Lady of the Rosary and Queen of Peace became the focus of anti-Communist devotions.

world and its snares.⁸⁰ A second form of devotional practice based on reverence for the presence of Jesus in the Eucharist⁸¹ was an important part of the ritual of Catholic life until the middle of the twentieth century. School children were encouraged to visit a church to pray in front of the “Blessed Sacrament”, to attend Benediction and to take part in the Forty Hours devotions.

While most devotional practices were essentially private in nature, Eucharistic processions constituted the most public expression of Catholic religious distinctiveness. They were sometimes held in public on holy days such as the feast of Christ the King. The following describes a two hour Eucharistic procession from St Benedict’s to the Auckland Domain which was held at the climax of the 1938 Catholic centennial celebrations in Auckland:

Singing hymns and carrying banners, 11,000 Catholics joined the procession as thousands of onlookers lined the streets. School children in white, Children of Mary and the Guard of Honour Sodality in their distinctive colours, uniformed Scouts and Guides, Holy Name men, Yugoslavs in national costume, Maori and mission priests, Hibernians in regalia, a detachment from the French cruiser *Jeanne d’Arc*, ex-servicemen and chaplains, religious brothers and clergy, and about twenty boys and girls scattering flower petals all preceded the Blessed Sacrament. The monstrance was carried by Liston under a canopy held up by Marist Brothers, surrounded by a guard of honour made up of prominent laymen, followed by the New Zealand bishops and visiting prelates, with the Sacred Heart College boys as a rearguard. Once the processionists had joined the 10,000 or more other people already waiting in the Domain, they listened to an address by Father

⁸⁰ Massam, *Sacred threads*. 92.

⁸¹ Eucharist literally means thanksgiving. The liturgy of the Mass is also known as the Eucharist.

Francis Owen Dudley, of the Catholic Missionary Society in London on the authenticity of the Catholic Church and the significance for Catholics of Christ's presence in the Eucharist. Bishop Liston gave the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament before the singing of *Faith of Our Fathers*.⁸²

As the extract details, the Eucharistic procession enabled the whole Catholic community to publicly re-affirm its values, its distinctiveness and its cohesion. Included were all the trappings of the Catholic Church: vestments, music, and the regalia of sodalities, bishops, priests and religious brothers (women religious were not expected to take a role in public demonstrations of Catholicity – see further discussion of this later in the chapter). The Eucharistic procession was an opportunity for school children to take part in a public ritual of Catholic life alongside sodalities, Catholic scouts and guides, ex-servicemen, Maori, a contingent from a French cruiser and representatives of the Yugoslav Catholic community. All surrounded the bishop in an affirmation of national and international Catholic solidarity. Devotions like these functioned essentially as a populist affirmation of the sacramental power of the priesthood. Implicitly, they cast the laity into a passive role and promoted a ghetto mentality among New Zealand Catholics, a world view that was to remain a significant feature of Catholic life until the ecumenical developments of the Second Vatican Council.⁸³

⁸² van der Krogt, "More a part than apart". 101-02. See also *NZ Herald*, 7 March 1938, 13; *NZ Tablet*, 9 March 1938, 43-44.

⁸³ In 1960 Pope John XXIII established the Secretariat for the Promotion of Christian Unity and invited "non-Catholic" Christians as official observers at Vatican II. See McBrien, *Catholicism*. 648.

They formed part of the affective, stereotypically feminine devotions⁸⁴ that underpinned the spiritual identity of New Zealand Catholics. They were part of the cultural and religious practice of Catholic schools until the mid-twentieth century.

A third form of devotional practice gained a strong following in the twentieth century. Devotion to the Sacred Heart became a mechanism for rekindling the tenderness and warmth that had been lost in the Church after the rigidities of the Reformation and the austerity and fearfulness of the Jansenistic era.⁸⁵ Parish priests preached emotively and directly on the physical sufferings that Jesus had endured to redeem the world, and invited reparation to the heart of Jesus for the “coldness and ingratitude with which His love is met by so many of the men and women [for] whom He died to save from Hell”.⁸⁶ In 1899, Leo XIII dedicated the whole world to the Sacred Heart, and in 1919 Australasia was similarly dedicated by the reading of an Act of Consecration in parish churches.⁸⁷ Throughout New Zealand, schools and parishes were placed under the patronage of the Sacred Heart. Pictures of the Sacred Heart adorned classrooms and the home (see photo 3.3). A Religious of the Sacred Heart, who was born in 1911, remembers the importance of devotion to the Sacred Heart to her family:

In those days there was the practice of devotion to the nine first Fridays when you went to Holy Mass and received Holy Communion on nine consecutive Fridays which was a very difficult effort on the part of

⁸⁴ Massam, *Sacred threads*. 168.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶ *NZ Tablet*, 31 May 1923, 29.

⁸⁷ *NZ Tablet*, 26 June 1919, 17-19, 25-26; also 3 July 1919, 22, 27.

children at school... My parents had that devotion and I think that added fuel to my call to the Sacred Heart. (SW2)

What was essentially a strongly Roman devotion was sanctioned with indulgences and closely associated with the sacraments of the institutional Church, in particular the Eucharist.⁸⁸ Devotion to the Sacred Heart was strongly associated with the Sodality of the Sacred Heart, a parish structure which married Catholic women were generally expected to join. Popular hymns also promoted the emotive basis of this devotion.

To Jesus' Heart, all burning
With fervent love for men
My heart with fondest yearning
Shall raise its joyful strain.⁸⁹

Many Catholic homes were dedicated to the Sacred Heart, a formal ceremony led by the parish priest that aimed to protect home life over the competing claims of the New Zealand social environment and the temptations of young people to too much “freedom from restraint... especially in their relations with one another”.⁹⁰
(See photo 3.4)

Whether they were practiced in the school, the parish or as a public demonstration of commitment to Catholic values, devotions characterised the defensiveness of Catholics stubbornly restating their fundamental values to a wider community, by which they believed they had been spurned. By promoting them, Gregory Haines has argued, the Church treated the laity “like a herd” offering a sugary diet of anti-intellectual spirituality well beyond the time that

⁸⁸ Massam, *Sacred threads*.

⁸⁹ *The Australian Hymnal* no 11.

⁹⁰ *Manual of the Sacred Heart*, 39.

ignorance and scarce resources could justify it.⁹¹ As I will detail in part four of this thesis, the devotional practices that characterised Catholic identity in the latter part of the nineteenth and early years of the twentieth century continued to shape the religious and cultural practices of Catholic schools in the years of this study. They were seen as crucial to a Catholic educational mission whose goal was the transmission of faith and Catholic culture (diagram 3.1). Yet, as I will argue in the following chapter, much of the Church's effort, particularly in education, was concerned with breaking down the link between Catholicism and working-class status.⁹² There were tensions between this style of spirituality and the aspirations of lay people for educational, professional and social success. Designed for a laity with limited education and leisure, devotional practices reproduced a spirituality that aimed to be distant from the world and uninvolved with secular challenges. They reflected assumptions about a dependent and submissive laity which I will argue were at variance with the goals of a twentieth century Church increasingly concerned to achieve the social, economic and educational advancement of Catholics at a time when increasing numbers of New Zealand Catholics (although overrepresented in the lower socioeconomic groups) were gaining access to government service and some professional groups.⁹³ The tensions between a spirituality that was passive and dependent and Catholic

⁹¹ Haines, 1978, cited in Massam, *Sacred threads*. 19.

⁹² Lawrence B. Angus, *Continuity and change in Catholic schooling: An ethnography of a Christian Brothers College in Australian Society* (London, 1982), Massam, *Sacred threads*.

⁹³ van der Krogt, "More a part than apart". 42-43.

ambitions to take up their rightful place in the secular world will be explored further in part three.

Engaging with the world: Active forms of Catholic spirituality

The 1925 introduction by Pius XI of the feast of Christ the King into the formal calendar of the Church signalled the birth of a new and more active form of spirituality that promoted the engagement of Catholics with social issues and the world. The philosophy underpinning this development was ratified first by Pope Leo XII in his 1891 encyclical, *Rerum Novarum*, and reiterated in Pope Pius XI's 1931 encyclical, *Quadragesimo Anno*.⁹⁴ "Catholic Action" promoted an increased involvement of Catholic adults in the Church's wider salvation mission. (Men) were encouraged "to acknowledge the kingship of Christ" and to take Christian action in a world torn by war and threatened by the rise of totalitarian regimes.⁹⁵ While the first encyclical restated the primacy of natural law, in the second, Pius XI emphasised a social model of Church that offered a "third way" between "Liberalism" and "Socialism-Communism" and a shift in emphasis from relations between the individual and the State to a focus on the Church's relationship to civil society. In it Pius highlighted the responsibilities

⁹⁴ Pope Pius XI, *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931 [cited 1 June 2005]); available from http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xi/encyclicals/index.htm.

⁹⁵ Pope Pius IX, *Quas Primas* (1925 [cited 1 June 2005]); available from http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xi/encyclicals/index.htm. See also *NZ Tablet*, 24 February 1926, 25.

that Catholics had to “be at the service of social action, especially in ... Christian secular institutions”.⁹⁶

The metaphor of Christ as “King” became a vehicle for “a Catholicism ready to embrace the world”.⁹⁷ A hymn that became most popularly associated with this new “active” spirituality abandons the emotive language of “O Jesus heart all burning” to affirm Christ’s qualities of majesty and power:

Hail, Redeemer, King Divine,
Priest and Lamb the Throne is Thine,
King Whose Reign shall never cease,
Prince of everlasting Peace.

CHORUS: Angels, Saints and Nations sing:
Praised be Jesus Christ, our King!
Lord of Life, earth, sky and sea,
King of Love on Calvary.⁹⁸

While the devotional tradition of Catholic spirituality had emphasised the more stereotypically “feminine” characteristics of passivity and withdrawal from the world, Christ the King emphasised “masculine” models of leadership and activity in the temporal world (see diagram 3.1). However even as Catholic spirituality took on new characteristics, Catholic schools continued to promote views of gender that reflected the contemporary stereotypes of women as passive and inhabiting the private world, while activity in the temporal world, including spiritual work, was constructed as assertive and masculine in character.⁹⁹

⁹⁶ Roger Aubert, *Catholic social teaching: An historical perspective* (Milwaukee, 2003). 221-23.

⁹⁷ Massam, *Sacred threads*. 71.

⁹⁸ *Southern Cross*, 27 October 1950, 1.

⁹⁹ Massam, *Sacred threads*.

There was no sodality under the patronage of Christ the King. The more active spirituality associated with it was expressed in organisations such as the Holy Name Society, which was initially established by Bishop James Liston in Auckland in 1926 and rapidly became the largest sodality for men in New Zealand. Although it was essentially a pious organisation, it lobbied publicly against immoral literature and films.¹⁰⁰ St Vincent de Paul Society, on the other hand was an early expression of active spirituality among the laity. Its members visited poor families, organised food and the distribution of other necessities, disseminated religious literature and sponsored the Apostleship of the Sea, opening the first Catholic Seaman's Institute in Dunedin in 1926.¹⁰¹ Christopher van der Krogt notes that while St Vincent de Paul was an exception to the predominantly devotional lay associations founded during the nineteenth century, it lacked their mass membership.¹⁰²

The most significant group promoting a form of active spirituality among lay women was the Catholic Women's League, founded in 1931 in Auckland by Bishop Liston. Established as a direct response to the Depression, the League aimed to "unite Catholic women to work along charitable, intellectual and social lines".¹⁰³ Its members were encouraged to promote Catholic moral and social ideals as well as alleviating distress.¹⁰⁴ However it tended to uphold traditional

¹⁰⁰ *Zealandia*, 1 July 1937, 5.

¹⁰¹ *NZ Tablet*, 16 June 1926, 21.

¹⁰² van der Krogt, "More a part than apart". 87.

¹⁰³ *Month*, 1 September 1931, 10.

¹⁰⁴ *Month*, 1 September 1931, 10.

expectations of women's social responsibilities, much of its focus being to "assist" in the work of other Catholic organisations such as the St Vincent de Paul Society and the Church's orphanages, as well as catering for the annual charity ball.¹⁰⁵

Increasingly from the 1930s onwards, "Catholic Action" became the catchphrase of lay spirituality. While Pius XI defined it as "the participation of the laity in the apostolate of the hierarchy"¹⁰⁶ it was never intended as an independent apostolate. It eventually came to mean any organised lay activity led by the clergy and under the authority of the bishops.¹⁰⁷ Nevertheless its rationale was underpinned by new understandings of lay spirituality. For example it was no longer seen as sufficient for laity to restrict their roles to dispensing charity within the Catholic community and to defending the Church against attacks from the outside. A Mercy Sister recalls that she was inspired to get involved in social justice issues in the late 1940s after she had left school and before she entered religious life:

I mixed with a group of people who felt that God was real in their lives; also I was heavily involved in the Catholic youth movement in Lower Hutt. I was the girls' president of the Catholic youth movement while Tom Williams [later to become Cardinal Williams] was the men's president. We had a strong social justice focus. (MNI-2)

As the *NZ Tablet* explained it, the laity was now called to "conquer the new paganism" to "save souls" and to take part in "the complete reconstruction

¹⁰⁵ van der Krogt, "More a part than apart". 88.

¹⁰⁶ *Zealandia*. 2 March 1939, 7.

¹⁰⁷ van der Krogt, "More a part than apart".

of our civilization on Christian principles”.¹⁰⁸ While Catholic Action was not directly political, individual Catholics were encouraged to promote Catholic moral principles by participation in politics.¹⁰⁹

The philosophy of engagement with the moral and social issues of the times that underpinned Catholic Action had limited application in schools. Pupils in schools run by the Religious of the Sacred Heart were encouraged “in the last years of their education” to take part in “moral and spiritual training... as defined by the Sovereign Pontiffs”. The purpose of this training was to work “for the extension of the Reign of Jesus Christ in the world”.¹¹⁰ The few students encouraged to examine the Church’s social teachings were those who progressed to the senior secondary level and studied “apologetics” (see diagram 3.1). However, the main aim of apologetics was to help students defend their faith and to demonstrate the truth of beliefs such as “the existence of God, the divinity of Jesus, the Catholic Church as the one true Church, and the infallibility of the Pope”. Only a few schools emphasised Catholic social philosophy.¹¹¹

The social encyclicals that underpinned the more active forms of spirituality also gave New Zealand Catholics another reason for justifying their separate education system. As O’Donoghue puts it, schools were encouraged to utilise “discussion and instruction” to argue against the evils of capitalism and

¹⁰⁸ *NZ Tablet*, 4 October 1933, 2.

¹⁰⁹ *NZ Tablet*, 20 April 1932, 3.

¹¹⁰ *Spirit and plan of studies in the Society of the Sacred Heart of Jesus*, (Farnborough, 1958). 41-43.

¹¹¹ Bryk, Lee & Holland, 1993, cited in O’Donoghue, *Upholding the faith*. 75.

communism. Yet, as in Australia, the majority of New Zealand Catholics were not exposed to such discussion since they did not go on to senior secondary school. For the majority of pupils, the experience of religious education involved learning prayers, committing doctrines to memory in an unquestioning manner, and listening to and reading about the “story” of the Church.¹¹²

From the beginning of the twentieth century the Church sought to extend its influence in society via a more active laity. Changes in Catholic social philosophy which encouraged Catholic engagement with the social and moral issues of the modern world are exemplified in the new feast of Christ the King, the Holy Name Society and groups who functioned under the banner of “Catholic Action”. As I will demonstrate in part four of this thesis, these developments helped to shape a mid-twentieth century educational mission that increasingly promoted the social and economic success and the educational advancement of all Catholic pupils. Nevertheless, the new spirituality remained under clerical control and its practice in schools continued to reflect an educational mission focussed on the transmission of a basic understanding of faith and the maintenance of a distinctive cultural identity.

Liturgical developments

At the heart of the spiritual identity of New Zealand Catholics was their participation in the Liturgy of the Mass (see diagram 3.1). Although Jansenistic influences from an Irish clergy who had been trained in France during penal times had long discouraged frequent communion among the Irish, by the beginning of the twentieth century Vatican decrees encouraged the laity to

¹¹² *ibid.*, 76.

receive Communion often, and children to first receive the Sacrament at about seven years – what was seen as the age of reason.¹¹³ First communion, prepared for and celebrated at primary school, became an essential rite of passage for Catholic children. Girls dressed as “brides of Christ” in white dresses and veils and boys wore white shirts with sashes (see photo 3.4). An Irish Dominican Sister recalls her first communion in the 1940s:

I remember my First Communion day. There were no buses on at that time and we had no car... So my dad and I walked halfway into town and I dressed in the veil. We got half way there and my dad turned to me and said, “Do you want me to carry you ___?” I was so indignant. I was dressed in my lovely gear, my new shoes and my veil and I couldn’t imagine him carrying me so I said, “No”... There must have been about fifty girls and fifty boys. I remember the priest saying, “She was worth waiting for”, and he took me by the hand. (OB6-7)

However, a more frequent reception of Eucharist remained an individualistic practice, confirming the tendency for Catholics to view the Mass as a context for their own personal devotions rather than a collective act of worship.¹¹⁴ The passive role of the congregation was reflected in references to “hearing Mass”. For much of the liturgy, Catholics tended to ignore the priest offering Mass, in Latin, on behalf of the people. Instead they prayed the Rosary or read from a prayer book.¹¹⁵

From the beginning of the twentieth century, Church authorities moved to utilise schools to promote key changes in liturgical practice that aimed at

¹¹³ See Pope Pius X, *Quam Singulari* (1910 [cited 1 June 2005]); available from <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Pius10/p10quam.htm>. See also *Zealandia*, 5 December 1935, 6.

¹¹⁴ van der Krogt, “More a part than apart”. 107.

¹¹⁵ *Zealandia*, 12 September 1935, 6.

increasing the participation of ordinary Catholics. In 1903 Pius X had called for the restoration of Gregorian chant as a model for liturgical music and the introduction of a missal.¹¹⁶ Yet acceptance of the liturgical changes was slow in New Zealand. Resistance took the form of a prolonged controversy after one contributor to the *Tablet* argued that there should be no singing during the liturgy.¹¹⁷ In order to ensure the success of the new liturgical changes, Church authorities introduced the practice of liturgical music in Catholic schools. A 1936 Church Commission appointed by Archbishop Thomas O'Shea produced detailed regulations and a list of approved liturgical music for the Wellington archdiocese. Pupils in Catholic schools were instructed to spend at least half an hour each week learning Gregorian chant and other church music.¹¹⁸ Text-books were prepared for the teaching of liturgical music to school-children.¹¹⁹ My father, who attended Christian Brothers' High School in the late 1930s, remembered learning Gregorian chant after he joined the school choir in the Fourth Form:

They used to give us hymn books and the music was four lines instead of five and the notes were funny square things...The man I particularly remember was Father Loughnan... he was a lovely gentle man and he had a wonderful way. The boys were the sopranos and the trebles, the little kids and we were supposed to be the tenors and bases. As soon as your voice broke they collared you for it. The organist was Dr Vernon Griffiths.... It was all Gregorian chant. (DG 22-23)¹²⁰

¹¹⁶ van der Krogt, "More a part than apart". 108-09.

¹¹⁷ *NZ Tablet* from 18 March 1936, 21, 36, to June 1936, 6-7, 29.

¹¹⁸ *NZ Tablet*, 21 April 1937, 23.

¹¹⁹ *NZ Tablet*, 16 November 1932, 37.

¹²⁰ Interview with Des Graham, 30 September 2004

By April 1937 the *NZ Tablet* noted that Pius X's instructions were "gradually beginning to be observed, not only in one diocese, but from end to end in our country".¹²¹

Liturgical reformers also encouraged the use of the missal among pupils in order to replace prayer books such as *Key to Heaven* and *The Garden of the Soul* (which contained only the unchanging "ordinary" of the Mass). There was some resistance to the missal which was available in English or with the Latin text in parallel columns and which contained the "propers" that varied according to the liturgical season (see photo 3.5). To "the uninitiated" the missal was "a complex and puzzling book;"¹²² finding the correct prayers at the correct time required a good understanding and some practice. Nevertheless, the Sisters of the Sacred Heart, who maintained stronger links with religious education in continental Europe than did most of the other teaching orders, taught the use of the missal at their school in Timaru many years before it became common practice.¹²³

By 1939 the "recited" or, more accurately the "dialogue Mass" was being offered to pupils in New Zealand. In a dialogue Mass, not only the responses but also some of the principal prayers such as the Gloria, the Credo, and the Sanctus were said aloud by the congregation. Trained by Rev. Dr. J.T. McMahon of Perth, the girls of Sacred Heart College and the Grail girls participated in a

¹²¹ *NZ Tablet*, 28 April 1937, 5.

¹²² *NZ Tablet*, 30 March 1938, 5.

¹²³ van der Krogt, "More a part than apart". 110. See also *Month*, 19 November 1929, 22.

dialogue Mass in the Cathedral in 1939.¹²⁴ Pupils of the Christian Brothers' High School and St Dominic's College as well as Scouts and Guides took part in dialogue Masses in Dunedin during the same year.¹²⁵ My father recalled learning the responses to the dialogue Mass as an altar boy:

I still remember how the Mass started. "Introibo ad altare Dei" (I will go to the altar of God) and the altar boy replied, "Ad Deum, qui laetificat juventutem meam". (Unto God, who giveth joy to my youth)¹²⁶ (DG24)

The strongest support for the liturgical reforms also emerged among the newer, more active religious groups like the Grail and the Catholic Action organisations, whose members sought not only to sanctify themselves but also to exercise a Christian influence on society at large.¹²⁷

Thus Church authorities utilised the Catholic school system to transmit new religious and liturgical practices that resulted from changed understandings of lay spirituality and to encourage forms of religious leadership acceptable to the Church among pupils. Although the distrust of modern society and its values continued to influence Catholic spiritual values in the 1920s and 1930s, there was a growing awareness that Catholics needed to take a more active part in the apostolate of the Church and to find ways to approach the challenges of the modern world. Along with the emergence of an active spirituality which promoted participation in the Church's official worship, the laity was increasingly encouraged to participate in the apostolate of the clergy and the

¹²⁴ *NZ Tablet*, 27 December 1939, 17.

¹²⁵ *NZ Tablet*, 29 November 1939, 5.

¹²⁶ Interview with Des Graham (DG24).

¹²⁷ *NZ Tablet*, 27 December 1939, 19.

hierarchy although as we have seen they continued to remain under its authority. However, as the following section will argue, despite a conditional acceptance of a more active role for the laity in society and the need for a greater participation in the liturgy, Catholic understandings of gender remained conservative in practice and outlook.

Assumptions about gender

While the Catholic Church has been popularly thought of as monolithic and unchanging, this thesis will demonstrate that it is important to acknowledge the divergent streams that form the complex spiritual, political and cultural heritage of New Zealand Catholics. In particular, as a feminist narrative historian I argue that any analysis of the Catholic educational mission needs to take account of gender, not only by considering the religious experience of men and women but also by acknowledging the significance of discourses of gender and power within the educational structures of institutional Catholicism.¹²⁸

Constructions of gender that underpinned the Catholic educational mission reflected contemporary stereotypes about men and women in society. They also incorporated distinctive understandings of the role of women and men in the Church's salvation mission (see diagram 3.1). These included:

1. historical traditions of the renunciation of sexuality and pleasure;
2. the high value placed on celibate religious life;

¹²⁸ See also Massam, *Sacred threads*; Strevens, *In step with time*; Christine Trimmingham Jack, *Growing good Catholic girls: Education and convent life in Australia* (Melbourne, 2003).

3. distinctive beliefs about the role of men and women in the Church;
4. models of women as temptress, virgin and mother;
5. the distinctive role of mothers in transmitting faith and values to the next generation;
6. understandings about the public role of men and the location of women in the private world of the family caring for others;
7. assumptions about the location of power and authority within the home and in wider society.

Catholic understandings about gender differed in key respects from that in contemporary New Zealand society and from other Christian denominations. Beliefs about the body that promoted the spiritual significance of the renunciation of sexuality and pleasure were inherited in early Christian communities from Stoic philosophies that repudiated pleasure and avoided uncontrolled passion. Then there was the view prevalent in the late Roman imperial period that masculinity and male integrity were dependent on virtues of detachment, self-sufficiency, autonomy and the avoidance of softness. For Ambrose, the fourth century Bishop of Milan, virginity was the perfect expression of integrity because it guaranteed a body and soul that was kept whole and entire. Integrity was seen as a male virtue, partly because women's physical integrity was dispersed by the menstrual cycle. In addition, medieval theologians such as Jean Gerson accused women of being determined seducers who threatened male autonomy. As Philip Sheldrake puts it these cultural values were reinforced by the theological link "gradually forged between the wholeness of our presumed destiny in heaven involving the resurrection of the body and the

desire to anticipate this through the bodily intactness of virginity here and now".¹²⁹ Thus, as I will consider further in chapter four in the context of the religious formation of Catholic teachers, the precondition for a deep spirituality became the absence of sexual activity: a commitment predicated on a spirituality of detachment and separation which privileged males and excluded females.

Consecrated celibate life was given a high value in the educational mission of the Church. It was promoted as the most noble and holy state that could be achieved in this life. As a Marist Brother who entered religious life in 1939 recalled:

There was a very strong emphasis that "religious life" is better than say "lay life"... There was a Marist Brothers' book called Christian Perfection... that would quote St Bernard, "a religious falls into sin less frequently, rises more quickly". St Bernard had a great list of these things you see... When Vatican II came in, we had to forget all that stuff. (FP5)

The Brother is referring to a text by St Bernard celebrating the advantages of religious life over life "in the world".

Is not that a holy state in which a man lives more purely, falls more rarely, rises more speedily, is bedewed with grace more frequently, dies more confidently, is purified more quickly, and rewarded more abundantly.¹³⁰

Thus Catholic pupils were taught that religiously-motivated celibacy was "more excellent" than marriage, even though individual married persons might be "more perfect in the sight of God than individuals who are in a state of virginity

¹²⁹ Philip Sheldrake, "Spirituality and sexuality," in *Embracing sexuality: Authority and experience in the Catholic Church*, ed. Joseph A. Selling (Aldershot, Hampshire, 2001), 23.

¹³⁰ See "Advantages of a religious life" Saint Bernard, *New Zealand Catholic Secondary Schools Journal*, February 1946, 105.

or celibacy”.¹³¹ The call to priesthood or to life in a religious order was presented as a privileged invitation to serve God. A pupil seen as a potential candidate might be invited to consider whether or not she or he had a vocation to religious life, as a Religious of the Sacred Heart recalls:

We had Mother Biehler to take us for little talks as we grew older in the school. At one of the little talks she asked me, “When are you thinking of entering?” I hadn’t mentioned a word to her... so the vocation, as we call it, the call from God came to me quite early, and it was helped along by such holy people. (SP5)

Young people were encouraged to consider a religious vocation; to ignore a religious vocation was seen as a selfish refusal of God’s will which could lead to unhappiness and even damnation. As a Mercy Sister explained:

I always felt that God was part of my pathway... I did have a strong sense that God was calling me. In one particular Eucharist I had a sense that God was asking me to progress in the spiritual life and I just answered that sense. (MNI)

In the context of the expansion of Catholic parishes, schools and hospitals that took place at the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the value of a dedicated workforce of priests, brothers and especially sisters was particularly high. As Massam rather provocatively puts it, by promoting the consecrated religious state as the most noble and holy state one could achieve in this life, the Catholic Church was simply following a general bureaucratic trend in its preference for non-salaried celibate workers who had no responsibilities other than their jobs.¹³²

¹³¹ *Marist Messenger*, 1 June 1934, 43-44.

¹³² Massam, *Sacred threads*.

Nevertheless, the New Zealand Church hierarchy were aware that the majority of the laity would choose to marry. Marriage was accepted as suitable for the “ordinary” individual, although the literature on marriage made it clear that consecrated virginity of the religious was the highest state. Single life lived in celibacy was next, while marriage presented as “a good and possibly sanctifying life, the choice of unspectacular souls”.¹³³ In this Catholics and Protestants inherited a very different teaching on the ideal vocations of men and women. While the Protestant reformers of the sixteenth century had repudiated clerical celibacy and monasticism, in favour of exalting the roles of wife and caregiver or husband and provider, for Catholics life “in the world” continued to be regarded as an inferior option by comparison with the celibate priesthood or the religious life. However, as we shall see, Catholic teaching on the roles of married men and women fell well within the constructions of respectable opinion found in contemporary New Zealand society.¹³⁴ As a Dominican Sister explained it, “Girls were there to leave school and get married later and have children” (OW6).

Constructions of women in the Catholic Church have appeared in two opposed forms: on the one hand, Mary the virgin and mother of Christ, and on the other Eve, the temptress and the downfall of man.¹³⁵ Added to the mixture were New Zealand ingredients. The usual understandings of Mary as the model of perfection, submission and other-worldliness were laced notions of Irish purity

¹³³ See *Ibid.*, 28.

¹³⁴ van der Krogt, “More a part than apart”. 243.

¹³⁵ O’Farrell, *The Catholic Church and community*.

and mixed with concepts of the ideal pioneer woman.¹³⁶ It is likely that notions of “Little Irish Mother” as a stalwart, pioneer Irish-Catholic woman in the bush represented little more than nostalgia, particularly as the proportions of Catholics living in a rural environment began to decline.¹³⁷ Donald Akenson, however, notes a darker side to the myth, an Irish distrust of women exemplified in Dan Davin’s novels and short stories:

One facet of this distrust is simply a male recognition that women can be very tricky (that their subservient position in Irish marriages means that women must use their wits is not a point recognised). This distrust of female cunning begins at an early age for Davin’s Irish Catholic New Zealanders... Another form of anti-female feeling is aversion to marriage (recall that the Irish in the homeland had the highest marriage age and lowest marriage rate in the western world).¹³⁸

The dichotomous images that “set women on a pedestal dangerously close to perdition’s cliff” had, as we have seen, a long history within Judeo-Christianity.¹³⁹ Images of Eve as temptress and of Mary as virgin and mother of God were common in Catholic publications. Mary was presented as the model

¹³⁶ Sally Kennedy, *Faith and feminism: Catholic women's struggles for self-expression* (Sydney, 1985).

¹³⁷ Catholics, like the rest of New Zealand, became increasingly urban. In 1921 47.84% of Catholics lived in the country’s fourteen largest towns, a figure slightly less than the overall population (49.22%). By 1936 the proportions had increased to 51.98%, slightly more than the overall population (51.66%). van der Krogt, “More a part than apart”. 22.

¹³⁸ Akenson, *Half the world from home*. 117.

¹³⁹ Massam, *Sacred threads*. 26.

for all women, whether they were married, single, mothers, homemakers or widows:¹⁴⁰

She is the patron of virtue, alike to maiden, wife and mother. She exhibits the virginal modesty becoming the maid, the conjugal fidelity and loyalty of the spouse and the untiring devotion of the mother.¹⁴¹

Catholic pupils were encouraged to practice purity. Preaching at a Mass for St Philomena's Ex-Pupils' in 1936, Bishop James Whyte spoke of the need for "good women both single and married"; nevertheless most of his sermon was devoted to the value of virginity.¹⁴² The misogynist tradition within the Judaeo-Christian culture that emphasised women as temptress was (and is) deeply embedded in the New Zealand Catholic tradition. The Church claimed both moral superiority on the basis of its stress on purity and at the same time harboured important doubts about the standards of its female members.¹⁴³ Catholic moralists frequently protested against immodest contemporary fashions, especially in evening dress and sport's wear.¹⁴⁴ In 1925 the Convent of the Sacred Heart in Timaru, encouraged by Archbishop Redwood, established *Our Lady's League*, in which members promised in writing never to wear clothing which would displease the Holy Virgin. They were encouraged to make sure that

¹⁴⁰ *NZ Tablet*, 30 February 1922, 22; *Zealandia*, 8 July 1937, 10; Gascoigne, *The book of the congress, 1940*. Women in paid employment were a notable exception to this list.

¹⁴¹ *Zealandia*, 18 July 1935, 10.

¹⁴² *NZ Tablet*, 12 August 1936, 7.

¹⁴³ Akenson, *Half the world from home*. 115; Kennedy, *Faith and feminism*. xiv.

¹⁴⁴ *Zealandia*, 24 September 1936, 7; *Marist Messenger*, 1 December 1937, 23.

sleeves on dresses extended at least to the elbow.¹⁴⁵ A Dominican Sister who attended Catholic schools in the 1920s remembered some of the difficulties caused by the narrow and rigid attitudes to sexuality:

I had a few unpleasant experiences at university or at dances because I stuck to my principles. I remember being dropped on a dance floor... this fellow... wanted me to come out to the car with him... but I mean I wasn't in for that sort of thing. Sex... I suppose I was a bit prudish or standoffish. I think perhaps the Sisters' attitudes towards sexuality were very, very narrow. I have heard... pupils... say to me that they felt really frigid in their marriage. (OW11)

Religious orders encouraged their pupils to choose the ideal of an asexual personhood, a religious life which enabled men and women to transcend nature and achieve holiness, values epitomised in Eileen Duggan's 1937 poem *And at the End*:

Once on a dewy morning
With the bright sky blowing apart,
Each bud broke on my eyelids,
Each bird flew through my heart.
I prayed for the faith of a starling
Under the tawny trees,
A child or a holy woman -
What could be greater than these?¹⁴⁶

Despite the elevated status of religious virginity and the relegation of matrimony to a secondary status, Catholic schools endorsed the "sacredness and dignity" of the family.¹⁴⁷ Motherhood was promoted as "a sublime vocation and a privileged state of life", for every woman shared in the divine work of creation

¹⁴⁵ *Month*, 21 April 1925, 31.

¹⁴⁶ From "And at the End" by Eileen Duggan. J Bornholdt, G. O'Brien, and M. Williams, eds., *An anthology of New Zealand poetry in English* (Oxford, 1997). 475.

¹⁴⁷ *Zealandia*, 5 January 1939, 6.

and redemption by bearing children.¹⁴⁸ The family was seen as the most important unit in society.¹⁴⁹ According to Redwood, the nuclear family was divinely sanctioned: “Such is God’s idea of a home – father and mother and children living together in the fear and love of God”.¹⁵⁰ Catholic teaching on the family, and the role of women reflected conventional New Zealand values about the importance of the domestic family.¹⁵¹ From the 1920s, as New Zealand society became more urbanised and men increasingly travelled to work, the home became seem as the domain of the woman.¹⁵² In what became known as the “cult of domesticity” New Zealand women became seen as moral guardians of society exercising their influence largely through the home and the family.¹⁵³ The Church attributed a high status to women – or at least those who conformed to the prescribed role. However, unique to Catholicism were religious assumptions that women, much more than men, were expected to take special responsibility for the spiritual welfare of the family. While the story of Eve the temptress provided Catholics with a particular way of interpreting female sexuality, women

¹⁴⁸ *Zealandia*, 9 March 1939, 11.

¹⁴⁹ See van der Krogt, "More a part than apart". 248.

¹⁵⁰ *NZ Tablet*, 5 December 1928, 43.

¹⁵¹ Epitomised in Dr Truby King’s promotion of “motherhood” as a way of enhancing the strength, self-discipline and character of the child, the moral well-being of society and the improvement of the Anglo-Saxon race. See Jock Phillips, *A man's country: The image of the pakeha male - A history*, Revised Edition ed. (Auckland, 1996). 223.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*

¹⁵³ See van der Krogt, "More a part than apart". 251-55.

were also seen to share Mary's capacity to bring redemption to a fallen world.¹⁵⁴ Girls were told, "Mary was queen of her home" and it was in her home "and not in the public gaze that her influence was made apparent".¹⁵⁵ Mary Goulter wrote, "In the majority of cases, it is the woman who arbitrates between the conflicting ideals that continually besiege the sanctuary of the individual home".¹⁵⁶ Fr Kelly, for his part, hoped that "The men may be reformed by good women who will make good wives" but feared that there was less hope for families in which the wife and mother had "led the dissolute life of a flapper".¹⁵⁷

Women were thus both feared and venerated. As Massam explains, the radical duality of Eve/Mary excluded real women from the picture. These images formed part of a tradition in which the understanding of "woman" was constrained by biology and her degree of holiness by the extent to which she, like the Blessed Virgin had transcended her body.¹⁵⁸ Nevertheless even in the ecclesiastical role that it assigned to men and women, the Church reinforced the expectation that men would take the public roles while women served privately and remained hidden from public view. This convention applied even more strongly to nuns than to other women.¹⁵⁹ For example, in January 1932, a large

¹⁵⁴ Massam, *Sacred threads*.

¹⁵⁵ *Month*, 2 November 1931, 17.

¹⁵⁶ *Month*, 15 November 1919, 19.

¹⁵⁷ *NZ Tablet*, 24 April 1919, 26.

¹⁵⁸ Massam, *Sacred threads*.

¹⁵⁹ The significance of the location of missionary women in enclosed or separate spaces is examined by Fitzgerald, "Fences, boundaries and imagined communities," 14-25.

crowd gathered outside the new Dominican convent and school in Helensville for the opening ceremony while the nuns listened to the addresses from inside the convent. (See photo 3.6) As an enclosed order, Dominican Sisters were not permitted to take part in public events, even the opening of their own convent. I will consider issues relating to enclosure for women religious in chapter five.

The divergent strands that made up the construction of gender in twentieth century Catholic schools were woven together in a complex tapestry of spiritual contrasts. Religion in New Zealand was often labelled “women’s work” and with justification. Women were seen as the backbone of the Church, evidenced in appeals to women’s duty to inculcate moral values in their men folk¹⁶⁰ and the fact that women in religious life outnumbered men by about seven to one.¹⁶¹ Catholic publications honoured women in the home as the mainstay of the family’s values and the guardians of morals.¹⁶² The moral supremacy of women, however, was not permitted to undermine their husbands’ position as head of the household. Pupils were taught that, “The father is the natural head of the family” while the mother shares in this natural authority, and is required to exercise it undiminished in his default”.¹⁶³ In popular contemporary understandings, women’s particular spirituality was eminently suited to emotive

¹⁶⁰ *NZ Tablet*, 20 May 1931, 3.

¹⁶¹ Simmons, *A brief history of the Catholic Church in New Zealand*. 104.

¹⁶² *NZ Tablet*, 29 April 1920, 14; 14 September 1927, 33; 20 July 1938, 3. Jock Phillips notes the trend in early twentieth century New Zealand for the home to be seen as “a spiritual and moral retreat away from the heartless amoral conflict of the market-place”. See Phillips, *A man’s country*. 22.

¹⁶³ *NZ Tablet*, 12 March 1930, 9. van der Krogt, “More a part than apart”.

styles of religious practice. The “feminine style of piety” was actively promoted by the institution, while Massam suggests that the lack of institutional support for women’s groups such as the Grail when they were attempting to develop alternative spiritualities for women, also points to clerical rather than feminine interest in maintaining “affective” devotions. However, as I will argue in chapter five of this thesis, factors such as the distinctive traditions of religious orders also ensured the maintenance of gender-based cultural practices in Catholic schools in the years of this study. The institutional Church was a predominantly male environment, in which women were usually invisible.¹⁶⁴ As Goulter pointed out, the Catholic Church followed the Pauline injunction that women were to be silent in church, nor could girls serve at the altar like their brothers.¹⁶⁵ Women did have a significant domestic role in church, especially as members of altar sodalities responsible for sewing vestments and otherwise maintaining liturgical and church furnishings. Although women were absent from the structure and decision-making of the Church, it was these hidden women who bore the brunt of the responsibility for the spiritual welfare of families and communities and for the running of schools.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁴ Massam, *Sacred threads*.

¹⁶⁵ *Month*, 15 May 1922, 6-7; *Marist Messenger*, 1 November 1933, 31 (article by Goulter).

¹⁶⁶ See Massam, *Sacred threads*. 25; Simmons, *A brief history of the Catholic Church in New Zealand*. 107.

Forging the educational mission of Catholic schools

From 1877 until the mid-1940s Catholics saw themselves as a distinct group in New Zealand society.¹⁶⁷ Public gatherings of Catholics were usually marked by the singing of two hymns – “Hail, Queen of Heaven” – in homage to the Blessed Virgin, and “Faith of our Fathers”, which triumphantly evoked the sufferings of previous generations who had persevered in the Catholic faith in spite of persecution. For many lay people the circle of their social interaction was defined by the parish and the school; a network of explicitly Catholic involvement that fostered a sense of difference and protected a distinctive view of the world. The sense of Catholic division from wider society resulted, as we have seen, in the Church’s emphasis on separate schools to transmit a separate culture. After 1877 a major proportion of the Church’s resources were devoted to maintaining and developing the network of primary and secondary schools. As Akenson argues, the process of establishing a Catholic school system and of acquiring resources for its operation was continual and, “at heart, pitted the leaders of the Catholic Church, both clerical and lay, against the wider New Zealand society”.¹⁶⁸

The educational mission of Catholic schooling was founded on the transmission of faith and Catholic cultural practices. Pupils were taught how to live out their faith and defend it in a hostile world. In addition Catholic schools were an indispensable tool for handing on the complex values and practices that underpinned Catholic spiritual and cultural life (see diagram 3.1). Redwood described the schools as “the means of assuring the Church in New Zealand a

¹⁶⁷ Akenson, *Half the world from home*; King, *God's farthest outpost*.

¹⁶⁸ Akenson, *Half the world from home*. 159.

hopeful and a brilliant future”; however he warned that if Catholic education were neglected, “we must despair of the Church in New Zealand”.¹⁶⁹ Pupils emerging from Catholic schools were expected to be equipped to defend their faith, to “prove adamant to the lures and snares of the after school years” and to be an agent for the conversion of others.¹⁷⁰

As I will detail in parts two and three of this thesis, the transmission of faith and the inculcation of Catholic religious and cultural values continued to form the basis of the Catholic educational mission in the years of this study. The practice of religious values could not be separated from the secular curriculum; it had to be integrated into “the daily routine of school life”.¹⁷¹ Changes in Catholic social philosophy in the early part of the twentieth century meant that by the 1940s the twin goals of educating children as Catholics and as New Zealand citizens were no longer seen as incompatible objectives. A religious education was needed to prepare children for moral citizenship in society, but more importantly children needed a religious education to prepare for “the life hereafter”.¹⁷² Moral and religious education could not be separated from secular education – it had to be made “a part and parcel of the daily routine of school life”.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁹ *NZ Tablet*, 15 May 1919, 22-23; 27 April 1922, 22.

¹⁷⁰ Massam, *Sacred threads*. 41.

¹⁷¹ *NZ Tablet*, 31 August 1932, 6.

¹⁷² *Month*, 15 July 1921, 8.

¹⁷³ *The New Zealand Tablet*, 31 August 1932, 6.

Consequently, when the original educational mission came under pressure in the context of the Thomas reforms (as I will demonstrate in part three), the Church moved to maintain the autonomy of its school system from state interference and the influence of secular values. At the heart of the Church's concerns was the question of authority. Education, crucial as it was to human destiny, was also integral to the Church's earthly mission. All schemes of secular education – including those which admitted religion as a separate addition to curriculum – were seen as fundamentally defective. Church authorities would not surrender to the State, or anyone else, its authority to ensure that parents discharged their responsibility to educate their children in the faith. This task could be carried out in harmony with the State, but the Church believed that the State had no right to control parental rights of conscience or the authority of the Church. In fighting for a separate education system, the bishops were preserving Catholic religious and cultural values and a distinctive Catholic identity.

Conclusion

This chapter has detailed the principal historic trends in Catholic spirituality and religious identity that came together to forge the Catholic educational mission in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. It argued that nineteenth-century Roman-based policies reflected a deep suspicion of the secular world and provided the justification for an education system that would ensure the transmission of the faith and the maintenance of religious and cultural values. It detailed the influence of an Irish inheritance that was austere, authoritarian and dominated by a clergy who worked to protect the autonomy of Catholic schools from the spectre of state interference and control and the incursion of secular values. Devotional practices, encouraged by the Irish clergy and religious orders,

focused on the transmission of “a simple faith for a simple people” and the promotion of a basic level of religious awareness among Catholic pupils. Widely practiced in Catholic schools, devotional practices highlighted those aspects of Catholic belief and practice that differentiated Catholics from other New Zealanders. The chapter detailed the way the Church utilised schools to promote selected aspects of new and more active forms of spirituality and liturgical reforms that emerged in the early part of the twentieth century. It signalled a tension between conservative understandings of Catholic spirituality and a twentieth-century Church increasingly concerned with the successful integration of Catholics into society, a tension that was to have significant implications for the Catholic educational mission in the period of this study and which I will consider in more detail in parts three and four of this thesis. The chapter then highlighted the significance of constructions of gender for the Catholic educational mission. It identified distinctive Catholic understandings of the roles of men and women in the Church’s salvation mission to humanity pointing to the influence of historical traditions of the renunciation of sexuality and pleasure, the promotion of celibate religious life, distinctive beliefs about the role of men and women in the Church, and models of women as temptress, virgin and mother as well as the unique role of mothers in transmitting faith and values to the next generation and understandings about the roles of men and women in society. I concluded by defining the educational mission of Catholic schools and its importance for the preservation of a distinctive Catholic identity in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

Josephine School								Mary Jones - Grammar		May 1 st 1894
Names	Class	Age	G.	R.	Spelling	Arith	Geog	Writ	General Remarks	
Ellie Brewell	1 st Standard		P	P	P			29	This is a very nice class - just commenced work in copy books - and have done in neat & clean - know their tables pretty well & answered nicely in mental addition -	
Ralie Ophelan			P	P	P			29		
Maggie Conythin			P	P	P			29		
Midget Seeler			29	29	P			29		
John Lyons			P	P	P			29		
Michael Fitzgerald			P	P	P			29		
Michael Sullivan	2 nd Standard: 1 st Division		P	P	P			29	This is a very bright and promising class - quite up to standard - but there are very weakly - making excellent - on some cases pulled in most - above standard even for Australia	
James Cronahan			P	P	P			29		
Michael Sullivan			P	P	P			29		
Kenneth Mansfield			P	P	P			29		
Ralie Fitzgerald			P	P	P			29		
Leah Fleming			P	P	P			29		
Ralie Seeler			P	P	P			29		
Joseph Fleming			P	P	P			29		
Joseph Kelly			P	P	P			29		
John Stack			P	P	P			29		
Joseph Preece			P	P	P			29		
Richard-Blay			P	P	P			29		
Ben's Connell			P	P	P			29		
Thomas Leonard			P	P	P			29		
Shady Leonard		P	P	P			29			

Photo 4.1: Poor children, Mary McKillop maintained, required “an education sufficient to obtain a situation and earn a living, to write legibly, to add up and subtract figures and to communicate” Her 1894 visit to Josephine schools in New Zealand compared this Standard One class favourably with their Australian equivalents. The report examines each pupil on Christian Doctrine, Reading, Spelling, Arithmetic, Geography and Writing. From *A century in pictures*, 1983, 28.

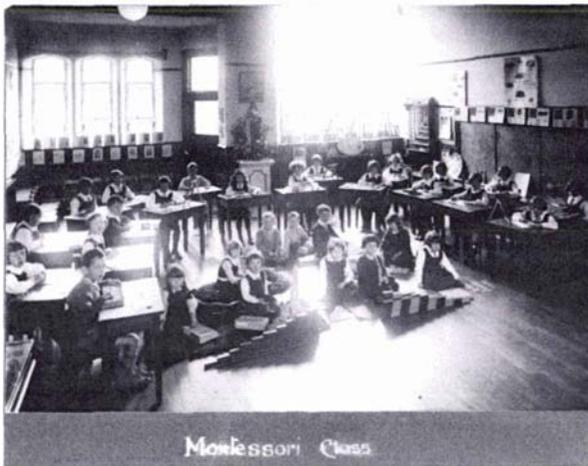


Photo 4.2: In 1927 the Sacred Heart Girls' College in Christchurch introduced the Montessori Method. Orders such as the Dominicans were quick to follow suit, sending Sisters to Christchurch for training and setting up “Montessori style” classrooms such as the one at St Dominic's College Dunedin c.1930s. *Hocken Collections Uare Taoka o Hakena*



Photo 4.3: Schools such as Sacred Heart College, Auckland, extolled their success in training loyal citizens who would fight and die for their country. Almost half of the college's old boys, just over two thousand, served in the armed forces in World War II. Creating patriotic citizens: Drill at Sacred Heart College in 1939. *Archives of the Marist Brothers*

Chapter Four

Constructing a Catholic education system

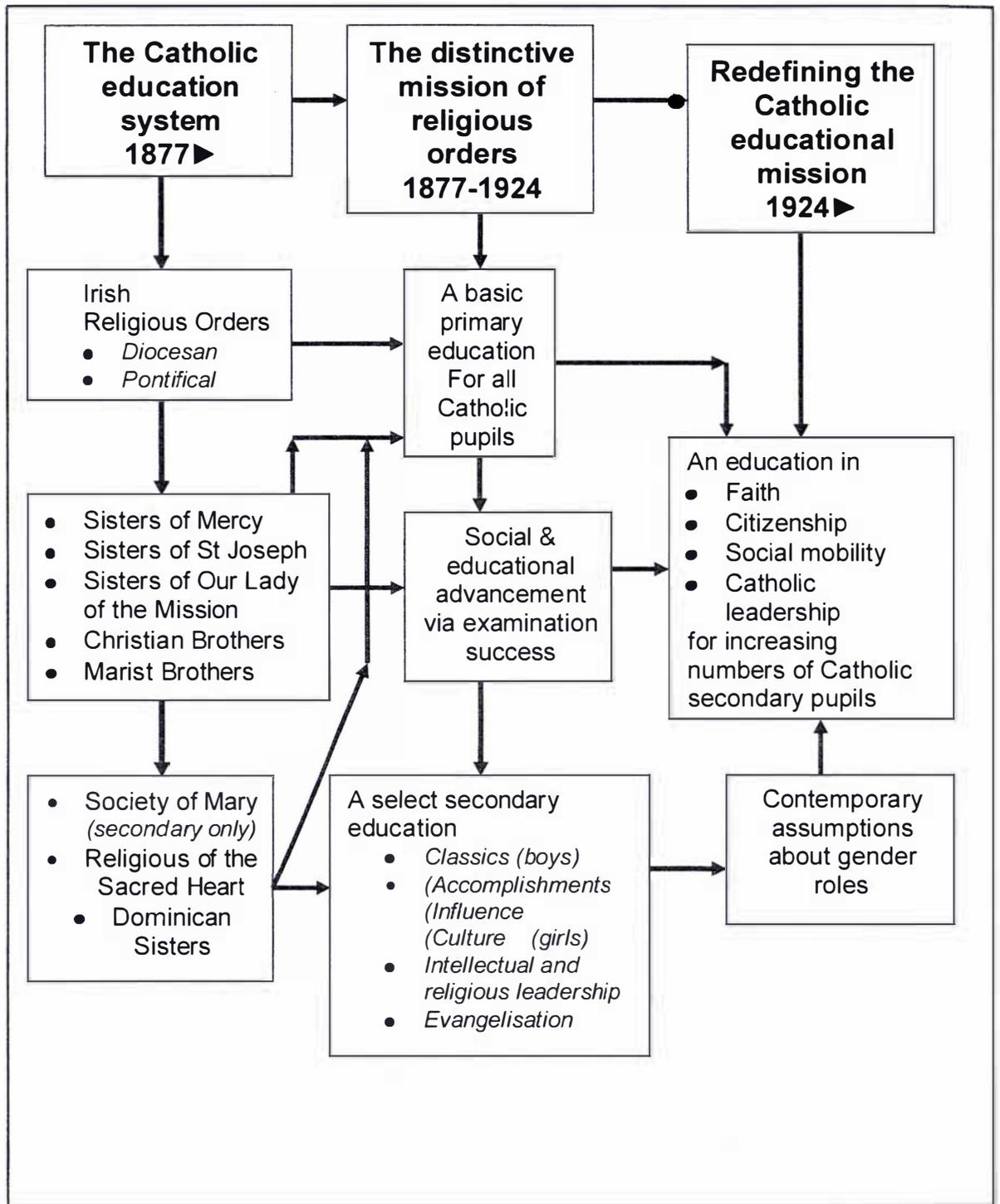
Introduction

In the previous chapter I detailed historical influences on the creation of a distinctive New Zealand Catholic spiritual and cultural identity and how these elements came together to create an educational mission that sought to transmit the faith and to protect Catholic pupils from the influence of the secular values implicit in a state education. In the following I will utilise documentary, archival and selected oral accounts to describe the influences that helped to determine the shape and function of a separate Catholic education system in the years from 1877 until 1944. The chapter is divided into two major sections. In the first part of the chapter I will examine the characteristics of diocesan and pontifical teaching orders and their role in the construction of a diocesan based education system. Then I consider the influence of distinctive pedagogies of the mostly Irish-founded teaching orders on the development of a Catholic educational mission to provide a basic primary education to the children of the Irish working-class and a classical and accomplishments secondary education to the select few.

The second part of the chapter examines the expansion of Catholic secondary education, an expansion that was justified on the basis that it would protect the faith and Catholic cultural values of the increasing numbers of Catholic pupils going on to secondary education. The chapter highlights changes

in the Catholic educational mission as Catholic educators increasingly promoted the values of moral citizenship, Catholic family and gender values and the social mobility of their pupils via success in the state-mandated examination system. Diagram 4.1 presents a model of the Catholic education system 1877-1944 and provides a framework for the chapter.

Diagram 4.1: A model of the Catholic education system 1877-1944



Constructing a Catholic education system

The establishment and maintenance of the Catholic educational system in New Zealand was facilitated by the international growth of active congregations of teaching religious. The significant increase in the number of female vocations in the period 1840 to 1920 and the development of women's religious communities meant that female congregations essentially dominated this new apostolate.¹⁷⁴

The growth of such congregations reflected the increasingly "active" social mission of the Church (outlined in chapter three) in areas such as health, welfare and particularly education. Teaching congregations such as the Sisters of Mercy and the Marist Brothers of the Schools adopted a modified monastic rule that enabled them to meet the requirements of a rapidly-growing system of education in countries such as New Zealand and Australia. They incorporated the advantages of mobility and adaptability with the mission to teach.¹⁷⁵

The first teaching orders arrived in New Zealand in the 1850s (see table 4.1). After the withdrawal of government assistance to Catholic schools in the 1877 Education Act, bishops persuaded various religious orders from European Catholic countries to establish and staff schools in New Zealand. The first major growth in religious orders took place in the 1880s with the arrival of Irish religious orders and some French orders, motivated by a new international missionary movement within the Church, a desire to escape religious persecution

¹⁷⁴ See Mary J. Oates, "Organised voluntarism: The Catholic Sisters in Massachusetts, 1870-1940," in *Women in American Religion*, ed. Janet Wilson James (1980), 149-69. Yvonne Turin, *Femmes et Religieuses au XIX^{ème} siècle: Le Féminisme "en Religion"* (Paris 1989), 59-60, cited in Curtis, "Educating the faithful". 99.

¹⁷⁵ Curtis, "Educating the faithful". 98.

in their home country and a surplus of personnel.¹⁷⁶ Over the next fifty years religious orders arriving in the country focussed increasingly on the Church's educational mission.

Table 4.1 Religious Orders taking up teaching in New Zealand: 1850-1950

Religious Orders taking up Teaching in New Zealand: 1850 - 1950		
Decade	Priests	Origin
1880s	Society of Mary	France
Decade	Religious Brothers	Origin
1870s	Christian Brothers	Ireland
1870s	Marist Brothers	France
Decade	Female Religious	Origin
1850s	Sisters of Mercy	Ireland
1860s	Our Lady of the Missions	France
1870s	Dominican Nuns	Ireland
1880s	Religious of the Sacred Heart	France
1880s	Sisters of St Joseph of Nazareth	Australia
1880s	Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart	Australia
1880s	Sisters of the Good Shepherd	Australia
1890s	Sisters of Compassion	New Zealand
1890s	Sisters of St Brigid	Ireland
1920s	Marist Sisters	Australia
1940s	Sisters of St Joseph of Cluny	Ireland

Source: *Australasian Catholic Directories*, 1897, 1900, 1930, 1950, ACDA.

While religious orders were committed to the overall educational mission of the Catholic Church, it will become evident in the following that each

¹⁷⁶ Fogarty, *Catholic education in Australia*.

expressed particular educational traditions and pedagogy. As table 4.1 illustrates, religious orders that originated in Ireland were to be a vital factor in the Church's implementation of a separate system of Catholic schools. All readily identified with the amalgam of Irish spirituality and nationalism which characterised New Zealand Catholicism after the arrival of the Irish bishops and were to adapt with relative ease to the demands of colonial Catholicism.¹⁷⁷ In chapter three I referred to the influence of Irish Cardinal Paul Cullen on the appointment of Irish bishops and clergy to New Zealand in the 1860s. He was, as Donald Akenson puts it, "the Irish Catholic Church's equivalent of Henry Ford, demanding a high level of standardised performance from everyone in his organisation". Fundamental to the Cullenite system of diocesan control were trustworthy local priests and teaching congregations that towed the line. Under his guidance the "Irish" bishops in New Zealand worked to ensure that the "right sort of new congregations were put in place". Practically every one of them was an Irish foundation, either directly from Ireland such as the Dominican Sisters, or by way of countries such as Australia, like some of the Mercy foundations.¹⁷⁸

As I will detail later, the "Irish" New Zealand bishops found that they were able to exercise control especially over the diocesan-based women's orders. As Lewis points out, "The organisation of ... these orders with respect to episcopal control made them eminently suited to manipulation by the Irish

¹⁷⁷ C.M. Lewis, "Provision for the education of Catholic women in Australia since 1840." (PhD diss, University of Melbourne, 1988). v.

¹⁷⁸ Akenson, *Half the world from home*. 163-64.

bishops".¹⁷⁹ Although the French orders that came to New Zealand in the nineteenth century never had the same numbers or profile within New Zealand Catholic education as the Irish orders, they brought the influence of their international traditions and, as will be detailed later, the distinctive elements of their pedagogy. Of these the Marist Fathers and the Marist Brothers were influential in the education of boys and the Religious of the Sacred Heart and the Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions for girls.

The religious orders who established educational foundations in New Zealand operated within a diocesan and a parish context. By the 1890s there were four dioceses in New Zealand: Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin. A diocese was divided into a number of parishes, each run by a diocesan priest whose main task was to preach, catechise and administer the sacraments. The parish priest had a duty to establish a local parish primary school and through the bishop arrange for a religious order to come and staff the school. The religious orders ran two kinds of school, the parish school and the order-owned school.¹⁸⁰

(See figure 4.1)

O'Donoghue points out that Church protocol ensured that no religious order made an initial foundation of a parochial school or an order-owned school within a diocese without the permission of the local bishop although, once established within a diocese, orders such as the Dominicans went on to set up their own order-owned schools. The way the Catholic primary education system developed in New Zealand was influenced by the organisational requirements of

¹⁷⁹ Lewis, "Provision for the education of Catholic women in Australia since 1840." v.

¹⁸⁰ O'Donoghue, *Upholding the faith*. 28.

the different religious orders. A.E.C.W. Spenser suggests that in order to survive, religious orders needed to maintain a distinctive value system, to establish clear boundaries with the outside world, to recruit and socialise new members, to satisfy role and status aspirations of their members and to maintain financial and material security.¹⁸¹ In addition, as I will demonstrate later in the chapter, each order maintained its own distinctive educational mission. A set of explicit or implicit understandings operated between the parish and the religious order.

The parish would:

1. build and maintain the school and provide for its operating costs;
2. ensure that the community of religious received a tolerable income in cash, goods and services; and
3. ensure a reasonable enrolment of pupils.

The religious order would ensure that the school:

1. was permanently staffed;
2. run along pedagogic lines; and
3. that it provided a satisfactory Christian education.

The bishop would in the last resort:

1. settle disputes; and
2. ensure that these understandings were honoured.¹⁸²

The influence of diocesan and pontifical orders

The relationship between religious orders and the diocesan bishop was influenced by an order's status as pontifical or diocesan-based. The pontifical

¹⁸¹ Spenser, "Interim Report," 118.

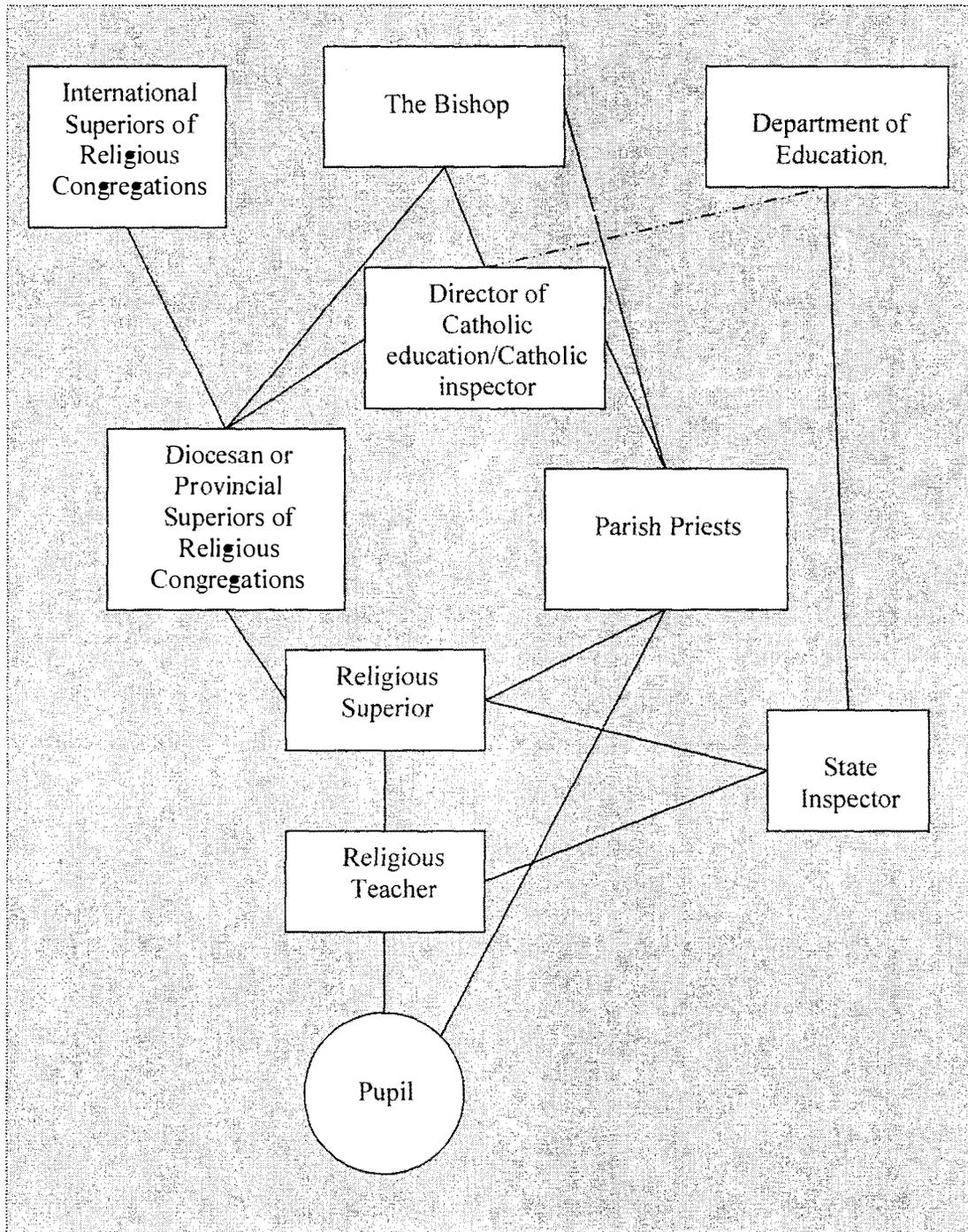
¹⁸² Ibid.

orders operated under the governing authority of their own superiors, theoretically with a minimum reference to the local bishop. For an order like the Religious of the Sacred Heart this meant the lines of authority went from a superior-general at the international level, to a provincial superior at the provincial level and a local superior at the convent level (see diagram 4.2). All of the male orders involved in education in New Zealand operated under this pontifical model, as did some of the female orders, notably the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart, the Religious of the Sacred Heart and the Dominican Sisters. The organisational structure of the Marist Brothers illustrates the complexities of the relationship between a pontifical order and the diocesan episcopal authorities and its potential for tension and conflict. Until 1917, when a separate province was created in New Zealand, the Marist Brothers were part of the Australasian province. After 1917 they were run by the New Zealand Provincial Council but had to apply to the General Council of the Order at the Mother House of the Marist Brothers “for approval of all but minor decisions and expenditure”.¹⁸³ The interests of pontifical religious orders did not necessarily correspond with those of individual diocesan bishops as is evidenced by the presence of Marist establishments across diocesan and national boundaries and the number of disagreements over issues such as the provision of school buildings and resources.¹⁸⁴

¹⁸³ Kane, "The Marist Brothers in New Zealand education, 1917 to 1967". 19.

¹⁸⁴ In 1884 Brother John notes his disappointment that the sum of \$100 (sic) offered by Dr (later Bishop) Luck would barely cover the living expenses of a Brother in the proposed establishment of a Marist school in Auckland; Lettres, 31 December 1884, cited in Alban Doyle, *The story of the Marist Brothers in Australia 1872-1972* (Drummoyne, Sydney, 1972). 286.

Diagram 4.2: The organization of authority relationships in Catholic schools in New Zealand



It is hardly surprising to find that bishops generally preferred diocesan-based orders such as the Sisters of Mercy (see table 4.2). Under this model, a female order established its “motherhouse” in a diocese and later might establish other “branch” houses. These might in their turn become independent houses in their own right. The usual justification for diocesan-based orders was their flexibility in response to local demands. The bishops favoured this type of organisation for it gave them more control and enabled them to plan with some certainty for educational developments within the diocese. Fogarty notes, however, the tendency towards “a certain parochialism in outlook” in diocesan-based orders. In an education system lacking strong national coordination of policy and resources, the presence of orders limited to one diocese also prevented the efficient deployment of surplus teachers and resources in one area to another diocese where they might be better utilised.¹⁸⁵ It has also been argued that members of diocesan orders were not as exposed to new ideas and educational developments as were members of pontifical orders, that they didn’t have the same mobility, and they tended to be subject to the “dangers of narrowness, isolation and inbreeding”.¹⁸⁶

The jurisdiction of the superior of a diocesan congregation was limited to the group under the authority of a “mother house”. The superior, in turn, came under the direct authority of the bishop of the diocese. This situation frequently led to a proliferation of different groups within individual diocesan orders and by

¹⁸⁵ See Fogarty, *Catholic education in Australia*. 290, O’Donoghue, *Upholding the faith*. 30.

¹⁸⁶ M.C. Leavey, “Religious education, school climate and achievement: A study of nine Catholic sixth-form girls’ schools”, PhD diss, Australian National University, 1972, 21, cited in O’Donoghue, *Upholding the faith*. 31.

the early twentieth century, for reasons of efficiency, a number of them amalgamated.¹⁸⁷

Table 4.2: The Religious Order Schools in New Zealand in 1950

Religious Order Schools in New Zealand in 1950			
Religious Order	Arrival	Diocesan Order	Pontifical Order
Sisters of Mercy	1850	X	
Our Lady of the Missions	1861		X
Dominican Nuns	1871		X
Religious of the Sacred Heart	1880		X
Sisters of St Joseph of Nazareth	1880	X	
Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart	1883		X
Sisters of the Good Shepherd	1886		X
Sisters of St Brigid	1898		X
Marist Sisters	1927		X
Sisters of St Joseph of Cluny	1940		X
Society of Mary	1838		X
Sisters of Compassion	1982		X
Christian Brothers	1876		X
Marist Brothers	1876		X

Source: *Australasian Catholic Directories*, 1897, 1900, 1930, 1950, ACDA.

Table 4.2 reveals that in 1950 the Sisters of Mercy and the Sisters of St Joseph of Nazareth were the only two diocesan teaching orders in New Zealand. Yet the Mercy Sisters with 715 members were the only order present in all four dioceses;

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

they constituted by far the largest teaching order in New Zealand and controlled the majority of the schools.¹⁸⁸ (See table 4.3)

Table 4.3: Nine Teaching Orders of Religious, 1897-1970

Nine Teaching Orders of Religious 1897-1970						
	1893	1900	1930	1950	1960	1970
Sisters of Mercy*	167	272	517	715	863	818
Our Lady of the Missions	85	130	302	346	367	302
Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart	35	38	131	172	206	224
Dominican Nuns	75	75	134	154	167	210
Sisters of St Joseph of Nazareth	18	56	128	146	153	157
Religious of the Sacred Heart			52	73	93	63
Society of Mary*	54	58	81	132	167	191
Marist Brothers	32	43	80	161	203	297
Christian Brothers	5	4	12	13	35	63

Source: *Australasian Directories*, 1897, 1900, 1930, 1950, 1960, 1970, ACDA.

¹⁸⁸ It is probably reasonable to assume (given the large number of Mercy Schools and the location of only two Mercy hospitals (in the Dunedin and Auckland dioceses) that the majority of these Sisters would be teachers. To illustrate: there were four Mercy secondary schools and twenty-five primary schools listed in the *New Zealand Catholic Directory* for Wellington in 1950. However the figures are not broken down into an analysis of the number of Sisters involved in the different apostolates. A number would also be retired or involved in other work.

* Priests in the Society of Mary were involved in teaching, mission and parish ministry. Sisters of Mercy were involved in teaching, nursing and social work.

The Sisters of St Joseph's struggle to maintain autonomy in the face of episcopal insistence on diocesan control illuminates the complexities of the Catholic education system and the difficulties faced by an Australian-based order which also established foundations in New Zealand in the 1880s. It also exemplifies, as I will detail later, the conflict between local bishops who wished the orders under their authority to cater for a wide range of educational aspirations within their diocese and the explicit "mission" of the Josephite Sisters to provide a basic elementary education for working-class Catholic pupils rather than an education in the "accomplishments" that would enhance the upward social mobility of their female pupils. Founder Mary MacKillop's uncompromising stand in defence of her desire to retain central control of the Josephite sisters and her promotion of an egalitarian spirit¹⁸⁹ among her sisters brought her into direct conflict with a number of Australian bishops and culminated in her excommunication by Dr Lawrence Sheil, Bishop of Adelaide, and the expulsion of forty-seven sisters

¹⁸⁹ As a pontifical order the Sisters of St Joseph were entitled to run their own affairs, without, in theory anyway, interference from a local bishop. Mary's rejection of the elitism of most convent education of the 1860s reflected a spirit of egalitarianism that was extended to the conduct of the community itself. There was to be no class structure among the sisters and no differentiation within the community of choir and lay sisters. There was no dowry requirement and teacher training was given on an apprenticeship basis. Lewis, "Provision for the education of Catholic women in Australia since 1840." 380-81.

from the institute.¹⁹⁰ Bishops James Quinn of Queensland and Matthew Quinn in Bathurst also waged a bitter conflict with Mary MacKillop over the right of the Josephites to their own autonomy. Papal acceptance of the pontifical status of the order further alienated these bishops who were determined to make the Josephites subject to diocesan authority. As a consequence Mary withdrew her Sisters from Queensland and Matthew Quinn presented the Bathurst Sisters with an ultimatum – they could stay and accept diocesan control or leave the district. One Sister, Hyacinth Quinlan, remained to train the recruits the bishop had imported from Ireland but the others left. A foundation of these Bathurst sisters was made in the Wellington diocese in 1880. Sister Hyacinth Quinlan herself was one of four diocesan sisters who established the Wanganui foundation (these Sisters became known as Sisters of St Joseph of Nazareth). A subsequent foundation of Brown Josephites (the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart) in Temuka in 1883 (also part of the Wellington diocese at the time), caused resentments and difficulties for the earlier foundation, which spilled over into their relations in New Zealand. The Wanganui Sisters, who had not been consulted regarding the introduction of the Brown Josephites, were instructed by Redwood to adopt a black habit to distinguish them from the other Josephite sisters. Neither group “recognised the way in which they were victims of power struggles among clerics”¹⁹¹, who were attempting to control the way the women religious exercised their educational mission.

¹⁹⁰ Excommunication refers to the expulsion of an individual from the Church, more particularly from the Eucharist. It was withdrawn after an investigation by Roman authorities. For a comprehensive discussion of this issue see *Ibid.*, 384-92.

¹⁹¹ Strevens, *In step with time*. 23.

The teaching religious orders that came to New Zealand in the latter part of the nineteenth century were the foundation on which the Catholic educational mission in New Zealand was built (see diagram 4.1). The nature of Catholic schooling was shaped by the complex relations between diocesan and pontifical orders and the Episcopal authorities in each diocese. Diocesan-based orders such as the Mercy Sisters provided the “shock troops” that established the parish-based elementary education system in all four dioceses. Subject to the authority of the bishop they were able to provide a quick response to diocesan-based educational needs but suffered from a certain insularity and inflexibility in regard to national educational needs. The pontifical orders retained a greater independence and a closer contact with international educational developments, but their educational interests frequently crossed diocesan boundaries and they in their turn were constrained by the requirements of their own internationally-based authorities (see diagram 4.2). As the following section will detail, the teaching orders brought with them particular cultural and pedagogical traditions, traditions which helped to shape the educational mission of Catholic primary and secondary schools in New Zealand.

The educational “missions” of the teaching religious orders

The majority of the “new” nineteenth-century religious orders worked to provide a basic primary school education for the Catholic population. Some of the female religious orders offered a “culture and accomplishments” curriculum; from the 1880s male orders such as the Society of Mary offered a “classical” curriculum to small numbers of boys (see diagram 4.1). What little research has been undertaken on the cultural and pedagogical missions of the parochial and order-

run primary schools suggests that the parochial schools catered for the poorer children while the more affluent attended order-run schools where they paid higher fees.¹⁹² Fundamental to the success of the Catholic educational mission in the years of this study were the thousands of women religious who staffed and ran the vast majority of New Zealand Catholic primary schools; at most the Brothers and Priests constituted only one seventh of their numbers. In general they taught boys from the senior primary level onwards.¹⁹³ Particular religious orders, such as the Jesuits¹⁹⁴, the Society of Mary, the Sisters of the Sacred Heart and the Dominican Sisters catered for the upper echelons of Catholic society, while the Christian Brothers, the Marist Brothers, the Mercy Sisters and the

¹⁹² O'Donoghue, *Upholding the faith*. 28.

¹⁹³ See Simmons, *A brief history of the Catholic Church in New Zealand*. In 1917 the Marist Brothers ran nine primary schools for Catholic boys which ranged from Standard Two or Standard Four to Standard Six. Kane, "The Marist Brothers in New Zealand education, 1917 to 1967". 17. The Christian Brothers ran two primary schools in Dunedin (Christian Brothers on Rattray St and St Edmunds in South Dunedin) and one in Oamaru. A 1900 school report lists classes from Infants up to Fifth class at the Rattray St site (*School Report*, 31 March 1900, "Institute Reports 1895-1902", Kavanagh College Records 96-124 HL). Later "Christies" accepted boys from Standard Three onwards. St Edmund's, established in 1949, accepted pupils from Standard Three to Standard Six. St Patrick's Oamaru was a full primary school run by the Christian Brothers from 1928 until 1974 when the Dominican Sisters took it over and the Standard Five and Standard Six boys transferred to St Kevins. Donaldson, *To all parts of the kingdom: Christian Brothers in New Zealand, 1876-2001*. 7-9.

¹⁹⁴ King, *God's farthest outpost*. 96. The Jesuits never really established a high profile in New Zealand. An initial foundation in Dunedin lasted only ten years, and it wasn't until 1947 that they returned to Christchurch to staff the new seminary there.

Sisters of St Joseph were established to cater to those at the lower end of the social ladder. Nevertheless the pattern is more complex than it first appears as the following consideration of the pedagogy of the different teaching orders will show. In New Zealand the situation in the nineteenth century was complicated by the relative scarcity of schools catering for the secondary education of Catholic boys.¹⁹⁵ In addition a number of women's religious orders catered for the different social groups by establishing separate schools. In the case of the Dominican Sisters, in 1871 they established two schools on the site of their motherhouse in Dunedin, one which was fee paying for those who could afford to pay and another which did not charge fees. Some orders catered to a wide range of clientele. For example the Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions established secondary schools in Christchurch, Napier, Nelson and New Plymouth, an Industrial school for girls in Nelson and St Joseph's College for Maori girls in the Hawke's Bay as well as numerous primary schools.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁵ St Patrick's College, established in 1884 by the Society of Mary, was the first Catholic secondary school for boys in the colony. The first Christian Brothers' school in Dunedin, established as a primary school in 1876, later added secondary classes to become Christian Brothers High School. Sacred Heart College Auckland, was established as a secondary school by the Marist Brothers in 1903. The distinction between the "College" and "High School" seems to reflect a school's original designation as primary or secondary.

¹⁹⁶ See M O'Meehan, *Held firm by faith: A history of the Catholic Diocese of Christchurch, 1840-1987* (Christchurch, 1988); M O'Meehan, *Steadfast in hope: The story of the Catholic diocese of Wellington, 1850 to 2000* (Palmerston North, 2003); *Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions, Napier, 1865-1990*, (Palmerston North, 1990).

The primary mission: Faith and a basic education

The Sisters of St Joseph

Unique among the “new” nineteenth-century religious orders, the Sisters of St Joseph were determined to focus their efforts on providing a utilitarian elementary education for the children of the working-class, leaving to other religious orders those higher branches of learning with which their founder Mary MacKillop believed the poor should have no concern (see diagram 4.1). Poor children Mary maintained, required “an education sufficient to obtain a situation and earn a living, to write legibly, to add up and subtract figures and to communicate”¹⁹⁷ (see photo 4.1). Mary believed that the catechism should be the backbone and that every aspect of the day should be permeated by a Catholic spirit through prayers, hymns and classroom paraliturgies. The elegances and accomplishments were inappropriate for the development of a truly working-class woman. Their inclusion would make poor children dissatisfied with life:

How often do not vain foolish parents suffer the far more important educational wants of their children to be neglected... How often have not hard-working mothers toiled without mercy to themselves and allowed their children to grow up without any idea of the true duties of their state.¹⁹⁸

They also established “mission” schools to provide a basic education to Maori children as Sister Teresa Schmitt of the Sisters of St Joseph of Nazareth explained in 1883:

¹⁹⁷ M. MacKillop (Adelaide) to J. Tenison-Woods n.d (c.1872), cited in Lewis, "Provision for the education of Catholic women in Australia since 1840." 393.

¹⁹⁸ M. MacKillop (Adelaide) to J. Tenison-Woods n.d (c.1872), cited in Ibid.

[Maori] children were taught to read in their own language: in fact very few of them could speak English at all. They learnt the alphabet and small syllables from blackboards... those who could write used slates and copy-books.¹⁹⁹

The Sisters of Mercy

The mission of the original Sisters of Mercy included the education of the poor, the visitation of the sick and the protection and training of young women. Mother Catherine McAuley, the Irish founder, drew on her links with the Presentation Sisters in the teaching of her schools in the nineteenth century. In creating a religious institute whose members left the convent to go out into the streets to serve the poor she challenged traditional expectations regarding the enclosure of women religious. As a Mercy Sister put it, “The Irish people called them the ‘walking nuns’, which wasn’t exactly a compliment to start with” (MM6). In the “poor” elementary schools, Mercy Sisters promoted character formation, cleanliness and politeness; they worked to ensure that girls would acquire skills such as cooking, sewing and knitting that would help them in their future roles as mothers.²⁰⁰ It was a system of training that the Mercy Sisters brought with them to New Zealand to their schools and orphanages as a Mercy Sister outlined:

They came there to the Cathedral which was not the present one of course, just a wee wooden church at that stage. The Marist Fathers who were working there had, I think against their will collected up eight little orphan girls, mainly of mixed race, and almost the moment the Sisters walked into the building they parked these children on them... They had no intention of starting orphanages but were virtually landed with them. (MM8)

Bishop Jean Baptiste Pompallier, the first Catholic bishop of New Zealand devised a set of regulations for Mercy schools in the Auckland diocese:

¹⁹⁹ *Month*, 27 June 1927, cited in Strevens, *In step with time*. 48.

²⁰⁰ Kirk, *Remembering your mercy*.

The first general class comprises pupils who... study the Catholic Catechism, reading, writing and spelling and the rules of Arithmetic... The Second general class... have to improve on things taught in the First class, and they study Grammar, Arithmetic, Geography, History and Plain Chant for the Catholics.²⁰¹

A “select” secondary education for social mobility

From 1851 onwards, as a consequence of pressure from nineteenth-century settlers looking for a convent education in the “accomplishments” for their daughters, teaching orders such as the Mercy Sisters and the Sisters of St Joseph came under pressure to establish secondary schools for girls (see diagram 4.1):

Yet another building had risen in the little enclosure on the site of the present Cathedral... a boarding school, begged for by settlers in other parts of the diocese, who wished to entrust their daughters wholly to the Sisters' care.²⁰²

The Mercy boarding school referred to in the above extract catered for wealthy Auckland settlers who wished their daughters to gain a convent education. “Select” boarding schools, such as St Mary’s College in Auckland which was founded in 1851, charged relatively low fees and provided opportunities for girls to study subjects such as French, mathematics, botany, literature, music, and painting. Day schools for girls catered for families who could not afford the expense of boarding. They aimed to produce skills for future workers in areas like shop-keeping, farming and access to professions such as nursing and

²⁰¹ “Article Five” SRC *Oceania*, 1865-60, Vol. 6, i. 1050 cited in *Ibid.*, 116.

²⁰² Veronica Delany, *Gracious is the time: 1850-1950 Centenary of the Sisters of Mercy Auckland New Zealand* (Auckland, 1952). 55.

teaching.²⁰³ Mercy Sisters utilised a training in the “accomplishments” to promote the upward social mobility of working-class girls who learned “to manage the family farm and home” and were encouraged to acquire skills such as cooking, sewing and knitting, laundering, and a knowledge of bookkeeping.²⁰⁴ Girls, particularly those who were orphans, were trained to earn their own living in “as respectable a way as possible”, given the restricted range of occupations allowable for women in the society of the day.²⁰⁵ The Mercy Sisters’ pragmatic approach to the development of pedagogical theory, combined with the diocesan-based structure of Mercy foundations, facilitated the order’s rapid expansion throughout New Zealand and into most countries of the English-speaking world.²⁰⁶

On their arrival at Wanganui in 1880, the Sisters of St Joseph of Nazareth found themselves pressured into establishing a “select” school for boarders by the local parish priest, a Father Kirk, who was unable to understand their objections.

The Superioress, Mother Hyacinth ... put her concerns before Redwood but the Archbishop was in favour of the proposed boarding school... She consulted Father Woods and he advised her to try and carry out Fr Kirk’s plan. He said obedience to the Bishop’s authority would bring a blessing and help.²⁰⁷

²⁰³ Kirk, *Remembering your mercy*. 20.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 115.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁶ Lewis, "Provision for the education of Catholic women in Australia since 1840." 258.

²⁰⁷ Huscott, *Memoirs*, 2, cited in Strevens, *In step with time*. 42.

As a diocesan order, the Sisters of St Joseph of Nazareth were forced to accommodate the bishop's request. Nevertheless, the educational mission of the Josephite Sisters in the nineteenth century continued to focus on primary education. In the twentieth century they moved only slowly into girls' secondary education "as secondary education became less the preserve and privilege of the rich and became the right also of the poor".²⁰⁸ Their secondary schools, established in less affluent regions, taught a utilitarian curriculum incorporating commercial subjects and domestic science, designed to enhance the job prospects of pupils and to meet the requirements of the public examination system.²⁰⁹

The Marist Brothers: a primary education for boys

In 1876 Archbishop Redwood brought the Marist Brothers of the Schools to the Wellington diocese. The teaching order founded by Marcellin Champagnat in the Lyons-Belley area of France had — at Rome's insistence — separated itself from the Society of Mary in 1852, to run primary schools for boys. As a Marist Brother explained it, Marcellin Champagnat's "vision" was an educational mission that focussed on "the poor, for the ones who were less fortunate" (FJ12). Like other "new" nineteenth-century congregations, the Marist Brothers utilised a monitorial system of classroom organisation developed by the De La Salle

²⁰⁸ *Australian Catholic Directory* (n.d.) 150-51, cited in Lewis, "Provision for the education of Catholic women in Australia since 1840." 403.

²⁰⁹ By 1950 the Sisters of St Joseph of Nazareth ran one secondary school and 16 primary schools in the Wellington diocese (they opened a second secondary school in Hastings in 1951). The Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart ran one secondary school and 23 primary schools in the Auckland diocese as well as five primary schools in Christchurch and one in Dunedin. *Australasian Catholic Directory 1950*, ACDA.

Brothers to cope with the large number of pupils attending their primary schools:²¹⁰

At the signal given to announce the entrance into school, the children are to keep quiet, stop all their games, take their partners, and line up under the supervision of their respective schoolmasters. Upon entering the classroom they are to walk sedately, take off the cross, bow to the crucifix and the teacher, then having arrived at their places, kneel at their benches, and say a Hail Mary.²¹¹

So began the school day in hundreds of French “charity” schools run by the Marist Brothers in the nineteenth century: ordered, quiet, and with due respect paid to teachers and to God. Children were taught how to read, how to pray and also how to behave: a religious education that focussed on the transmission of faith, culture and rudimentary instruction in a highly disciplined environment.

The earliest Marist Brothers’ schools in New Zealand, like their French counterparts, consisted of a single room, divided by movable partitions. The school at Christchurch (founded in 1888) was 105 feet long by 30 feet wide, divided by two wooden partitions: “one rose half-way up the wall, the other to the ceiling”.²¹² The noise level in such a building, occupied by some 300 pupils ranging from Primer One to Standard Six, must have been unimaginable. Apart from the religious instruction, which concentrated on the rote learning of the catechism, the programme followed the state primary school curriculum. Some

²¹⁰ Curtis, "Educating the faithful".

²¹¹ *Guide des écoles à l'usage des Petits Frères de Marie* (Lyon, 1853), 3, cited in *Ibid.*, 284.

²¹² Pat Gallagher, *The Marist Brothers in New Zealand, Fiji & Samoa* (Christchurch, 1976).

indication of its scope is contained in Brother Mark's report on the Timaru school in 1898:

The chief points which in my opinion demand special attention are comprehension of reading lesson which I found weak throughout... The prayers are fairly well known as also the letter of the catechism but I would expect a better knowledge of explanation and substance in the higher standards. Writing in copy books should be forthwith introduced into the second and even the first Standards... children should be accustomed to the pen at an early age for the same difficulties present themselves no matter how long they have been writing on slates.²¹³

Marist Brothers put a high priority on their pupils' success in the Proficiency Examination,²¹⁴ as inspector James Hendry noted in his 1897 inspection of Marist School, Invercargill:

The results of this examination, both as regards the essential and the non-essential subjects, are eminently satisfactory... Marist Brothers have made their school one of the most efficient in the district... Order, attention and manners are in **every** way satisfactory.²¹⁵

²¹³ Brother Mark 1898, cited in *Ibid.*, 111-12.

²¹⁴ The Proficiency Examination, launched in 1899 as a Standard Sixschool leaving qualification, signaled that its holder had achieved a high level of primary education. In 1901 with the introduction of the "free place scheme", it became an entry qualification to state-run post-primary schools. See Openshaw, Lee, and Lee, *Challenging the myths*.

²¹⁵ Inspection Report, 1897, cited in J.O.P. Watt, *Invercargill Marist 75th Jubilee, 1897-1972* (1972). 9. HL.

In the early years attempts to extend the work of primary schools took the form of adding a high school class, or evening classes, either in the academic subjects or to prepare youths and adults for the reception of the sacraments.²¹⁶

The Christian Brothers: education for social mobility

From their first arrival in Dunedin in 1876 the educational mission of the Christian Brothers' schools focussed on the provision of a sound utilitarian vocational education that would fit their pupils for the civil service or even the professions (see diagram 4.1). The low fees gave access to children of the working-class Irish, facilitating a much quicker upward mobility than might otherwise have been the case. The influence of their Irish educational inheritance was central to the Christian Brothers' approach to education. O'Farrell suggests the Irish pedagogy was underpinned by a strict discipline, methodical teaching, extraordinarily hard work and devotion to examinations, and the Christian Brothers applied those concepts vigorously in both Australia and New Zealand.²¹⁷

Like the Marist Brothers, the Christian Brothers utilised a monitorial system to cope with the larger number of pupils attending their primary schools.²¹⁸ Nineteenth-century schools run by the Christian Brothers focussed on providing free education for "poor children", although the "pension" school

²¹⁶ Sacred Heart College, Auckland, established in 1903, occupied a position of dominance, even though small secondary schools were established at Greymouth, Invercargill, Gisborne, Hamilton and Suva. Gallagher, *The Marist Brothers in New Zealand, Fiji & Samoa*. 112.

²¹⁷ O'Farrell, *The Catholic Church and community*. 355.

²¹⁸ Curtis, "Educating the faithful".

concept for aspiring middle-class boys was also utilised by the Irish Christian Brothers as a way of supporting the costs of supplying education to the poor. The first Christian Brothers' school in New Zealand, founded in Dunedin, was partly funded by fees of one shilling a week "for the first and second book, two for the third and fourth and geometry and book-keeping were extras".²¹⁹ As Brother Treacy reported in November, 1875:

As soon as I return to Melbourne, I will send him [Bishop Moran] a plan of a new wooden school... the Brothers may have two good rooms and a class room to commence with... suitably furnished at the expense of the Bishop. The Brothers are to receive fees in the schools, the same as they do in Australia and the Bishop will immediately apply to Rome for the necessary permission.²²⁰

Monitors were still used extensively in the lower grades, as is apparent in Brother Bodkin's report on the working of the Dunedin school, accompanying the *Classified Returns* of 1885: "Class No 1 is taught similarly to schools of the same standard at home, monitors being freely used".²²¹

During the first ten years of the school, following the practice in secondary district high school departments, and in line the 1877 Education Acts, the curriculum was extended to include some secondary subjects including Latin, French, Higher Mathematics and Bookkeeping.²²² Selected boys began to enter

²¹⁹ Educational Record 1931, cited in K.K. O'Donoghue, *P.A. Treacy and the Christian Brothers in Australia and New Zealand* (Melbourne, 1983). 103.

²²⁰ Brother Treacy, 13 November 1875, cited in *Ibid.*, 102.

²²¹ Brother Bodkin's *Report Dunedin*, 19 October 1885, cited in *Ibid.*, 162.

²²² *Jubilee Magazine*, Dunedin, cited in *Ibid.*, 103.

for matriculation although the move into secondary education was subject to some criticism in Australia:

Now for the sake of seven boys, which is the largest number that matriculated in any year, so to sacrifice the stability of a large community, is I would say one of the greatest mistakes committed in Australia... that it is necessary to have high schools out here is clear but it does not follow that they should be where they are not wanted.. we are not bound to have them, let us leave them to those who are instituted for such things.²²³

The debate about the appropriateness of secondary schooling for the working-class is a significant one. It concerns fundamental issues which will surface again in part three of this thesis in the context of the Thomas Committee's reforms and its proposal for a compulsory common core curriculum. Suffice it to say at this point that there were debates among Catholic educators about the appropriateness of secondary education for the "lower orders", debates which, as I will demonstrate in the context of the Thomas reforms, had parallels in wider New Zealand society. There were tensions too, as I will explore in the following section, regarding the educational mission of teaching orders concerned to maintain the "academic" and "cultural" standards of a "select" secondary education designed to produce the intellectual and religious leaders in the Catholic community, and those who wished to facilitate the access of "able" working-class pupils to a "utilitarian" secondary education which focussed on examination success and social mobility.

²²³ Brother Barrett, 29 August 1882, cited in *Ibid.*, 132.

A secondary education for culture, truth and influence

The Dominican Sisters: promoting culture and truth

The Dominican Sisters who came from Dublin to New Zealand in 1871 were originally founded in 1206 at Prouille in France by St Dominic. To preach and teach is implicit in the Dominican motto “Veritas” (truth). While preaching was generally the prerogative of male Dominicans, the Sisters engaged in the teaching apostolate. The nuns of the Third Order, whose rule of enclosure is less strict than Second Order Dominicans, are a pontifical order.²²⁴

The educational mission of the New Zealand Dominican Sisters interwove eight hundred years of Dominican tradition with a strong Irish influence. In 1871 the Dominican Sisters brought this cultural and scholastic tradition from Dublin to their schools in Otago and Southland. The notion that an accomplished woman’s learning was used in the private sphere, enhancing her own womanly excellence and serving the needs of others underpinned the Dominican pedagogy. As a Dominican Sister explained: “The emphasis was on being ladylike and well-mannered, courteous... there was a balance between our academic side and that side of our education” (OW2). “Accomplishment” in this way signified the appropriate use of woman’s intellect in man’s society. The accomplished woman did not appropriate knowledge in order to enhance self-

²²⁴ Second Order Dominican Sisters live under a strict monastic rule based on contemplation and prayer.

esteem, moral authority or economic independence. Rather, it followed that learning should “adorn” the female body.²²⁵

The course of studies offered at “Dominican Convent, Boarding and Day School for Young Ladies” in Dunedin in 1873 comprised subjects considered desirable for the education of young ladies in the nineteenth century. These included an “English education in all its branches, French, German and Italian Languages and Literature: Music, Singing, Plain and Fancy Work, Drawing, Painting, etc”²²⁶ In New Zealand, as in Australia, Britain, the United States, Canada and South Africa, the nineteenth-century “accomplishments” curriculum comprised two main elements. These were referred to as “a sound English education” and “the usual accomplishments”. The “English” education is somewhat ironical, given the Irish heritage of the Sisters. Nevertheless, in New Zealand, as in Australia, a systematic study of subjects that promoted “European” or “English” cultural and social values had potential occupational meaning for many women forced to support themselves, and an education in the accomplishments was an important part of a family’s “cultural capital” in contracting a good marriage for a daughter (see diagram 4.1). Thus it was not

²²⁵ This injunction ran like a litany through nineteenth-century sermons. See Theobald, *Knowing women: Origins of women's education in nineteenth-century Australia*.

²²⁶ From an advertisement in the *NZ Tablet*, 3 May 1873, cited in McCarthy, *Star in the south*.
49.

seen as useless frippery, but crucial for marriage or work, if necessary as a governess or teacher.²²⁷

The unique characteristics of Dominican educational pedagogy are evident in the intellectual nature of “lecture and objection” method used widely in secondary classes in all Dominican classes: an extended training in apologetics in the tradition of St Thomas Aquinas. In their education of the daughters of the elite and socially upwardly mobile Catholics, the Dominican Sisters promoted the ideals of an order whose particular mission was to inspire each pupil with an enthusiasm for learning, culture and truth. As the *NZ Tablet* explained it, Dominican schools were uniquely placed “to train girls to forth into society, well educated, stamped with a culture based on long tested traditions, but above all, alive to their supernatural dignity as Christians.... each bearing further afield the torch of learning and religion kindled at one or other of the Dominican hearths throughout the diocese”.²²⁸ Thus a pupil educated in a Dominican school was equipped to explain, practise, and defend her religion “in the midst of scepticism and doubt” and to take her place in society.²²⁹

²²⁷ See Marjorie Theobald, "Women's teaching labour, the family and the state in nineteenth-century Victoria," in *Family, school and state in Australian history*, ed. Marjorie Theobald and R.J.W. Selleck (Sydney, 1990), 25-44.

²²⁸ “The Dominicans in New Zealand” *NZ Tablet* 9 May 1946, 9.

²²⁹ *The Catholic Press* 1933, cited in Lewis, "Provision for the education of Catholic women in Australia since 1840." 90.

The Sacred Heart Sisters: educating for influence

The general apostolic mission of the Society of the Sacred Heart involved the educating of the upper classes in boarding and later in day schools. By 1852 Madeleine Sophie Barat, the founder, had extended the work of education to the rising French middle classes in the belief that “There is an immense good to be done amongst this class; it has greater influence than is generally believed”.²³⁰ By adopting the Jesuit *Ratio Studiorum* as the model for the academic life of her schools, Sophie Barat set a high standard of intellectual endeavour as a requirement for those women whom she expected to enhance the regeneration of Christian society. While she accepted that women would fill the traditional roles of wives, mothers, and mistresses of households “they needed to study the duties as well as the rights of their station in life” in order to take up their roles as influential, intelligent and capable collaborators with their husbands.²³¹ As Bishop Patrick Moran, opening the Timaru convent in 1880, put it:

We are inaugurating an institution in which truly Christian culture in all its stages will be given to females of all classes. Here, their intellects will be developed, the power of forming sound judgment acquired, their memories stored with useful knowledge, their hearts trained to virtue, and their manners refined.²³²

²³⁰ Barat to Garabis, 12 January 1852, cited in *Ibid.*,295.

²³¹ F.Fenelon, *De l’Education des filles*, 1687, cited in *Ibid.*,300.

²³² *Timaru Herald*, 10 October 1880, 4.

The *Plan of Studies* was designed to be “an enunciation of the spirit that should guide the work”, rather than a programme of studies.²³³ It incorporated the main elements of a liberal arts education, “having theology as its core, and a strong emphasis on Philosophy, Literature and History” (see diagram 4.1). A Religious of the Sacred Heart who attended the Sisters’ Timaru school in the 1930s remembered that she was encouraged “to develop a great interest in literature, in History and Geography...and what you would call culture, the spiritual side as well as the social side” (SP2). The programme included limited science; the physical and biological sciences were considered to have little relevance to girls.²³⁴

Of the four French orders who established foundations in New Zealand in the latter part of the nineteenth century, the Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus developed a distinctive pedagogy that was unique in its conception of female education. While they did not exert the widespread influence of their Irish counterparts, founding convents and “superior” schools at Timaru in 1880, Island Bay, Wellington in 1905 and Remuera, Auckland in 1909, their focus on intellectual and cultural leadership in the Catholic community gave them a significant profile in debates shaping the Catholic educational mission in New Zealand. This is evidenced in the Catholic debates regarding the Thomas Report, the implications of which I will consider in chapters seven and eight. They also established the Loreto Hall Training College for religious teachers in Auckland

²³³ L. Barlow, 1982, cited in Lewis, "Provision for the education of Catholic women in Australia since 1840." 303.

²³⁴ *Spirit and plan of studies*. 110.

in 1950 (see chapter ten) thus playing a significant role in setting the professional standards for the education of teaching religious in New Zealand.

A secondary education in the classics

The Society of Mary

The mission of the Society of Mary, an order of priests founded in Lyon France in the nineteenth century, focussed on the education of youth for intellectual and religious leadership and evangelisation (see diagram 4.1). The nineteenth-century Catholic secondary colleges for boys run by the Society of Mary maintained a strong classical tradition as the following description of St Mary's College in Dundalk, Ireland by a leading Marist educator of the day illustrates:

The higher classes have an hour's Latin and an hour's Greek, three quarters of an hour English and the same for Mathematics. Fifth and Sixth classes who have not Greek have two hours of Latin a day. That way I hope to prevent our pupils languishing in the lower classes. Finally during the vacation Fr. Pestre has drawn up a programme of Latin and Greek authors to be translated by each class. He has chosen those preferred by the Catholic University and Trinity College.²³⁵

This classical tradition was brought to New Zealand by a number of graduates of St Mary's College Dundalk, including Dr Felix Watters who was the first rector of St Patrick's College Wellington.²³⁶ Francis Redwood and John Grimes, both Marists and future bishops in New Zealand were also educated at Dundalk.

²³⁵ Fr Forestier to the General House, 11 September 1869, cited in P. A. Corcoran, *The Irish province of the Marists: An early history 1850-1870* (Maynooth Co Kildare, 1987). 131.

²³⁶ He was killed by a sniper's bullet in 1916 when he was at Catholic University School in Dublin.

The desire to lift the Church socially and to raise Catholics from the status of an underprivileged minority to be the equals of their non-Catholic fellow colonists was behind Archbishop Francis Redwood's support for this "specifically Marist boarding project that would nourish local vocations to the priesthood and would build up a body of well-educated laymen who would find their way to the professions".²³⁷ Redwood wanted something grander than the extempore extensions of primary schooling that had developed elsewhere in the colony: "Let St Patrick's College in Wellington be the premier College in the colony".²³⁸ St Patrick's offered a classical education to the future Catholic leaders and priests in New Zealand. The 1885 prospectus noted:

As the vast majority of Catholic youths in the colony are the sons of Erin, the college is named after the great apostle of Ireland [and] is intended to provide... the advantages of the great public schools of Europe.²³⁹

By providing the "advantages of the great public schools", the secondary schools run by the Society of Mary offered the sons of up and coming Irish-Catholics a "liberal" education designed for their future roles as the intellectual and religious leaders of the Catholic community.²⁴⁰ An education based on the classics was

²³⁷ O'Meehan, *Steadfast in hope*. 126.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*

²³⁹ M. King, 1985, cited in King, *God's farthest outpost*. 103.

²⁴⁰ St Patrick's College in Wellington produced 126 priests between the time of its foundation and the death of Archbishop Redwood in 1935. Of these 103 became Marists. *Ibid.* The Society founded St Bede's Christchurch in 1911, St Patrick's Silverstream in 1930, Timaru in 1938 and St John's Hastings in 1941.

seen to mould the character, to contain unsurpassed treasures of graceful poetry and deep philosophy, perfect examples of logical and accurate use of language and, above all other subjects, it produced the trained and disciplined mind.²⁴¹

The type of education given in Catholic secondary schools that grew up in the latter part of the nineteenth century was determined largely by accepted religious values, and the perceived social needs of the Catholic community. The pedagogical traditions and educational lore of the religious orders became enshrined in their various manuals of educational practice. These incorporated not only the accumulated educational wisdom of the Church but also the distinctive educational mission of each order and accepted contemporary secular practice of the time. Several orders developed “systems of training”. The better known among these included the “Ratio Studiorum” of the Jesuits, “Conduit des Écoles” of the Marist Brothers, the “Reglements” of the Ursulines and the “Plan d’Études” of the Religious of the Sacred Heart. Those orders which produced no special manuals of school organisation generally incorporated their educational system into their Rules or Book of Practices or Customs, as in the case of the Dominicans.²⁴²

Expanding the Catholic educational mission

The expansion of the Catholic educational mission occurred in the context of the increasing demand for secondary education and in an environment of improving relations between Catholics and the rest of New Zealand society. Catholic parents, ambitious for their children’s social and economic success in the world,

²⁴¹ Fogarty, *Catholic education in Australia*. 362.

²⁴² *Ibid.*,303.

sent their sons and daughters to Catholic secondary schools to receive an education in the Catholic faith and to acquire state-mandated examination credentials. In the second part of this chapter I will argue that while the expansion of the Catholic educational mission that occurred from the 1920s was justified on the basis of the need to protect the faith of the growing number of pupils going on to secondary schools, it was also grounded in a new Catholic confidence in their role as patriotic citizens committed to successful participation in New Zealand society.²⁴³ As the following will detail, Catholic secondary schools promoted the training of pupils as moral, patriotic citizens who had a commitment to maintaining distinctive Catholic values particularly in relation to the family and gender roles. However, Catholic concerns to protect the autonomy of their schools from state interference, the values of a “liberal” education and their pupils from the secular values of “new” education meant that there were some tensions between the desire to preserve Catholic educational values and an educational mission that aimed at the social and educational advancement of Catholic pupils.

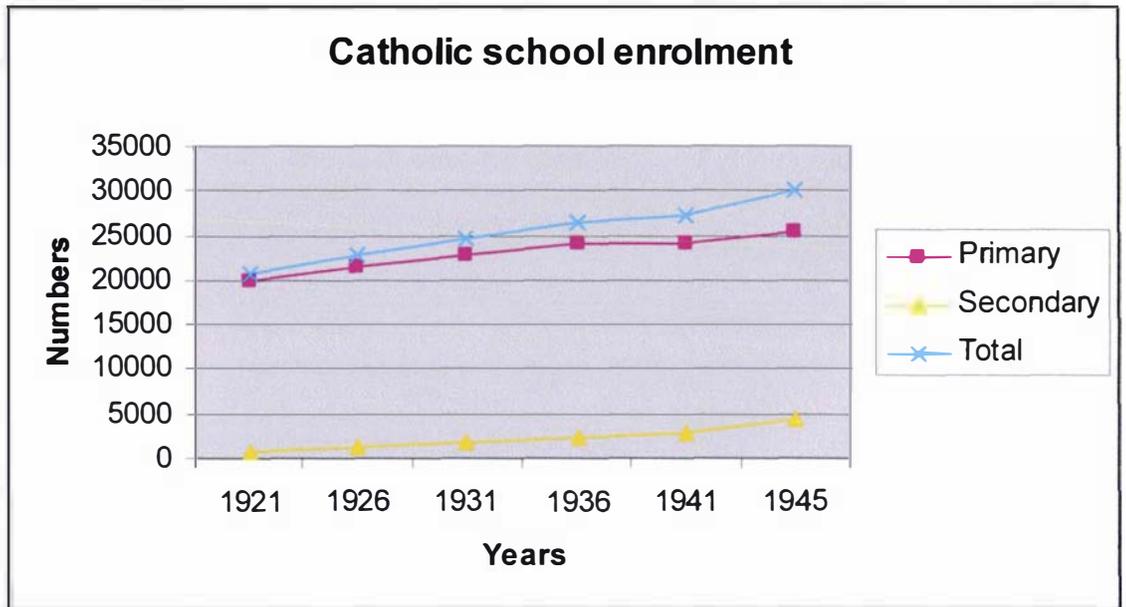
A period of growth

The period between 1921 and 1945 marked a period of steady growth for the Catholic and State education systems. The Catholic population grew from 35,635 non-Maori Catholics aged five to fourteen in 1921 to 37,822 in 1936 and 38,604 in 1945. This compares to a similarly steady growth in the New Zealand population from 1,271,501 in 1921 to 1,573,810 in 1936, and to 1,702,290 in

²⁴³ An examination of the key issues highlighted in this section of the chapter appears in Collins, "Schooling for faith, citizenship and social mobility."

1945.²⁴⁴ Catholic school enrolment rose in proportion. There were 20,652 pupils in Catholic schools in 1921. By 1936 there were 28,449, and by 1945 29, 965 pupils (see figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1: Catholic school enrolments 1921-1945



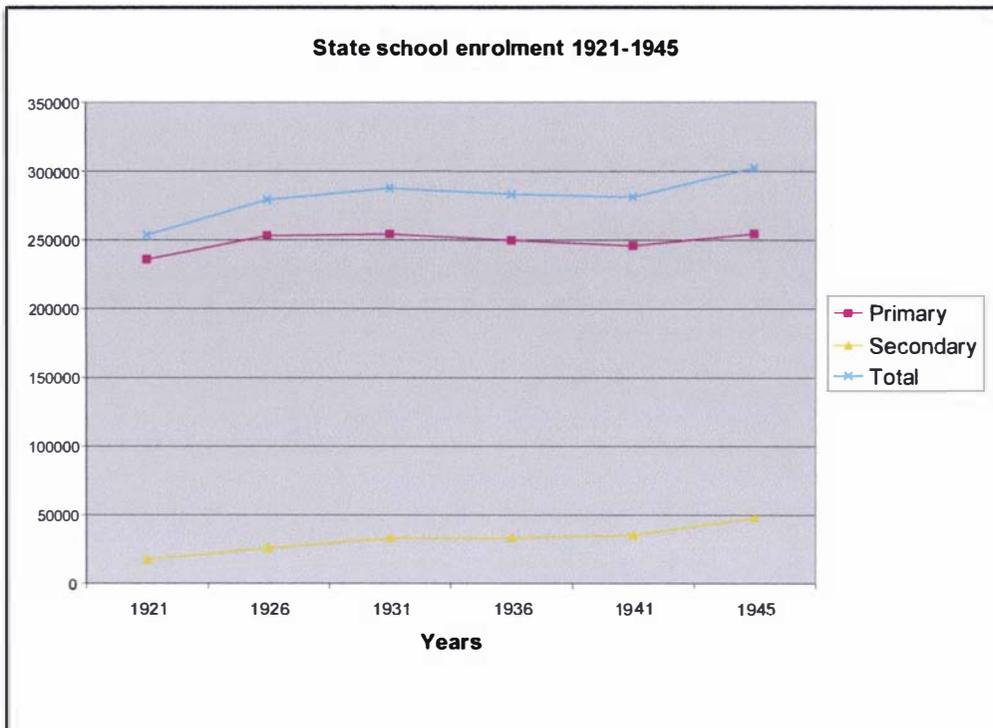
Source: Derived from Table B.5 (Spenser, 1972) based on demographic data and enrolment statistics.²⁴⁵

At the same time there was a steady increase in state school enrolment from 253,615 pupils in 1921 to 283,187 in 1936 to 302,274 in 1945(see figure 4.2).

²⁴⁴ See Table A.1. The figures are derived from Census of Population and dwellings. See Spenser, "Interim Report," 445.

²⁴⁵ Ibid., 462.

Figure 4.2: State school enrolments 1921-1945



Source: Derived from Table B.5 (Spenser, 1972) based on demographic data and enrolment statistics.²⁴⁶

The proportion of Catholics attending Catholic primary and secondary schools during these years steadily increased as the index of total Catholic school coverage rose from 58% of school-age Catholic children in 1921 to 64.9% in 1936, when it reached a plateau. The index of primary coverage rose from 59.8% in 1921 to 67.4% in 1936. In the same year the index of secondary coverage reached 48.6%.²⁴⁷ In 1921 there were 1,507 religious in New Zealand. By 1936 this had risen to 1,973 and by 1945 to 3,293. During these years the Catholic education system was characterised by steady growth in the population attending

²⁴⁶ Ibid.

²⁴⁷ See Ibid., 198-99.

Catholic schools and an enlarging pool of teaching religious. As Spenser puts it, this pool was used to build up the Catholic secondary subsystem and to extend the primary schools. The extra resources were also used to relieve the financial strain on parents.²⁴⁸

During this period there were many references to the satisfactory reports of the Departmental Inspectorate and to the scholastic success of Catholic schools. Catholic schools also took the opportunity to innovate. In 1927 the Sacred Heart Girls College in Christchurch introduced the Montessori Method. Orders such as the Dominicans were quick to follow suit, sending Sisters to Christchurch for training and setting up “Montessori style” classrooms (see photo 4.1).²⁴⁹ A.G. Butchers, writing in 1929, noted that:

The rapid extension of this movement affords an excellent example of their fixed determination to maintain in the schools of their church at whatever cost standards of education not merely equal but, if possible, superior to those of the State which so far has not introduced the Montessori method into its schools.²⁵⁰

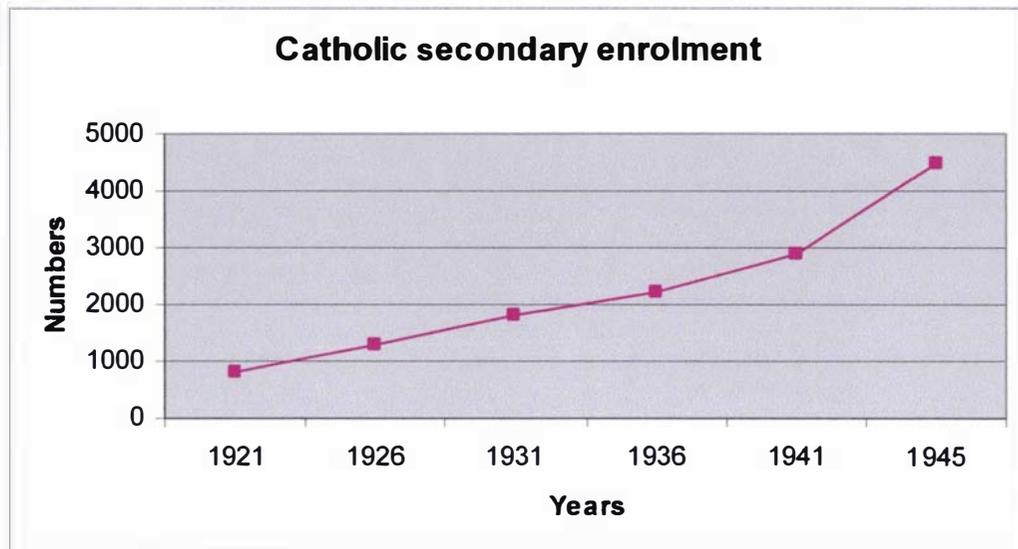
²⁴⁸ Free places were given in secondary schools and other types of post-primary institutions to children who gained their Proficiency Certificates on completion of Standard Six. The Wellington Catholic Education Trust Board abolished fees in primary schools in 1929, relying instead on the Sunday penny collection. It was a decision quickly regretted as the onset of the Great Depression severely reduced its income.

²⁴⁹ One of the author’s Dominican teachers, Sister St Joan Terry, was one of those trained in the early 1930s.

²⁵⁰ A .G. Butchers, *Education in New Zealand: An historical survey* (Dunedin, 1930). 504-5.

However, in the years after 1924, expansion of secondary education (see figure 4.2) was to result in a major challenge to the stability of the Catholic educational mission.

Figure 4.3: Catholic secondary enrolments 1921-1945



Source: Derived from Table B.5 (Spenser, 1972) based on demographic data and enrolment statistics.²⁵¹

In the following section I argue that the twentieth-century expansion of Catholic schooling into secondary education, justified on the basis that it would protect the increasing number of Catholic pupils going on to secondary schools from the “dangers” of state secular values, became in fact an educational mission whose goals included the transmission of faith, moral citizenship, social mobility and the greater participation Catholic pupils in contemporary New Zealand society.

Secondary schooling for faith and citizenship

The urgency of the need to expand the mission into secondary schooling was expressed as early as 1923 by Father Gilbert, the Rector of St Bede’s College in

²⁵¹ Spenser, "Interim Report," 462.

Christchurch. He pointed out that in 1920, 64% of those who passed Standard Six entered a course of secondary education yet “few – relatively few – go to Catholic colleges; others – an ever increasing number – go to the Government secondary schools or colleges”. He went on to ask:

What is the use after all of Catholic primary school teachers spending their energy and giving their lives for children who are lost to the Church later through the indifference to principle of their parents? And many a Catholic teacher has been forced to see the work of years ruined when the pupils have left the sheltering influence of the Catholic schools... The same group of causes that brought into existence and justifies the Catholic primary schools demands that we Catholics realise the danger in our midst – otherwise we shall be a generation too late.²⁵²

In this way the extension of the Catholic educational mission to secondary education is explained on the basis of the need to protect the faith of the growing number of pupils going on to secondary education. The Church’s mission to “provide a place in a Catholic school for all Catholic children” now extended to secondary schooling.²⁵³

Although the rationale for Catholic education continued to be explained in terms of the danger of state secular values, Catholic educators now emphasised the value of a secondary education for successful participation in society. Catholic secondary schools increasingly promoted the training of pupils as moral, patriotic citizens who had a commitment to maintaining Catholic family values. This shift occurred in the 1920s and 1930s in an environment of

²⁵² *NZ Tablet*, 3 May 1923, cited in *Ibid.*, 196.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*, 203.

improved relations between Catholics and the rest of New Zealand society.²⁵⁴ The bitter sectarian divisions that had occurred in the context of the 1916 conscription debates and the conflicts over Irish political independence had diminished.²⁵⁵ As Akenson explains it, what occurred was a shift from an Irish immigrant identity to a sense of being good Catholics and patriotic New Zealanders of Irish ethnicity.²⁵⁶ It was also a period during which working-class Catholics found a political voice in the rise of the Labour Party.²⁵⁷

Catholics had always argued that religious values underpinned moral training, now they emphasised its importance for participation in contemporary New Zealand society. Redwood expressed the view that Catholic schools were “the nurseries of good citizens who are the pride and bulwark of the State”.²⁵⁸ Monsignor James MacManus reminded Catholics that “the main purpose of a Catholic school was to inculcate Christian principles, which alone could save society”.²⁵⁹ Opening a new building at Marist School, Invercargill, Bishop James Whyte expressed the hope that:

²⁵⁴ See van der Krogt, "More a part than apart".

²⁵⁵ Sean Brosnahan, "Shaming the Shoneens: The Green Ray and The Maoriland Irish Society in Dunedin, 1916-22," in *A distant shore: Irish migration and New Zealand settlement*, ed. L. Fraser (Dunedin, 2000), 117-34.

²⁵⁶ Akenson, *Half the world from home*.

²⁵⁷ See R.P. Davis, "The New Zealand Labour Party's Irish campaign 1916-1921," *Political Science* 19 (1967); Barry S. Gustafson, "The advent of the New Zealand Labour Party, 1900-1919" (Master of Arts, University of Auckland, 1961).

²⁵⁸ *NZ Tablet*, 8 October 1924, 25, HCSA.

²⁵⁹ *NZ Tablet*, 8 February 1939, 43, HCSA.

The boys who leave this school may take a worthy place among the citizens of this young and prosperous Dominion while at the same time striving by their pious deeds to secure a place in the Eternal Home above.²⁶⁰

Like their state counterparts, Catholic secondary schools for boys utilised the military cadets to promote the values of patriotic citizenship and as a way to demonstrate masculinity.²⁶¹ Schools such as Sacred Heart College, Auckland, extolled their success in training loyal citizens who would fight and die for their country, evidenced in “almost half of the college’s old boys, just over two thousand, served in the armed forces in World War II (see photo 4.3).”²⁶² School magazines gave prominence to the war record of pupils:

Of her sons’ performance in the severest tests of war, the school is extremely proud; not only of the heroes who hit the headlines but also of the grand fellows who did not catch the gonger’s eye, who were so like the bulk of characterful Kiwis, doing a manly job soundly, unobtrusively, with magnificent loyalty to their comrades - in action, in prison camp, or at base.²⁶³

Secondary schools for girls also sought to inculcate a sense of patriotism in their pupils as Mary Warren, a pupil at St Patrick’s Convent in Auckland explained in the *Month*:

²⁶⁰ NZ Tablet, 8 October 1924, 23, HCSA.

²⁶¹ See also R. Openshaw, "The highest expression of devotion: New Zealand primary schools and patriotic zeal during the early 1920s," *History of Education Review* 19 (1980): 333-44.

²⁶² Waters, *Confortare: A history of Sacred Heart College, Auckland, 1903-2003*. 110.

²⁶³ Rev J. Kingan, cited in Rev K. Maher, ed., *St Patrick's College Silverstream, 1931-1956: The first twenty-five years* (Wellington, 1956). 68. (author’s collection)

Loyalty to country is no less an obligation than is loyalty to God, and every Catholic school instructs its children on this subject from their earliest childhood.²⁶⁴

Catholic secondary schools promoted the distinctive qualities of Catholic citizenship by emphasising the importance of the religious values implicit in family relationships. The family was seen as the basic and most important unit of society. As Father Francis McMahon put it, “if you sanctify the family, you sanctify the community... if family life becomes corrupt we may despair of the nation”.²⁶⁵ While models of Catholic masculinity were based on contemporary beliefs that strict discipline and hardship would produce the “hard men” needed for post-colonial New Zealand society, Catholic manhood was also represented as a tough team endeavour which required obedience to authority.²⁶⁶ It was a utilitarian approach to spiritual and educational values that was also anti-intellectual in tone – as O’Farrell explains:

Religion was taught in much the same terms as football – a tough team endeavour, obeying the captain and the rules, the domain of action not thought.²⁶⁷

At the same time Catholic schools encouraged boys to model themselves on the Holy Family and the moral leadership epitomised in St Joseph’s role as husband and head of the home, “the industrious provider and protector, self sacrificing

²⁶⁴ *Month*, 1 November 1932, 8, ACDA.

²⁶⁵ *NZ Tablet*, 20 July 1938, 8, HCSA.

²⁶⁶ See King, *God's farthest outpost*, Phillips, *A man's country*.

²⁶⁷ O’Farrell, *The Catholic Church and community*. 240.

and ever considerate, ever courteous".²⁶⁸ Schools run by the Marists and Christian Brothers also tried to balance the emphasis on sport by encouraging participation in music and drama.²⁶⁹

The construction of femininity in Catholic secondary schools was firmly based on a pragmatic view of woman's future role as wife and mother and in that order. As a Mr Rae told an audience at a break-up concert in Westland sometime in the 1920s:

What was the use of a girl, for instance, who could play the piano most brilliantly, who could speak French, German, Italian, or even Chinese (laughter), who could draw a castle, or paint a camellia, but could not cook a mutton chop. She was an instance of a most accomplished young lady whose education had been sadly neglected.²⁷⁰

Catholic teaching had much in common with contemporary views of women's responsibilities as the "moral guardians" of society.²⁷¹ However, Catholic educators emphasised the importance of chastity, and a family life based on the

²⁶⁸ *Zealandia*, 5 January 1939, 6, ACDA.

²⁶⁹ For example Christian Brothers' schools took part in Eisteddfod competitions in speech and music.

²⁷⁰ Speech by a Mr Rae at Break-up concert (undated) cited in, "Mercy in Westland: 1878-1978," in *Centenary Booklet Sisters of Mercy* (1978), 25.

²⁷¹ Ruth Fry notes that girls' schools selected literature for the teaching of English because of its "moral and inspirational" qualities and because "women had the special task of moral influence over men and children". See Ruth Fry, *It's different for daughters: A history of the curriculum for girls in New Zealand schools, 1900-1975* (Wellington, 1985). 37-38. See also van der Krogt, "More a part than apart".

idealised relationships in the “Holy Family”. Girls were encouraged to model their behaviour on the sexual purity of Mary the mother of Jesus. When Mary Goulter, writing in the *Month*, expressed concerns about the “the current tendency for the sexes to mix more freely than in the past”, she offered Mary as a “the model set before every Catholic girl – Mary, the crown and glory of womanhood”.²⁷²

Catholic writers concurred with contemporary “experts” who argued that in order to fulfil their destiny as wives and mothers, girls needed an appropriate education.²⁷³ Yet support for “academic” studies for girls remained low – the Catholic Federation in Auckland offered five day-scholarships and two correspondence scholarships to boys but only two day-scholarships to girls, while the Christchurch Diocesan Council of the Federation rejected a proposal to open its scholarships competition to girls.²⁷⁴ The suitability of an academic education for women was the subject of some debate:

Marriage is (or ought to be) the common lot of the convent-trained girl. For that we plead.. for the turning out of sweet domesticated maidens rather than incipient blue-stocking or brilliant executants or smart sayers of airy nothings.²⁷⁵

Nevertheless, as the following section will illustrate, utilitarian educational qualifications that would provide access to secretarial work, nursing or teaching were seen as relevant for girls who needed to work for economic reasons. This

²⁷² *Month*, 15 November 1923, 27-28, ACDA.

²⁷³ *Zealandia*, 27 August 1936, ACDA: see also van der Krogt, "More a part than apart". 252.

²⁷⁴ *Month*, 15 September 1921, 15, ACDA.

²⁷⁵ Bishop Cleary, cited in *Month*, 15 September 1919, 18, ACDA.

would provide employment before marriage and a safety net in case there were difficulties after marriage that meant a woman had to provide for herself and her children.

Secondary schooling for social mobility

From the 1920s onwards the secondary schools run by religious orders such as the Christian and Marist Brothers, the Sisters of Mercy, the Josephites and the Sisters of the Mission set out to provide a utilitarian secondary education for the children of parents ambitious for their social and economic success in the world. This was what the rising Catholic community wanted for its sons and daughters.²⁷⁶ Retaining elements of the classical and accomplishment curriculum, these schools provided opportunities to sit the Public Service Examinations and for selected pupils to go on to the Matriculation examination. The low fees of the Christian and Marist Brothers and the Mercy and Josephite schools gave access to secondary education and upward social mobility to the sons and daughters of the working-class who constituted the majority of New Zealand Catholics.

²⁷⁶ In the period 1918 to 1936 the Catholic community (approximately 13.5 % of New Zealand population) was still over-represented among the lower socio-economic groups and among the unemployed, although small but significant shifts were taking place. For example Catholic men were under-represented in skilled occupations requiring advanced training or education – engineers, architects and the legal profession. However they were over-represented in some forms of government employment, including local government and the police force. See van der Krogt, "More a part than apart". 36.

Parental demands for access to commercial qualifications meant that teaching orders that had previously focused on primary teaching, came under pressure to expand into secondary education, as the following illustrates:²⁷⁷

For some years past, there has been a desire, repeatedly expressed, by parents of the Proficiency class children, for a Secondary class, preferably a Commercial class... In case the Commercial class is not formed, it means that nearly all those children will go to schools which are not Catholic. I therefore kindly ask you to send us a Sister for the beginning of the school year, so that the children in question may be saved from the dangers consequent on attendance at secular institutions.²⁷⁸

The letter, written by a Father John Bradley, asked Mother Cyril, the superior-general of the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart, to send another teacher for a badly needed “post-proficiency class” at his parish school. Like Father Gilbert, he justified the expansion into secondary education as a way to “save” pupils from the “dangers” of attending state secondary schools. Nevertheless, it was clear that he wished to promote the “commercial” qualifications of girls who will go on to jobs as stenographers and secretaries in Government offices and private businesses.²⁷⁹ Father Bradley’s argument bore fruit, as St Michael’s

²⁷⁷ These included the Josephite Sisters and the Marist Brothers. See Kane, "The Marist Brothers in New Zealand education, 1917 to 1967", Strevens, *In step with time*.

²⁷⁸ Rev. John J. Bradley to Mother Cyril, Superior General of the Sisters of the Sacred Heart, 9 January 1933, cited in Power, *Sisters' of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart: New story, 1883 - 1997*. 164.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

School in Remuera established a “commercial class” which attracted pupils from the neighbouring parishes and from as far away as the North Shore.

In the years of this study Catholic schools utilised the state-mandated examinations as a key indicator of their success and a means of providing social and educational advancement for those who were able to gain the credentials, as a Marist Brother who attended a Catholic secondary school in the 1930s, explains:

So we did exactly the same as the State, and the inspectors gave us the same tests... In Form Five you did U.E. (Matriculation) and on the U.E. exam... it was the entrance to university and it was in the Fifth Form. We had a number of characters, including Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara (later Prime Minister and President of Fiji) who went on to university from Fifth Form and did very well. (FT14)

In addition, as the extract suggests, a secondary education was designed to produce future Catholic leaders. Nevertheless, there was a tension between the organisational, religious and social goals of Catholic secondary schools. In order to protect the integrity of an educational mission whose prime focus was the ultimate salvation of pupils, the Catholic bishops stood ready to defend their schools against the spectre of state interference and the threats implicit in a state-mandated “secular” curriculum. At the same time Catholic educators wanted to provide the increasing numbers of working-class pupils filling their schools with access to credentials that would give them access to a good job and further education. As we have seen, Catholic secondary schools promoted the distinctive qualities of Catholic citizenship, emphasising the religious and family values that underpinned successful participation in New Zealand society. Essentially the issue was the same one that had faced the Catholic education system since

the 1877 Education Act²⁸⁰: how Catholics might organise and maintain a system that was distinctively and qualitatively different from the state system and in this instance how Catholic educators might ensure the social and educational advancement of Catholic pupils while protecting the distinctive identity of the Catholic schools. It was an issue that aggravated relations between the Catholic hierarchy and state educational authorities for the best part of 100 years.²⁸¹ As a former diocesan director of education, who attended a Catholic secondary school in the 1930s, explained, “We were proposing a faith which is in many ways denied by the culture in which we live... what we were doing in the Catholic schools was teaching the skills they had to have, but at the same time, inculcating the fact that we had a faith that went far beyond in significance and particularly in relationship to human destiny” (DJ8).

In the context of the 1944 Thomas Report, with its proposal for a new “common core” curriculum for post-primary schools, as I will discuss in part three of this thesis, the issue would escalate into a crisis, prompting wide-ranging debates within the Catholic educational community and protracted negotiations with state educational authorities.²⁸² Nevertheless, on a day to day basis – as the speaker explains - Catholic educators continued to encourage their pupils to gain the academic credentials they needed for their social and educational advancement. At the same time the former had the crucial responsibility of transmitting the faith and preparing pupils for their ultimate “human destiny”, a

²⁸⁰ Education Act, 1877. *New Zealand Statutes*, 1877, 21, 109-131. 29 November 1877.

²⁸¹ See also Sweetman, *A fair and just solution?*

²⁸² See Collins, "Ideology and accommodation."

role for which they received specialist training as the following chapter will detail.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have examined the distinctive characteristics of diocesan and pontifical teaching orders and the complex relations with the diocesan authorities that underpinned the Catholic educational mission. Diocesan-based orders were able to provide a quick response to local needs but they suffered difficulties in their relationships with bishops and from a certain insularity and inflexibility in regard to national educational needs. The pontifical orders retained a greater independence and a closer contact with international educational developments but their educational interests frequently crossed diocesan boundaries and they in their turn were constrained by the requirements of their own internationally-based authorities. While the type of education given in Catholic secondary schools that grew up in the latter part of the nineteenth century was determined by accepted religious values and the perceived social needs of the Catholic community, the pedagogical traditions of the religious orders helped to shape the educational mission of Catholic primary and secondary schools in New Zealand in the late nineteenth century.

The majority of the “new” active religious orders worked to provide a basic primary school education for the Catholic population. Some female religious orders offered a “culture and accomplishments” curriculum and some male orders offered a classically-based curriculum to small numbers of boys. Particular religious orders, such as the Society of Mary, the Sisters of the Sacred Heart and the Dominican Sisters catered for the upper echelons of Catholic society, while the Christian Brothers, the Marist Brothers, the Mercy Sisters and

the Sisters of St Joseph worked to provide for those at the lower end of the social ladder.

The second part of this chapter examined the expansion of the Catholic educational mission. Justified on the basis of the need to protect the faith of the growing number of pupils going on to secondary education, the expanded educational mission was also grounded in a new Catholic identity as “moral” patriotic citizens committed to Catholic family values and successful participation in New Zealand society. Catholic secondary schools offered a utilitarian secondary education that focussed on success in state-mandated examinations to the children of parents ambitious for their social and economic success in the world. Nevertheless, there were significant tensions between Catholic educators who wished to preserve the “academic” and “cultural” standards of a select secondary education and a Catholic educational mission that increasingly worked for the social and educational advancement of working-class Catholic pupils while aiming for the protection Catholic religious and cultural values. These tensions will resurface in the context of the Thomas reforms in part three of this thesis.



Photo 5.1: In the Juniorate, pupils completed their secondary education and received an introduction to the history and traditions of the particular religious order with which they were associated. The photo includes twelve recruits from New Zealand 'The twelve apostles' on their way to the Christian Brothers Juniorate at Strathfield, Sydney, 1922. *Hocken Collections Uare Taoka o Hākena*



Photo 5.2: The Novice was received formally into the religious order and wore full religious dress for the first time Marist Brothers signing at Profession ceremony *F. E. McGregor Collection Canterbury Museum*



Photo 5.3: Women religious wore a bridal dress for their reception ceremony. In the photo a Sister of Mission prepares for the Reception ceremony. After the ceremony the Sister was clothed in a habit that "enclosed", contained and restrained the body, its loose folds neutralised any signs of gender. *F. E. McGregor Collection Canterbury Museum*

Chapter Five

Mission, service and sacrifice: the religious formation of Catholic teachers

There was a statement in our training, “we are doormats of God”. Somebody took that as a retreat theme. “You are just doormats of God”. We are not doormats of God. God does not want this. (MNI 5)

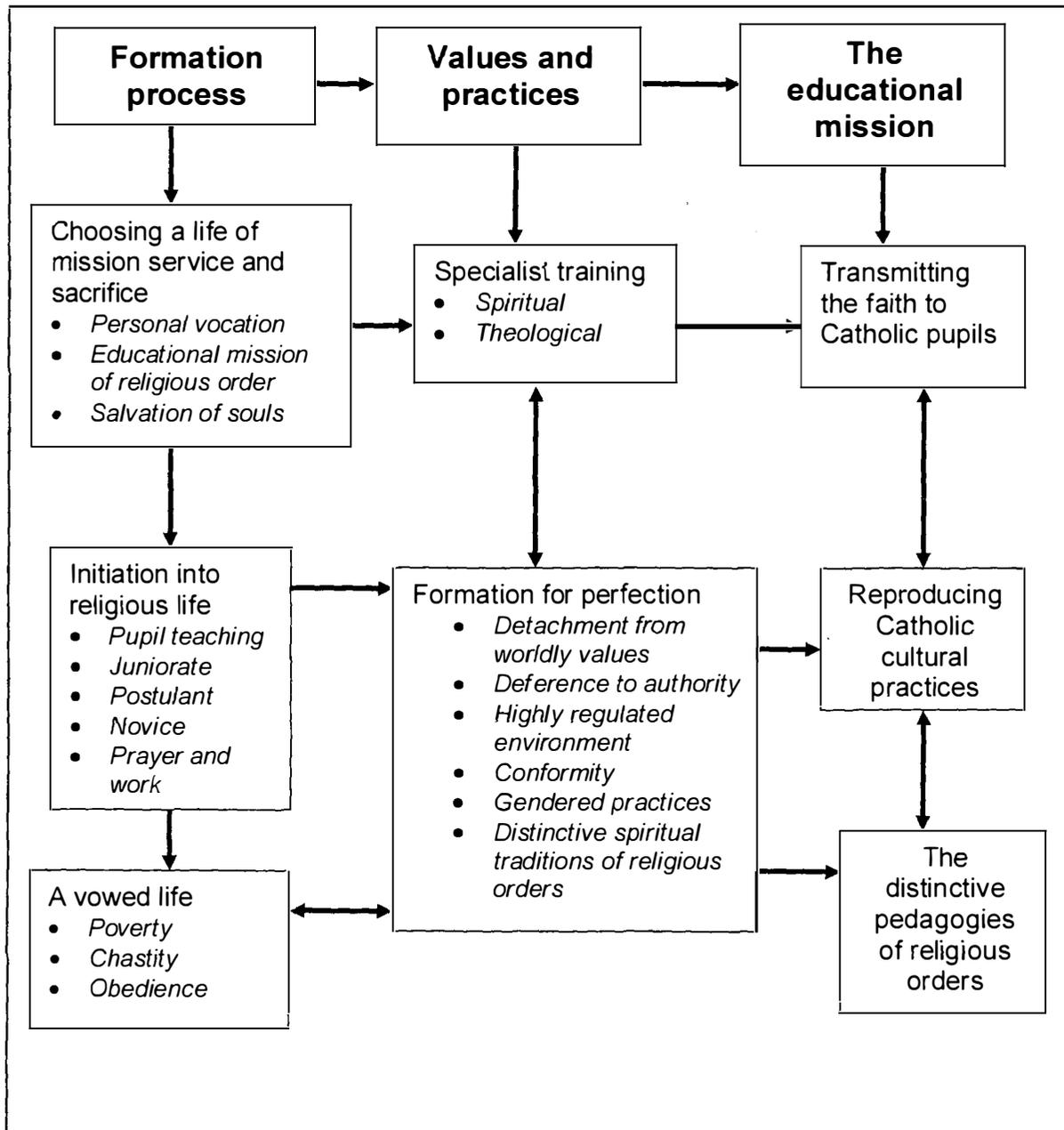
Introduction

In chapter three I argued that the Church’s educational mission was influenced by the desire to maintain a distinctive Catholic identity through the transmission of faith and Catholic cultural practices to the next generation of Catholic pupils. In this chapter I will illustrate how the religious formation of Catholic teachers was designed to produce expert teachers whose responsibility was to do just that (see also diagram 3.1). The strongly religious motivation for entering a teaching order set recruits to religious life apart from those entering teaching in the state education system. In the following, I will demonstrate that Catholic teachers were unique in their commitment to the celibate religious life, the educational mission of the order to which they belonged, and their special responsibility for the success of the Catholic educational mission. Each of them undertook a process of religious formation and professional training that prepared them to transmit the faith, to reproduce Catholic cultural practices and to enhance the social, economic and educational advancement of Catholic pupils.

This chapter will utilise documentary, archival and the life history accounts of the participants in this study to consider ways in which new religious were socialised into particular religious and cultural practices and the influence of the distinctive pedagogies of different religious orders. I will show that religious learned to comply with the requirements of a highly regulated celibate life because they felt a personal call or “vocation” to religious life and a commitment to the mission of the teaching order in which they became a member. It was a “call” that was sustained by the camaraderie they experienced with other recruits and the knowledge that they were taking part in the Church’s wider educational mission for the salvation of souls. From this point in the thesis onwards, the voices of the participants in this study, until now muted, will assume an increasingly significant role in the research narrative. The accounts of Catholic educators come to prominence particularly as we move from a consideration of historic influences in part two of this thesis to a focus on the significance of the educational mission for the religious who lived, shared and promoted that mission in part three and four of the thesis. Key themes identified in earlier chapters are examined in relation to the lives of the participants in this study, the 19 women and 10 men who taught in Catholic schools in the years after 1943. Influences such as Roman-based authoritarian structures, an Irish inheritance, the particular traditions of religious orders and gender-based practices resurface in the context of the religious formation of Catholic teachers. This chapter argues that the Church’s desire to ensure a continuity of religious, cultural and social values within the Catholic community shaped the spiritual formation of New Zealand Catholic teachers. Thus new recruits received specialised theological and spiritual training within highly regulated communities

and were socialised into practices of work and prayer designed to ensure the reproduction of these values in the next generation of Catholic pupils. The process of religious formation was influenced by a number of factors including notions of mission, service and sacrifice. The chapter outlines the organisation of novitiate training before detailing initiation practices underpinned by a mix of authoritarian and regulatory practices, particular constructions of gender and the distinctive spiritual traditions of religious orders. The framework of the chapter is outlined in diagram 5.1.

Diagram 5.1 The religious formation of Catholic teachers



Choosing a life of mission, service and sacrifice

Religious communities are made up of groups of individuals “who freely come together to enter a vowed life within a community which is both formally recognised and regulated by the Church”.²⁸³ Members take vows of poverty,

²⁸³ Smyth, "Much exertion of the voice," 100.

chastity and obedience, and pledge to uphold the charism, or mission of the community. As Elizabeth Smyth puts it, religious communities have both practical and moral purposes.²⁸⁴ The increasing numbers who joined the “active” religious orders in the nineteenth-century English-speaking world saw teaching in a Catholic school as a useful work to do both for the salvation of their souls and for the good of society as a whole.²⁸⁵ The notion of mission operated at three levels, a personal mission or vocation as a religious, a commitment to the distinctive educational mission of a religious order and a sharing in the Church’s wider salvation mission by transmitting faith and cultural practices to their pupils (see diagram 5.1). Essential to the vocation of a religious teacher was a notion of service that assumed a lifetime commitment to the apostolate of teaching, a commitment that was undertaken without payment and which involved a wide range of duties.²⁸⁶ The vast majority of these teachers were women.²⁸⁷ As Ernest Simmonds notes:

²⁸⁴ Ibid.

²⁸⁵ T. O'Donoghue, *Come follow me and forsake temptation: Catholic schooling and the recruitment and retention of teachers for religious teaching orders, 1922-1965* (Bern, 2004). 19.

²⁸⁶ These duties included cleaning the school, taking care of the grounds, meeting parents, training sports' teams, giving extra tuition to children with learning difficulties, organising the work of sodalities such as the Children of Mary, fundraising activities, preparing pupils for the Sacraments, supervision of boarders, and the giving of music and speech lessons after school to supplement the low school fees charged to Catholic pupils. See Collins, "Hidden Lives". 194; O'Donoghue, *Come follow me*. 20.

²⁸⁷ In New Zealand seven out of eight religious were women. See Table 4.3: and Simmons, *A brief history of the Catholic Church in New Zealand*.

It was taken for granted that these dedicated women would work long hours at all sorts of tasks from the most menial to the most sublime and at the same time live in such poverty that the fees of the music teacher were often the only means of keeping the convent going... they were building a Church on the bent backs of the Nuns.²⁸⁸

The success of the Catholic educational mission depended, as Simmonds explains, on the large numbers of religious women who worked “long hours at all sorts of tasks” to “build” the Catholic Church in New Zealand. It was a life characterised by poverty, hard work and personal commitment. A Dominican Sister recalls that she was drawn to religious life by the Sisters who taught her “their poverty, they had practically nothing in the school and yet they taught us” (OM 4). Another Dominican Sister saw that life as a religious offered opportunities for devotion, prayer, the service of others and an alternative to marriage.

A lot of my friends at school were going out and I used to (as well). Yet it seemed to me that it was so superficial, there was nothing there. I thought, “Goodness, I can’t imagine just going through life, going to morning teas and afternoon teas and all the rest of it”. Then the fact that I went to Mass with my father and saw his devotion. We looked after the poor people in our area. To me these seemed (to be) the real values. Then of course my sister was received as a Dominican Sister. I suppose I was at the age of 12 or 13 at that time. I was very impressed by that ceremony. (OG3)

The Sister, who was a boarder at a Dominican secondary school with her older sister, is inspired to enter the convent because the “devotion” of her father, and a desire to live “the real values” of the Catholic faith rather than “just going through life, going to morning teas”. She was drawn to the Dominican order because she was “very impressed” by her sister’s reception ceremony. Like a

²⁸⁸ Ibid. 107.

number of the Dominican Sisters in this study, she remembers being attracted to religious life by the beauty of the solemn liturgies particularly those of the Divine Office (see later discussion).

As has been illustrated in chapter four, the establishment of the Catholic education system in New Zealand was made possible by the influx of predominantly Irish teaching religious orders; its expansion relied on the successful recruitment of new members to these orders. This was achieved by a policy of recruitment from Ireland, a policy which continued until the 1960s, and by encouraging pupils, particularly in Catholic secondary schools, to “enter” teaching religious life.²⁸⁹ Five Irish-born Sisters were interviewed for this study, three Sisters of Mercy and two Dominican Sisters. These Sisters came to New Zealand in the 1950s and early 1960s. They have now returned to Ireland, each having spent more than forty years teaching in New Zealand Catholic schools.²⁹⁰ For these Sisters the importance of “mission” was paramount. A Mercy Sister remembered that in Ireland “it was customary in those days [the 1940 and 1950s] for the missionary sisters [to] come around to the schools and talk to the girls

²⁸⁹ For example significant numbers of Irish postulants joined the Auckland Sisters of Mercy in the first half of the twentieth century: nineteen in 1922, seventeen in 1937, twenty-four in 1949, twenty-one in 1951. Delany, *Gracious is the time: 1850-1950 Centenary of the Sisters of Mercy Auckland New Zealand*. 179. Issues relating to the continuing Irish presence among New Zealand teaching religious is an area needing further research.

²⁹⁰ Since it became the policy of the Dominican and Mercy Sisters in the 1990s to allow Irish born Sisters to return to Ireland on “retirement” twenty-five Mercy Sisters and two Dominicans have done so (Personal Communication, (MO), 13 February 2003). The author interviewed three Mercy Sisters and two Dominican Sisters when she visited Ireland in May 2003.

about vocations” (MB3). Although a Dominican Sister recalls that she was “just fifteen” when New Zealand Dominican Sisters came to recruit new members at the Dublin school she attended, she had always had a strong sense of mission “to be a teacher and to be a religious” (OA5):

These Sisters came and asked... “Do you want to be a religious?” “Yes I do.” “And you’re going to do something about it for me?”... So I stepped out into the dark and said I would go. They told me a little bit about New Zealand. Mother Philomena told me about this gorgeous country that was so like ours and the skies were blue, blue skies and there were green, green paddocks and I was thinking “That’s just like home” not that that was what took me there. I really feel that this was my call from God and I felt that if I didn’t answer then, God knows I might not ever have another opportunity to say yes. (OA5-6)

Inspired by notions of service – “a choice of vocation that was beautiful” (OB8) - numbers of Irish girls felt a “call to New Zealand to the missions” (OB9). They decided to join the New Zealand Dominicans even though that meant leaving family and friends and travelling to the other side of the world to a country about which they knew little.²⁹¹

I suppose we were brought up with the idea of a mission, the need to support missions (missions to us were people out there who had never heard of God) and that we should do something for these people. We knew it would be helpful to get them to know God like we would and to support them. I suppose going to New Zealand was a mission. (OA11)

Like their nineteenth-century Irish antecedents, these Irish-born Dominican Sisters were inspired to travel half way around the world to bring the faith to a “people out there who had never heard of (God)”. As some of the Sisters commented, they imagined (mistakenly) that New Zealand was inhabited by

²⁹¹ A number of the “Irish” Sisters believed they were going to be teaching Maori “wearing grass skirts”, a far cry from the children of working-class Irish Catholics they actually encountered (Personal communication MB, OB, OC, 26 May 2003).

native people wearing grass skirts and that they would be bringing the Catholic faith from Ireland to “people out there who had never heard of God”. Like their New Zealand counterparts they were inspired by the individual religious who were “happy in religious life”, and who modelled a calling they saw to be characterised by “kindness and caring”, “fantastic” teaching and a life of prayer, beautiful liturgies and the Divine Office:

I saw women who were great models and were happy in religious life ... We had a Sister who took us right throughout primary school... and she became such a model of kindness and caring. She was a fantastic teacher and we realised that more during our own school life when we became teachers... we would go around to the chapel and ... all of a sudden you would hear these angelic voices singing. I just loved liturgy and listening to the Divine Office... (OA4)

Researchers such as Hareven and Langenbach suggest that American religious communities not only promoted vocations in the pupils in their schools but also actively utilised a network of connections with Catholic families to encourage new recruits. They note, for example that girls who eventually became Nuns often visited or boarded with aunts or older sisters who were members of religious communities.²⁹² Danylewycz suggests that this was part of an overall pattern where Catholic parents not only felt honoured when their children were called to serve God but were also led to believe that through this “sacrifice” their own chances for salvation had improved significantly.²⁹³ In fact by fostering a vocation to a teaching order a Catholic parent also shared in the Church’s

²⁹² See Tamara K. Hareven and Randolph Langenbach, *Amoskeag: Life and work in an American factory-city* (New York, 1978).

²⁹³ See Danylewycz, *Taking the veil: An alternative to marriage, motherhood and spinsterhood in Quebec, 1840-1920*.

educational mission and took part in the salvation of souls. Research for this thesis supports the contention of my earlier study that there is a strong correlation between an individual's experience of education in a Catholic school and his or her later decision to enter a religious order.²⁹⁴ Of the twenty-nine religious interviewed, all but one entered the religious order that ran the Catholic secondary school they attended; all had attended a Catholic school.²⁹⁵ It is also clear that many of the men and women in this study were encouraged by the example of inspirational teachers, as a Christian Brother recalled:

I think it was because I had a magnificent teacher in Form 2, Brother Webster, who is since dead, Peter, Xavier Webster. Now there would be three or four of us in this community and a number of us, who would say that we are here because of him. He had an influence that was miles beyond that of purely imparting knowledge. There are things that he taught us that I still remember. (CN7)

Schools, convents and monasteries were permeated by religious values and practices. These worked, not only to transmit the faith and cultural practices for those who chose the single or married state in life, but also to encourage pupils to consider the possibility of a religious vocation. Becoming a Catholic teacher provided young men and women with an opportunity to undertake a life of mission, sacrifice and service in the field of education and by doing so to fulfil a unique role in building up the Catholic Church in New Zealand as a Dominican Sister who entered in the 1930s remembered:

We felt that we were fulfilling something within the Church, some need that might be there, and also we were providing a good solid education for

²⁹⁴ Collins, "Hidden Lives". 142.

²⁹⁵ The other religious had attended a Catholic primary school run by another order and later a state school.

girls of that time. I felt it was a call from God. That was the main thing. It meant a big sacrifice having to give up all the things you give up when you become a Nun. Apart from the social aspect of everything it's the fact of marriage and having children and all that... But you don't think of these things at the time – the sacrifice your family is making. (OW2, 3, 18)

As the Sister explains, the Church had a “need” for religious teachers to run the Catholic schools. As a teaching religious she was taking part in the Church’s mission to educate the “girls of that time” in the Catholic faith and to provide “a good solid education”. Like many of the participants in this study she identifies a personal vocation to a life of service as a teacher “a call from God”. And that call, as we have already seen in chapter three, meant a life of sacrifice of “giving up” all prospects of “marriage and having children”. Although she “didn’t think of it at the time” the Sister realised much later that her parents also made a “tremendous sacrifice”; they were able to see her only once a month and to exchange infrequent letters.

While the majority of participants recall that their parents were supportive, an Irish Mercy Sister’s father was very upset that she was responding to a call to mission that would take her to the other side of the world:

My father said he didn’t mind me entering in Ireland or England, perhaps America if I had to go that far, but never anywhere beyond that and he said it would be over his dead body that I would go to New Zealand. And it was. He actually died the beginning of the year that I went. He died in February and I moved out in October. It’s hard to know why it just happened like that. (MB8)

The sense of grief expressed by the speaker illuminates the personal cost of taking up a religious vocation, a cost that included the severing of family relationships and leaving behind forever the life she had known. Even now, as she looks back, the Sister finds it hard “to know why it just happened like that”. This sense of loss and the homesickness that occurred as the result of taking up

the mission of religious life in distant places is present too in a story told by a Christian Brother who went to train in the Australian novitiate in Sydney in the mid-1950s:²⁹⁶

You were an awful long way from home. It was like going to the moon. The moment you put some water between people, it seems an awful long way and of course in those days, the Trans-Tasman flights were just beginning. The old flying boats were doing it but that was a major ten hour trip. The land planes were just starting, but most people crossing the Tasman did it on a boat. It was an awful long way to go and (at fifteen) we were thought to be very, very young. (CN9)

Like aspirants to other religious orders the Christian Brother was going on a mission that would take him across the Tasman, away from his family and with little prospect of return.

The organisation of religious formation by religious orders

Participants in this study are members of three female congregations: the Sisters of Mercy, the Religious of the Sacred Heart, and the Dominican Sisters and three male congregations: the Marist Fathers, the Marist Brothers, and the Christian Brothers. The following table presents an outline of the ways the formation of religious was organised in these orders in the period of this study. Nationally by far the largest order (see chapter four), the Mercy Sisters are diocesan-based; each congregation was responsible for the formation of their own recruits.²⁹⁷ In

²⁹⁶ The idea of “mission” was expressed in the practice of sending newly-professed Australian-born Christian Brothers to teach in a different state from the one in which their family lived or to New Zealand. Similarly, until the late 1950s New Zealand-born Christian Brothers were generally sent “on the missions” to an Australian state. For some it was more than ten years before they saw their family again.

²⁹⁷ Kirk, *Remembering your mercy*.

contrast, as a pontifical order with convents and schools in Otago Southland, the Manawatu and Auckland, the Dominicans underwent their formation at the congregational motherhouse in Dunedin.²⁹⁸ The Religious of the Sacred Heart are also pontifical but because the provincial motherhouse was in Rose Bay Sydney, recruits went there for religious and professional formation.²⁹⁹ From 1950 Loreto Hall in Auckland provided New Zealand based teacher training facilities (see chapter ten).³⁰⁰ The Christian Brothers remained part of an Australasian province until 1959. Although a Juniorate was established in Canterbury in 1960, Christian Brothers continued to undertake their spiritual and professional formation in Sydney until 1979.³⁰¹ After 1917, when the Marist Brothers became part of a separate province, they developed a comprehensive training system in New Zealand that included a Juniorate at Tuakau (1922), a Novitiate at Claremont (1932) and a Scholasticate in Auckland (1934).³⁰² The seminary training of the Marist Fathers (Society of Mary) was based in

²⁹⁸ Collins, "Hidden Lives".

²⁹⁹ *Other worlds: The extended apostolate of Society of the Sacred Heart in Australia, New Zealand, Asia, Africa*, (1951).

³⁰⁰ "Loreto Hall 1950-1985: Dream and reality and memory," in *Loreto Hall Catalogue J III I Training College History*. Sisters of the Sacred Heart Archives – hereafter SSHA.

³⁰¹ Paul Malcolm Robertson, "Nga Parata Karaitiana, The Christian Brothers - a public culture in transition: A comparative study of the Indian and New Zealand provinces" (Master of Arts, University of Auckland, 1996). 42.

³⁰² Kane, "The Marist Brothers in New Zealand education, 1917 to 1967". 20-23.

Greenmeadows, although the Novitiate year was spent at Highden.³⁰³ The formation processes in four of the six religious orders, the Dominican Sisters, the Religious of the Sacred Heart, the Christian and Marist Brothers, focussed exclusively on an educational mission, while Mercy Sisters trained either as nurses or teachers. There was no teacher training in the Society of Mary, although many Marist priests went on to obtain University degrees; as a “missionary order” the focus of formation was on evangelisation through secondary schools, mission and parish work.³⁰⁴

³⁰³ *Aspects of the apostolates of the Society of Mary in New Zealand since 1838*, (Wellington, 1989). 67-69.

³⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

Table 5.1: The Organisation of Religious Formation in New Zealand 1900-1965

The Organization of Religious Formation in New Zealand 1900-1965					
Order	Organization	Juniorate	Novitiate	Scholasticate	Apostolate
Sisters of Mercy	Diocesan		Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, Dunedin	Auckland Wellington Christchurch Dunedin	Teaching Nursing
Dominican Sisters	Pontifical (New Zealand)		Dunedin	Dunedin	Teaching
Religious of the Sacred Heart	Pontifical (Australasian Province)		Sydney	Sydney Loreto Hall (1960)	Teaching
Christian Brothers	Pontifical (Australasian Province until 1959)	Sydney, Canterbury (1960)	Sydney	Sydney	Teaching
Marist Brothers	Pontifical (New Zealand Province from 1917)	Sydney, Tuakau (1922)	Sydney Claremont (1932)	Auckland	Teaching
Marist Fathers	Pontifical (New Zealand Province)		Highden (1924)	Mount St Mary's Greenmeadows	Teaching Missions Parish

Initiation into religious life:

As Elizabeth Smyth notes, teaching religious are members both of a religious order and an occupational class. Their lives are an overlay of vocation and employment, governed by both religious and secular regulation.³⁰⁵ While the influence of state regulation and the process of teacher training for religious will be considered in chapter ten, the intersection between vocation and occupation was important in the construction of a Catholic teacher. While the primary focus

³⁰⁵ Smyth, "Much exertion of the voice," 97-113.

of religious life was on living a life of holiness for the personal salvation of its members, in the case of the teaching orders this salvation was achieved by working for the distinctive educational mission of the order. The formation process for a life of holiness and mission began with a period of initiation into religious life that for some commenced in a Juniorate where they experienced the day to day practices of religious life and for others in secondary school where they had their first taste of teaching (see diagram 5.1).

Seven of the Brothers in this study began their initiation into religious life at around fourteen years of age, when they entered a Juniorate.³⁰⁶ The Marist Brothers' Juniorate at Tuakau, "was a secondary school where boys who thought they would like to be Brothers would... get their secondary education and later on quite a number of them did become Brothers". (CT2) Until 1959, when a separate New Zealand province was created, boys who were interested in joining the Christian Brothers did their Juniorate training in Sydney.³⁰⁷ (See photo 5.1)

³⁰⁶ During the period of this study the Juniorate was a Catholic boarding school run by a religious order which provided a secondary education to students who had indicated an interest in pursuing a religious life in that order. It had a greater emphasis on discipline and religious atmosphere than ordinary Catholic schools and students followed many of the religious practices of the order.

³⁰⁷ From its foundation in 1876, the New Zealand community of Christian Brothers were administered as part of the Australasian province incorporating Australia, New Zealand and, from 1950, Papua New Guinea. In the 1950s, rapidly rising rolls led to some criticism that New Zealand schools were not getting their fair share of Brothers, given the number of New Zealanders who had joined the Congregation (Personal Communication (CB) 2 April 2003). After a consultation process St Joseph's Vice-Province was established in August 1959. As a

It was all organised and I was to go the Christian Brothers' Training College, what they called the Juniorate. It was like a secondary school, like a boarding school, you know the idea of an apostolic school? They used to have them in Ireland and on the continent, They were schools that were geared towards people entering religious life (of course) the horrors of psychologists and counsellors and other people these days...(1955) (CN8)

In the Juniorate, pupils completed their secondary education and received an introduction to the history and traditions of the particular religious order with which they were associated. While they did not engage in teaching practice, the focus was on the notion of teaching as a vocation and as “a calling from God”. Pupils were invited to consider if they had a calling to share in the educational mission of the order by teachers who were selected for their teaching ability and enthusiasm for religious life.

One Brother, who joined the Juniorate in Sydney in 1938 remembered “a very organised day” with daily rising at 5.30am study in the morning, sport in the afternoon and afternoon school from about 3.30pm until 5pm to avoid the “heat of the day”(see appendix seven for a fuller account). Pupils who entered the Juniorate were able to further their own education “I loved those couple of years and that enabled me to get my Leaving Certificate or Matriculation” (CG2-3). In the following narrative another Christian Brother recalls his impressions of life in the Juniorate in the 1950s, a much more regulated life than the one he had left behind in New Zealand:

It was suddenly like having a whole lot of brothers...Some of the attitudes were, I found, dated. They came out of the 1930s. We were required to wear braces for some mad reason. They seemed to think that anybody wearing a belt to keep his trousers up was a sign that they were roughs, or

result many New Zealand Brothers returned to work in their home country. Donaldson, *To all parts of the kingdom: Christian Brothers in New Zealand, 1876-2001*. 29.

the local street kids..., it was thought that larrikins wore belts. Now that might have been because the man in charge (he died of cancer the year that I got there and I only saw him once) Brother Murrery, Borgia Murray, had been in charge of the Juniorate since about 1930. This was 1955, so he'd been twenty-five years in charge of the Juniorate and the nature of the formation house. Given that it was pre-Vatican II, it was totally inward looking. Things didn't change. This was the way it was done and you just made the adjustment. This was part of the business of becoming a Christian Brother. You just went on. (CN9-10)

This extract points to a number of the distinctive characteristics of religious life which this chapter will consider in more detail in a following section. The new recruit was rather overwhelmed by the all male nature of the Juniorate “it was suddenly like having a whole lot of brothers” and the fact that there were some rather odd rules “we were required to wear braces”. The rationale for braces instead of a belt may have been intended to endorse the wearing of socially conservative “masculine” clothing in an era when adolescent gangs such as the Widgies and Bodgies were wearing tight fitting flamboyant clothes including trousers (with belts) and many buttoned jackets. Also the term “larrikin” or “tough” was Australian/New Zealand slang for young men who displayed disrespect for authority, a state of affairs that would not be tolerated in the Juniorate and later religious life.³⁰⁸ The references to “dated” attitudes and to Brother Borgia who had “been in charge of the Juniorate since about 1930” signals that religious formation was generally the responsibility of a senior member of the order who could be trusted to impart the more conservative values of the congregation (this will be discussed in more detail later in the chapter). It

³⁰⁸ See *The young and the restless: Children and adolescents in New Zealand 1930-1960* (Dictionary of NZ Biography, 2005 [cited 1 June 2005]); available from http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/dnzb_exhibs/youth/.

was a self-contained “totally inward looking” environment; its inflexibility meant that recruits had to make “the adjustment” in order to survive. The comment that “this was part of the business of being a Christian Brother” sheds light on the pragmatic response of many of the participants in this study; they regarded the process as a necessary if not very enjoyable part of their socialisation into religious life. In the case of the Christian Brothers it was an initiation process characterised by inflexible and authoritarian methods later replicated in the schools as I will detail in chapter eleven. In order to take part in the educational mission of the Christian Brothers you had to accept all the rules and regulations - “you just went on” .

Several of Sisters in this study began their initiation into teaching and religious life while they were still in school. Danylewycz points to the importance of interactions between Canadian religious women and their pupils in facilitating the movement of younger generations into religious life.³⁰⁹ Some potential new religious recruits to a teaching order were encouraged to experience the educational mission as a “pupil-teacher”, as is evident in the following story:

As a matter of fact, I started (teaching) earlier, when I was at school at Erskine, because there were three or four girls who wanted to learn Latin, and I used to take them of an evening about twice a week and teach them the Latin that I knew and the same with their science because science was not a very popular subject as yet. (SW4)

A Dominican Sister remembers that, as a young woman, newly qualified with a Home Science Degree from Otago University, she was also asked to “help out”

³⁰⁹ Danylewycz, *Taking the veil: An alternative to marriage, motherhood and spinsterhood in Quebec, 1840-1920*.

with teaching home science because of the shortage of qualified science teachers where she had been a pupil:

Mother Dominica asked me to come to St Dominic's and help them out with the chemistry side of the home science... I used to go down there and teach. It was only for a couple of months. (OW5)

The exposure of potential new recruits to the practice of teaching also occurred in male religious orders. A number of Brothers mentioned experiences of teaching while they were still at school. One Brother remembered that when he was in Form Four, he broke his wrist and couldn't do physical education for a while. The experience of helping a Brother with his arithmetic class inspired him to want to become a teacher:

I used to go with one of the Brothers to Standard Four. Somehow [because of] one of those quirks in the timetable, he finished up with an arithmetic class in Standard Four and I used to go around and help these little kids with their maths. Now it struck me that I quite liked it (teaching maths). (CN7)

Taking part in a communal regime of prayer and work: Life in the Novitiate

The formal formation process began with a period known as postulancy,³¹⁰ when those who had graduated from the Juniorate joined with school leavers and "late vocations" who had been working before they entered religious life.³¹¹ It was an opportunity to see whether or not recruits had a "vocation" to religious life and whether they could accept a communal regime of prayer and work as well as the subjugation of the will to convent and monastery authorities (see diagram 5.1).

³¹⁰ A postulant is a candidate for religious life - from *postulare* (Latin) to claim - literally one who asks or demands.

³¹¹ O'Donoghue, *Come follow me*.

The postulant experienced the highly-regulated routines of religious life as the following description of life in the Christian Brothers' Novitiate illustrates:

We lived in a world of routine which never varied. We rose at a quarter to six every day of the year; if we did not, it was earlier—never later... You can take the patterns of novitiate life twenty years apart; every group had almost exactly the same experiences— an identical life was presented.³¹²

Religious life was based on a programme of prayer and work, a routine that shaped the recruit for his or her future work in schools. In the case of the Christian Brother, postulants took part in a regular schedule of meditations, “every group had almost exactly the same experiences”, in a pattern of life that never varied. The postulancy period ranged from six weeks for Christian Brothers to about a year for some of the Sisters. During this period, they lived with the Novices and came under novitiate rules. They were eased into the life of a fully-professed member of a religious order; many began teaching at this stage, although they were still not totally part of the community since they tended to sit at their own table in the community refectory.³¹³ Those who continued on beyond the postulancy became Novices. The Novice was received formally into the religious order and wore full religious dress for the first time (see photo 5.2). A Marist Brother remembers his year of Novitiate at Claremont in South Canterbury (for other narratives of life in the novitiate see appendix seven).

The Novitiate proper started in September and went on for strictly one year...I thought it was great. We were all in our late teenage years and it was like getting into uniform. I don't think we made great efforts to

³¹² "Brother Thomas Patrick Harty," in *Educational Record: Necrology* (1975), 241.

³¹³ O'Donoghue, *Upholding the faith*.

understand what it was really meant to signify. It was really meant to signify that you have now been given a new life and you will look different and you'll get a new name and it's almost as if you died to the world and you're living in a different world... it was just something you did. It was a step on the way and it was quite a striking one. All our parents turned up for it. We had a little celebration afterwards. I remember that night I had to go down and close the front gates. It was a long run and it was raining. When I got back mud went from the bottom of my soutane right up to my neck. (FP4)

While the Brother acknowledges that he didn't "make great efforts to understand what it was meant to signify", the wearing of a habit signalled the first serious step in the commitment to religious life. This commitment also involved being given a "new name", a sign of the loss of a former "worldly" identity, and the taking on of a new life "in religion". In the extract the Brother runs through the rain to "close the front gate", getting mud all over his soutane as he symbolically shuts out his family and former life. The story is a metaphor of his detachment from previous ties, the "dying to the outside world", a detachment that allows him to declare his personal commitment to the "higher state" of religious life and to take part in the educational mission of the religious order to which he now belonged.

A number of the participants in this study remember that the wearing of a habit acted as a public sign of their distinctive role. A Marist Brother explained:

If you went out you wore a [black stock and white] collar like a priest and I think that took a lot to adjust to. People were looking at you and saying, "Oh yes, he's a Brother. He's different." I'm not sure that was a very comfortable period in my life adjusting to that. (FJ3)

As the story illustrates the habit was a sign of commitment to religious life, the taking on of a new identity. It marked the religious as different: "he's a Brother". Women religious wore a bridal dress for their reception ceremony (see photo 5.3). After the ceremony they were dressed in a habit that "enclosed" the body.

Reaching to the feet, it contained and restrained the body, its loose folds neutralised any signs of gender. The veil covered the hair and hid the face removing all signs of individuality. A Mercy Sister remembers the discomfort of wearing the habit for the first time:

After the first ceremony at reception that (indicating a display including a doll wearing the habit of a white novice) is what we put on. I couldn't hear and I couldn't eat. They were starched. I thought, "My gosh, I'm never going to last with this". But because everybody else did, you did. (MM22)

During this period, known as the "canonical year", the Novices did not teach. Rather their focus was on understanding the requirements of religious life, learning the religious and cultural practices of the order, and on living according to the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. There was a strong emphasis on the value of religious life as the best way of achieving "Christian Perfection":

We studied the Rule and also a book called *Christian Perfection*. That was a Marist Brothers' book... and there was a very strong emphasis that religious life is better than say Lay life... There was a great emphasis there that it is a better way of life. (FP5)

As I detailed in chapter three, religious life was seen as "a better way of life". Because they were trained in the complexities of Catholic faith practices and the pursuit of perfection through a commitment to the "higher calling" of a vowed life, religious were seen to be better equipped to transmit the Catholic faith and cultural practices to Catholic pupils than were parents (see discussion of this in chapter three). Life in the Novitiate was characterised by the practice of conservative religious values, exemplified in the reading material offered to new religious. Not infrequently, this was the cause of unintentional hilarity at the dining table as a Marist Brother recalls:

The books were rather limited, they were about religious life but they weren't the latest ideas. Besides it was war time and things were not easy

to get... At breakfast there was a reading of the lives of the Saints. Being good novices, we would think they were very funny. There were outbursts of laughter occasionally about some of the happenings. (FT6)

The novitiate usually lasted two years, although this varied from one religious order to another. The “Canonical Year” was the first year of religious formation during which novices lived separately from the rest of the community and only had contact with other religious on special days. It was a “totally spiritual year”, a base on which all formation was built. There were important skills to learn. Novices were initiated into the use of the breviary and had lectures on the psalms, scripture and theology. They learned prayers, meditations and reflections and attended classes in theology as well as the Rule and constitutions of the particular order they had entered. While the novitiate was a time to learn the formal practices of religious life, the socialisation into the world of the religious also involved learning complex behaviour codes in a highly regulated environment as the following will illustrate.

In pursuit of perfection: An authoritarian and regulatory framework

Recruits to religious life were trained for life as a teaching religious based on their “formation” for perfection, a process which aimed at subduing the “flesh” and promoting the “spirit” as well as an ongoing commitment to the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience (see diagram 5.1). As a Sister of Mercy explained:

You were forming the angelic sphere. We were formed in the old dualism that there was a flesh and the spirit and that you had to try to seek the angelic and leave behind all the want... (MN3)

The “dualism” of “flesh and spirit” underpinned many of the practices of religious formation during the period of this study. Catholic values that

privileged the “spirit” above “the flesh” also emphasised deference to and conformity with authority, values that were reproduced in Catholic schools as I will demonstrate in chapter twelve.

The period in the novitiate time was, as O’Donoghue notes, a testing time to see if the novices could submit to authority. They engaged in exercises “suited to correcting defects, subduing passions and acquiring virtues”.³¹⁴ A Religious of the Sacred Heart who undertook her novitiate at the order’s motherhouse in Rose Bay remembers learning to subdue her desire to look at the view over Sydney Harbour:

There was a magnificent view from where we were at Rose Bay, and then, using that view as a means for mortification, we were invited not to look at that view every single time we wanted to. You had to mortify your curiosity and if there were ships going over to New Zealand, and that might give you quite a pang if you indulged in that...There was a lot of homesickness, yes. We were allowed to write letters home once a month, and to receive letters, but it wasn’t very satisfying. There was nothing to talk about except our spiritual life in the noviceship really. It was all directed towards our religious training. (SW4)

In this story the Mistress of Novices has suggested that the young novice consciously detach herself from the “magnificent view” over Rose Bay and the thought of “ships going over to New Zealand” across the Sydney Harbour Heads. At one level the story demonstrates the loss she feels, a loss made more intense because, in the monthly letters home, she no longer had anything to talk about with her family “except our spiritual life”. At another level the Sister is detaching herself from the old life “in the world”, taking up her “cross” as a sign of her commitment to the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience and her new life as a Religious of the Sacred Heart.

³¹⁴ M.B. Bernstein, *Nuns* (Glasgow, 1978). 83.

Novices learned to obey the rules of religious life, many of which concerned the minutiae of daily living. A number of the participants in this study remember that the difficulties they had learning to cope with the highly-regulated nature of life in the novitiate. In the following a Religious of the Sacred Heart expresses irritation at the petty requirements of learning how to sweep a floor correctly:

It is hard to describe the noviceship, it really is. It's like a time of hibernation. For me it was. It seemed unreal in many ways and I thought oh well, I suppose this is important. I mean I knew how to sweep a floor. I didn't need to be trained in how to do it again. Things like that got on my nerves but I realised afterwards it was about the only way the Mistress of Novices could assess your character and get to know how you responded to things that seemed on the surface to be a little strange. (SA6)

Although “things like that got on my nerves”, the Sister spoke for a number of the participants in this study when she explained the complex behavioural requirements of life in the Novitiate as a tool for judging the “character” of a new recruit, their suitability for religious life and for the particular educational mission of the religious order. It was certainly true that novices had to learn to comply with the requirements of an authoritarian environment in order that they might “fit in” to religious life and undertake their role as a Catholic teacher. In an enclosed order such as the Religious of the Sacred Heart, novices had to cope with a strict rule of silence:

If you entered a religious congregation that was an enclosed congregation at that time pre-Vatican II, there was a very strict rule of silence for starters. We didn't talk to anybody or to each other, except in designated times. You were given your jobs to do; they were called “employments” and study to do, mostly relative to the scriptures, Gospels and reading the history of the Order. We were given instruction daily from the Mistress of Novices and two hours contemplative prayer a day. (SA6)

Novices were also isolated from contact with religious in the wider community in order to protect them from potential “divisiveness” and from the foibles and failings of others in the community. A Dominican Sister remembers that as a novice, she was no longer able to have contact with the older Sisters she had learned to love before she entered the convent and she found that difficult:

In the Novitiate, you had no contact much with some of these people that you had known in the school and I found it very difficult to pass by these Sisters. On Easter Sunday, the Feast of St Dominic and Christmas Day you were allowed to talk to these Sisters. (OG15)

As I noted earlier in the chapter, the Novice Master or Novice Mistress was generally a senior religious who ensured that new recruits learned the more conservative values of a religious community. He or she was seen as a person with special expertise:

The idea was that if you have too many influences coming in on the formation of a person it could be too divisive. It was left to a specially trained person, the Mistress of Novices, to see that it was centred, not on these people but on what you were doing because you were giving your life to God. (OG15)

Bernstein argues that the overall aim was of the Novice Mistress or Master was to “break the spirit; this was not regarded as cruelty since conformity was all”.³¹⁵

There is some support for this view in the following description of life at the Christian Brothers’ Sydney Novitiate:

The element of fear was certainly an over-riding feature in the motivation of the novice; fear of the penance following the reporting of an infringement; fear of the unpleasant accusation and revelation of one’s character that would follow the report, especially if it came from a third party. The self-accusation of

³¹⁵ Ibid.

faults which took place in the chapel each week had all the atmosphere of a war-crimes trial, when, kneeling at the altar, each novice would recite a litany of his external deficiencies.³¹⁶

The above extract comes from the regime of Brother Thomas Patrick

Harty, Novice Master of Christian Brothers for thirty years from 1929 to 1959.

He became a legendary figure for generations of novices, as a Christian Brother explains:

The Novice Master was probably a saint of some sort in his own right but he was a strict person and he had been in the job twenty-seven years at that point. He was seventy-six years of age at that point. He was legendary by then. He was the major influence in the Novitiate by a long, long way and his style had been canonised by the various administrations. Our administration would only last six years at a time so he would have been reappointed and reappointed and reappointed quite a few times. He claimed that he never wanted the job and that he asked every year to be relieved of it but he was continually or repetitively reinstated. He continued his particular programme therefore, which was very, I wouldn't say severe, but obedience was a high level of priority so lots of minuscule things became significant. There were five occasions in every given day in which one had the opportunity to report oneself for having failed in some small thing. (CJ4)

The influence of Jansenism on Irish-founded orders such as the Christian Brothers (detailed in chapter three) can be seen in the practice that required a novice to report his failings on "five occasions" each day. This was nowhere more evident and humiliating than in the weekly chapter of faults, but for a Christian Brother it was a practice that occurred on numerous occasions throughout each day:

The chapter of faults was once a week. But these occasions were before every meal and then on two occasions, one in the morning and one in the evening for what was called "routine", for checking those small things which were important and which would generate perhaps a fast day, or a meal on your knees, or missing a meal altogether. Something like dropping a knife or fork might end your meal for the day or forgetting to do

³¹⁶ "Education Record," 226-27.

something, or being late for something, or passing someone in the corridor, or using the wrong wash basin, or leaving your door or your bedclothes or your window in some condition that wasn't identical to everybody else's.
(CJ4)

In religious life, as the above extract illustrates, the Chapter of Faults took the form of a ritualised regulatory practice which focussed on the ways an individual “fell short” of the ideal. It was designed to ensure a detailed compliance with the minutiae of the customs and constitutions of a particular religious order. While the punishments meted out under the regime of Brother Harty were at the severe end of the scale, the experience of “self-reporting” of faults was common in contemporary religious orders such as the Dominican Sisters, the Mercy Sisters, the Religious of the Sacred Heart and the Marist Brothers. It was a practice, specific to religious life, that emerged from a religious’ struggle for perfection in “thought, word and deed” and an acknowledgement of those occasions where he or she had fallen short.

While a Mistress of Novices’ role was “to correct us daily for these misdemeanours”, Judith Graham, who entered the Dominican Sisters in the 1950s, recalls that “Mother Tarcisius... did so with gentle firmness. I really did feel she was trying to make me better”.³¹⁷ In this way the Mistress of Novices’ role was to encourage practices that fostered perfection and thus the personal salvation of the novice. While some individuals in charge of novices were strict and rather humourless, others were admired for their ability to empathise with novices as a Marist Brother recalls:

We had a Master of Novices who was an Australian and a very interesting character, and we had a Director or Sub-Master, as we called him... He

³¹⁷ Judith Graham, *Breaking the habit* (Dunedin, 1992). 65.

was a New Zealand man, a younger man, and without quite the sense of humour of the Master... there was a routine morning prayer and half an hour meditation standing up. The theme was read out by the Master of Novices and you had to think about it for the half an hour or pray about it. Occasionally some guys would go to sleep and fall over. Not too often, but it was always amusing. We were looking for amusement all the time of course and the Master had a great sense of humour. He was a good man to have around. If you were too serious about it you know, it could ruin the vocations of some members. (FT5)

Like the Marist novices in the above story, many participants in this study found it helpful to maintain a keen sense of humour in the face of the vicissitudes of religious life.

The two participants in this study who were training to be Marist Fathers seem to have enjoyed a somewhat less regulated experience. One remembered that the “novitiate training was basically learning about the Order”. In what seems to have been a somewhat more relaxed environment than many of the other participants enjoyed, a Marist Father recalls that after leaving school to enter the Society of Mary he “went to the seminary and enjoyed every minute of it”: (SG1)

We did have lectures, we studied the spirit and constitutions of the Order. We also studied the Psalms. Not great pressured study. We did have exams. We were required to read certain books and write reviews and comments on them and these were looked at by Father O’Connor and commented on. Books by some of the notable authors of the past, one in particular by Rodrigaes, a rather dated book. We had a number of retreats during the year in which it was expected we would sort ourselves out. We did a fair amount of manual work, looking after the gardens and the lawns, helping on the farm. Picking up spuds, the garden and that sort of thing. (SJ3)

Thus life in the novitiate involved routines of prayer, study and work, a blueprint that set the scene for a religious’ future life pattern as a teacher.

Learning to cope with conformity

In spite of the constraints of a highly regulated life, participants found they coped with life in the novitiate because they were young and flexible as the following story explains:

In some ways I think it was a good thing that I was so young. I often wonder how I would have coped with it as an older person because there was a certain expectation of conformity and I found that difficult. Although I know that our Sisters of Mercy were never as rigid as some other orders... They were not as strict but there were some things you accepted but I never seriously considered that that wasn't the place for me. It became par for the course. Everybody was in the same boat. The companionship was very bonding. There was a lot of companionship. Most of us were young and so it really saw us through. (MK3)

The sense of "being in the same boat" as others encouraged many novices to persevere with their vocation to religious life. Surviving the challenges of the highly-regimented life in the Novitiate strengthened bonds between novices and created a sense of purpose. The following is illustrative. A Mercy Sister tells of her first experience of "being in charge of the kitchen" after she is given the responsibility by a "new" Mistress of Novices who assumes, without checking first, that she has the skills because her mother is an excellent cook:

She was just a wizard at the Fielder's corn flour sponge... and of course the Novice Mistress naturally thought a good cook like that must have a daughter that's a good cook. And I thought if I say to her, "I can't cook!" that she'll think I don't want to do it, because that's the way they thought in those days. So she said, "I'm giving you Sister ____ and Sister ____ and Sister ____". Sister ____ had gone through St Mary's and she'd gone to training college and I knew she'd lived in a flat and she could cook... (the others could all cook) so I heaved a sigh of relief. They did all the cooking and I actually got the praise although I didn't have a clue how to cook. The four of us worked in the kitchen together and had a lot of fun. It was quite a big novitiate to cook for. In the end I became very proficient at cooking. (MK4)

The story evokes images of post-war New Zealand with the references to her mother being “a wizard at the Fielder’s corn flour sponge”.³¹⁸ The Sister finds herself unable to tell the new Novice Mistress that she can’t cook because in the complex world of convent communication codes she would have been judged as unwilling to do the job: “that’s the way they thought in those days”.³¹⁹ The authoritarian nature of convent life is illustrated in the Novice Mistress’ imperative “I am giving you Sister ___ and Sister ___ and Sister ___” and her assumption that they would obey without question. However, what is remarkable is the Sister’s enjoyment of the humour of the situation — “I heaved a sigh of relief” — and the way the four Sisters “worked together” and learned to have “a lot of fun”. The story highlights the personal adjustment necessary to survive religious life, the discovery of the value of teamwork, and a shared sense of mission that was fostered by the vicissitudes of convent life and influenced in the Sisters’ future roles as teachers in Catholic schools.

Novices in religious formation learned to live in a highly-regulated environment that was designed to shape their behaviour and values so that they would be fit for the important function of teaching in Catholic primary and secondary schools (see diagram 5.1). Religious orders had different ways of maintaining the continuity of the formation process and passing on of the correct behavioural and social codes to the next generation of novices. In the case of the

³¹⁸ It was a point of pride for many New Zealand women in the 1950s and 1960s to be able to bake a perfect sponge.

³¹⁹ In my earlier study I referred to the need for new Dominican postulants to learn the complex communication codes as part of their socialisation into convent life. See Collins, "Hidden Lives". 152.

Christian Brothers the “outgoing group” of novices took an important role in training the incoming recruits:

When you got there, the outgoing group still had about a month to run. We got there on the tenth of January and they finished on the twenty-seventh of February so you had six weeks and you worked in tandem... You had somebody who was your mentor and he trained you up so that when they went away and you started your novitiate, you then could just sort of run on. (CN12)

The impact of gender-based practices

Gender-based practices shaped the construction of Catholic teachers and the distinctive roles of male and female religious. Teaching religious orders were segregated along gender lines, a situation that as O’Donoghue notes minimised the possibility of those in religious life forming personal relationships with those of the opposite sex (see diagram 5.1).³²⁰ The formation practices of religious orders were also designed to discourage relationships between individual religious and to suppress the possibility of interpersonal relationships between teachers and pupils. Religious were bound by the three vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, yet some of the most stringent warnings in convent rules concerned behavioural codes and the protection of chastity. This is illustrated in the following extract from the Ceremonial of the Congregation of Irish Dominicans:

Whether thou standest or sittest, let it be with a perfect modesty as behoves one in the presence of God... Sitting, one should not loll. The knees and ankles should be kept together,

³²⁰ O’Donoghue, *Come follow me*. 147.

the Scapular (and Cappa, if being worn), being modestly disposed so as to cover them.³²¹

In the 1954 encyclical, *Sacra Virginitas*, Pope Pius XII recommended “constant vigilance” in safeguarding the chastity of religious. Religious were warned to control their passions and senses by “voluntary discipline” and “bodily mortification”. For aspirants to religious life great stress was put on renouncing their sexual role in order to achieve a neutral state in order to attain perfection.³²² As we have seen in chapter three, religious orders promoted the ideal of an asexual personhood as a way of facilitating the state of holiness that would allow a religious to transcend nature and participate in a heavenly state.³²³ Even the recreation period was regulated in order to prevent opportunities for the development of “particular friendships” as the following illustrates:

We had our recreations formalised. We were named in groups of three to either spend a half hour walking round the place together or to do the garden together. (SA6)

Such practices were aimed at preventing intimate relationships between religious, to promote teamwork rather than individual endeavours and to ensure detachment from worldly associations. They also discouraged the development

³²¹ This ceremonial was also utilised by the New Zealand Dominican Sisters. See the *Ceremonial of the Congregation of the Irish Dominicans*, c.1940, 1, New Zealand Dominican Sisters’ Archives - hereafter NZDSA.

³²² Pope. Pius XII, *Sacra virginitas*: Encyclical of Pope Pius XII on consecrated virginity (1954 [cited 1 June 2005]); available from <http://www.catholic-forum.com/saints/pope0260k.htm>.

³²³ O’Donoghue, *Come follow me*.

of heterosexual and homosexual relationships.³²⁴ However, as the following illustrates, few of these policies were explained to the novices:

And it's interesting in this kind of trouble, sexual trouble that the Church has been having at the moment, we didn't understand, I didn't understand for years. But any of what they call a particular friendship, any relationship either among ourselves or with the girls was absolutely taboo. It was a wisdom that we didn't appreciate at the time, because if you didn't have those proclivities you didn't understand what they were talking about. (MM22)

Thus Catholic teachers were expected to model purity and a detachment from personal relationships in such a way as to encourage pupils to abstain from sexual activity outside the bounds of marriage and to consider the possibility that they might be called to "higher" values of a celibate religious life.

In accordance with Catholic assumptions about the particular salvation roles of men and women (see chapter three), male and female religious recruits were treated in distinctive ways. This is evidenced as we have already seen in the different habits worn by male and female religious. While the Christian, Marist Brothers and Marist Fathers wore long black soutanes and clerical collars of varying styles, members of the different female orders wore habits that enclosed not only the body but also partly concealed the face. Differences are also evident in the social and behavioural codes expected of male and female religious. Female teaching religious in the period of this study were primarily "located" in the domestic space of the convent. Novices, for example, were allowed to walk as part of their recreation or to undertake gardening duties but they were restricted to the confines of the convent grounds. This was particularly the case

³²⁴ See Thomas O'Donoghue, *The Catholic Church and the secondary school curriculum in Ireland* (New York, 1999). 52.

for the enclosed orders as the following story told by a Religious of the Sacred

Heart illustrates:

You see, Sydney heat was first of all a great trial and our exuberance — we didn't have very much exercise in the noviceship. We did do physical exercises for a very short while and then we did our walk when we went outside for quarter of an hour's prayer before dinner. We were allowed to walk up and down saying those lovely prayers, but I felt a great need of a lot more exercise. There was a lovely swimming pool which we gazed on with great envy. (SW3)

Although most female novices accepted the gender-based practices, such as the restrictions on exercise, a Sister of Mercy remembers being irritated by aspects of the lectures which required her to behave as a "perfect lady" as the following illustrates:

I remember muttering after we'd go in and have lectures on the religious life, lectures on how we should behave ourselves (one was that the Sister of Mercy was a perfect lady) and I thought that was a ridiculous statement. Anybody could be a Sister of Mercy, they didn't have to be a perfect lady but that was part of a culture and the vows required these regulations: poverty, chastity and obedience. Obedience especially was a blind obedience. They insisted on blind obedience. And I would go around muttering about how idiotic and insurmountable these problems were associated with following the injunctions. (MN3)

The construction of the female religious as "a perfect lady" was associated in the Sister's mind with a culture that required compliance with "regulations" and "injunctions". At the heart of this culture was an unquestioning deference to authority — "obedience especially blind obedience" — and the location of women in the domestic environment. Yet the story also points to an emerging challenge to unconditional acceptance of authority and to longstanding Catholic conceptions of gender. Like a number of the women in this study who entered religious life in the 1950s this Sister found that she was increasingly at odds with what she saw as the limited mission of religious life. In the following story she is

determined to get “through” formation in order to “get to school” where she can “influence young women” in a way that will challenge traditional restrictions to their role as the following demonstrates:

Another Sister who was with me said, “You’ll never last”, and I said ‘Oh yes I will’... and I just tried to see it through. I’d get through the formation and then I would get to school... and if I got to school I would be able to influence young women, and that’s what I really wanted to do. (MN3)

Challenges to the location of female religious in the domestic landscape, subject to the supreme authority of God, is nowhere more evident than in the following:

There was a statement in our training, “we are doormats of God”. Somebody took that as a retreat theme. “You are just the doormats of God”. We are not doormats of God. God does not want this. (MNI 5)

Looking back critically at her religious formation the Sister remembers being offended at the description of a female religious as a “doormat of God”, a view which represents the individual religious as under the feet of God, completely sublimating her own desires to His will. This sense of unease with the cultural and behavioural requirements of religious life is reflected in a number of the participants’ stories in the years leading up the Second Vatican Council; it is evidence of changes in perception regarding the role of women religious, changes that had important implications for the Catholic educational mission in the years after 1965. An examination of these issues awaits future research.

Male novices, while living in a highly regulated environment, were given more opportunities for independent activities. In contrast to women religious they were allowed outside the monastery grounds. Neither were they so limited in terms of physical exercise. In the following story a Marist Brother remembers the long walks taken in the country around Claremont in South Canterbury:

Once a week, Thursday I think it might have been, instead of recreation and work, we would go for a walk around the district. It must have looked very strange for we had to wear our habits. I think the neighbours on the various farms got used to us. They knew who we were. There were no shops or anything to worry about... you might meet the occasional dog or horse. (FT5)

The sight of a dozen or so young men dressed in their long black habits caused some amusement for the local farmers although as the Brother recalls they soon “got used to us”. Male novices were also given opportunities for heavy physical work and sport, “In the afternoon you’d go out and do manual work, vegetable gardening, flower gardening, in silence”. (FP4) There seems to have been an acceptance by congregational authorities that young men were in need of physical “outlets” such as sport:

After dinner we would have recreation, which meant we went and played games for half an hour, and the games would either be cricket or soccer. But we had to play with our habits on, those long black habits. It was crazy but still, that was the Rule, but when we played soccer in the winter time we were allowed to take our habits off and play in our gardening boots and old trousers. (FT5)

Even the physical exercise is regulated, as the extract illustrates, with the comical consequence that the novices had to play cricket in their “long black habits”. Similarly in the Christian Brothers’ Novitiate, novices were given opportunities for work, games and the occasional “free afternoon”:

We were on a farm so there was always lots of work to do, or we had a games afternoon. Now and again you would have what was known as a free afternoon and you could do what you like... At half past four there was a siren, because there were people all around the place. The siren went and you changed back into your normal living clothes... if you missed the siren, you were in trouble. (CN11)

The distinctive spiritual traditions of religious orders

In what has gone before it has become increasingly clear that although the religious formation practices of the different religious orders followed similar

patterns, each of the orders maintained their own culture and traditions. While the focus of this research limits the discussion to a consideration of factors that relate more directly to education, the following section will highlight some of the spiritual traditions of the religious orders in this study and the way these helped to shape the distinctive educational mission of the religious orders under consideration.

First, the orders differed in the way they organised the training of religious. Some orders, such as the Dominican, Mercy Sisters, the Society of Mary and the Marist Brothers, were trained to teach within New Zealand. Others including the Christian Brothers and the Religious of the Sacred Heart trained their recruits to teach in the Australasian province. The Christian and Marist Brothers provided Juniorate training for school age recruits. Second, although the religious formation process was characterised by a highly regulated environment, this chapter has provided evidence that the Christian Brothers engaged in formation practices of a more authoritarian nature while Marist seminarians had more frequent opportunities for physical and spiritual independence.

The different orders also had their own traditions of prayer and liturgy, traditions that were practiced in their schools. The following highlights some of these. In the years covered by this study the Christian Brothers' prayers were dominated by a great number of pious prayers and litanies as the following illustrates:

In those days the Christian Brothers' prayers were pretty fundamental things with "Our Fathers" and "Hail Marys" and lots of this pious sort of prayer if I can use that expression. Acts of dedication to Our Lady... litanies by the dozen. Every time we went to the chapel we seemed to be saying a litany. Now that was the way it was right the way through the whole Order, it wasn't just us. (FT10)

The prayer life of a Marist Brother emphasised devotional prayers such as, “Month of May devotions, devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, the Apostleship of Prayer, the Crusaders of the Blessed Sacrament and the importance of spiritual reading... as well as meditations and the Office of the Blessed Virgin”.³²⁵ Brothers were admonished to recite the “Little Office” with care.³²⁶

The time you spend reciting Our Lady’s Hours should be the pleasantest of the whole day, and it will be if the Office is recited properly. It was a pleasure to listen to the Office during the Retreat. All took the same moderately high tone and the pauses in the verses were so well marked that the Office was recited with almost perfect rhythm and harmony. This is the way the Office should be recited, whether there are two or twenty present. It is painful at times to find one or two just mumbling the words.³²⁷

The Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary is modelled after the Liturgy of the Hours that priests and religious recite daily. As a shortened form of the Common of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the Liturgy of the Hours (Divine Office), it was seen as more appropriate for religious undertaking an active teaching mission. It was adopted by a number of women’s congregations, such as the Sisters of Mercy. It contains Hymns, Psalms and Readings arranged for recitation both in the morning and evening.³²⁸

³²⁵ Scott, “Marist Brothers New Zealand province 1939-1970 (A personal history),” 52.

³²⁶ Circular letter from Brother Borgia to Marist Brothers, 19 August 1949 in *Ibid.*, 53.

³²⁷ *Ibid.*

³²⁸ See Little office of the Virgin Mary ([cited 1 June 2005]); available from <http://www.udayton.edu/mary/prayers/LittleOfficeBVM.htm>.

On the other hand novices with monastic traditions such as the Dominicans spent a great deal of time during their formation learning the different chants of the Divine Office although it would take them a number of years to learn the complexities of the complete “Divine Office”:³²⁹

By then you were in the chapel with the Sisters for all the prayer times... We had to learn the Divine Office. There wasn't much use sending us (to the Chapel with the other Sisters) too early in our formation because it took a good 3-4 years to learn thoroughly. You see you had different chants. The Mistress of Novices would teach you the chants and it was all in Latin. If you hadn't done Latin, the Latin translations would be explained to you... The Divine Office took a very long time and there was not much use sending a postulant to the chapel to recite the Divine Office if she didn't know where to look in the Breviary to find it, and that was very involved. (OM 12-13)

The Dominican Novices seem to have enjoyed spiritual and intellectual freedoms not available to novices in other orders:

We were taught how to meditate in a sense, but there was a great freedom in the formation of the Dominicans. I think that less established Orders didn't give freedom of choice say in reading of spiritual books. It was left a great deal for you to develop your own learning. (OG5)

The Dominicans, an order with its roots in the thirteenth century and its mission to seek “truth” through rigorous study, enjoyed considerable “freedom of choice” in “reading of spiritual books”. It was a tradition that was practiced in the study of apologetics, particularly in the senior secondary school as I will detail in chapter eleven. This, as we have seen earlier, is in comparison to the “dated” and

³²⁹ The Divine Office or “Liturgy of the Hours” is the official prayer of the Catholic Church. It includes certain prayers to be recited at fixed time of the day or night by priests, or clerics, and, in general, by all those obliged by their vocation to fulfil this duty. These “hours” include matins, prime, terce, sext, none, and vespers. See Divine Office: Liturgy of the Hours ([cited 3 June 2005]); available from <http://newadvent.org/cathen/11219a.htm>.

“conservative” books available to novices in some religious orders. In addition during the period of this study, the Dominican Sisters were one of two New Zealand orders (the other being the Carmelites) who recited the official prayer of the Catholic Church. A number of distinctive Dominican traditions were long established as the following illustrates:

We had the Divine Office, the official prayer of Praise. But because the Dominicans had such a long tradition, 800 years or so, they had been permitted to develop a number of special parts (to the Divine Office). For instance, they had such a number of Blesseds and Saints in the Order, that when it came to their days they could be celebrated with more ceremony and also there were little differences, even in the saying of the Mass, just little differences of ritual. (OG6)

Two orders in this study were subject to the rules of enclosure. The Religious of the Sacred Heart, like the Dominican Sisters, were an enclosed order established for prayer and contemplation as well as for the apostolate of teaching. This meant they took part in extended periods at prayer and meditation:

[We] were enclosed and... had quite a few hours of prayer. I think it worked down to about four or five hours of prayer, which began with a morning's meditation of one hour, and then we had Holy Mass, and then the rest of the day was divided up into periods of prayer. But our whole life was meant to be a life of prayer, a life of contemplation in action. (SW3)

During the period of this study, Sisters in both orders lived in strict enclosure – an area which generally encompassed the convent, school grounds and sometimes a rural area if the convent was based in the country. A number of Sisters recounted humorous incidents related to the occasional travel outside the boundaries of enclosure. The following is illustrative:

You see at that time we were still an enclosed order and we had to have permission from Rome to go outside the enclosure, so it was quite serious and we were not free to go anywhere. If we walked along the pavement, we walked along the pavement and that was it. We couldn't call in somewhere else. And if the bull was in the paddock we had to walk along the pavement. He didn't like the sight of these nuns wearing flowing

habits, you see, and these coifs around our faces and veils floating, and if it was raining, black raincoats flapping, so the bull didn't appreciate this.
(SP6)

This story, like others in this chapter, highlights the rigidity of rules that had to be obeyed even at the risk to life and limb. The Rule of "enclosure" meant that a specific permission had to be given for "exits" outside the confines of the convent grounds.³³⁰ These permissions were not given lightly; once given they detailed exactly how the novice might make the journey, an example once again of the highly regulated, authoritarian process of religious formation that prepared a novice for life as a Catholic teacher.

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated how Catholic teachers were trained for their critical role in transmitting the faith and Catholic culture to the next generation of Catholic pupils via a process of religious formation that helped to forge the nature and function of the Catholic educational mission. The vocation of a religious teacher was characterised by notions of mission, service and sacrifice and assumptions of a lifetime commitment to the educational mission of the religious order to which the new recruit aspired. The chapter outlined the organisation of religious formation in six teaching orders arguing that the training of new recruits involved specialised theological and spiritual training within religious communities and socialisation into practices of work and prayer that were replicated in Catholic schools. It detailed initiation practices including

³³⁰ In this story the novice (then in her second year) had to go past a paddock on her way from John's College in Sancta Sophia, the University College for women run by the Religious of the Sacred Heart in Sydney, to Sydney Teachers' Training College.

secondary schooling in a Juniorate environment and the facilitation into religious life through early experiences as pupil-teachers.

Novitiate training, which marked the formal stage of religious formation, was a totally spiritual year that was characterised by a highly-regulated authoritarian environment and the influence of a particular Novice Master or Novice Mistress. Novices learned to cope with the vicissitudes of religious life through the companionship of their cohorts and by developing a sense of humour. The formation practices of religious orders were designed to promote the higher calling of celibate religious life, to discourage relationships between individual religious and to suppress the possibility of interpersonal relationships between teachers and pupils. Recruits were socialised into practices of religious life that would form them for the educational mission particular to each religious order. Male and female novices were treated in distinctive ways; females experiencing the restrictions of habit, limited access to physical exercise and their location in the domestic landscape. By the late 1950s, some women religious began to challenge the authoritarian regime of the novitiate and constructions of female that located them in the domestic environment. Males, while living in highly-regulated environment had greater freedoms of habit, mobility and physical activities.

Finally the chapter outlined a number of the spiritual traditions that influenced the distinctive educational mission of the six religious orders in this study including the devotional practices of the Christian and Marist Brothers, the intellectual freedom allowed to Dominicans and the influence of enclosure regulations on the lives of Religious of the Sacred Heart and the Dominican Sisters. The process of religious formation within the different orders aimed to

construct Sisters, Brothers and Priests who would transmit the Catholic faith, maintain religious and cultural values and ensure the success of the Catholic educational mission through the reproduction of these values in the next generation of Catholic pupils.

Part Three

The Catholic educational mission under pressure

Introduction to chapters six, seven, eight, and nine

Key themes identified in chapters three, four, and five are important for understanding the central concerns of part three of this thesis. The four chapters in this section of this study examine how the Catholic educational mission came under pressure in the area of Church-State relations, educational policymaking and in the aftermath of the Thomas Report and its implementation. Concerns about Catholic autonomy and the distinctive religious, cultural and educational values of Catholic schools will surface in chapter six in the context of relations between the Catholic Church and the State. I will examine the significance of the 1877 Education Act, the impact of Bishop Moran, the Bible in Schools debates, and issues of state aid for that relationship and their implications for the Catholic educational mission in the twentieth century. Chapter seven will examine the process of educational policy-making and demonstrates how the prospect of curriculum reforms focussed Catholic fears on the incursion of secular values into Catholic schools, raising yet again the spectre of state surveillance and control and threats to a distinctive Catholic educational mission.

As we shall see in chapter eight, the desire to protect the distinctive religious, cultural and educational values of Catholic schools will also underpin

Catholic objections to the Thomas Committee's recommendations for a state-mandated reform of the post-primary curriculum. Under pressure from burgeoning secondary rolls and the prospect of educational reform, the Catholic educational mission faced a crisis. While the Catholic bishops were determined to defend Catholic schools from state interference and the influence of secular values, they also wished to protect the educational standards of Catholic schools and to ensure the economic, social and educational enhancement of Catholic secondary pupils. As the chapter will detail, negotiations with state educational authorities over the Thomas reforms resulted in key accommodations on both sides and improved relations between church and state educational authorities. The process had implications for national educational policymaking and consequences for the Catholic educational mission in the years to come.

Chapter nine utilises teachers' narratives to focus on the key concerns of the Catholic educational mission in the years immediately after the release of the Thomas Report. It examines pressures on teachers including lack of departmental support for implementing the new curriculum, staffing shortages and increased pupil-teacher ratios. While some teachers feared a fall in academic standards and the incursion of secular values, others saw opportunities in the new "general" curriculum. In a period when the Catholic educational mission expanded to include a secondary education for all Catholic pupils, the revised School Certificate examination would come to be seen as a way of ensuring the success of the Catholic educational mission: access to a good job and further educational advancement.



Photo 6.1: Determined to impose an Irish model of ecclesiastical organisation and the disciplines of religion on the raw province of Otago. Bishop Patrick Moran challenged first the provincial and then the national government over the question of state fiscal aid for Catholic schools. Bishop Patrick Moran from the oil painting in St Dominic's Priory. *Courtesy of the Dominican Sisters*



Photo 6.2: The Labour Party included a number of prominent Catholics who were supported by a majority of Catholic people as champions of the poor. Catholic affection for Michael Joseph Savage, the first Labour Prime Minister, can be seen at the extent of Catholic involvement in his funeral - seen here as his body is taken from Auckland Railway Station en route for St Patrick's Cathedral, March 1940. Savage, a Catholic, resumed the practice of his faith in the last months of his life. *Auckland Catholic Diocesan Archives*

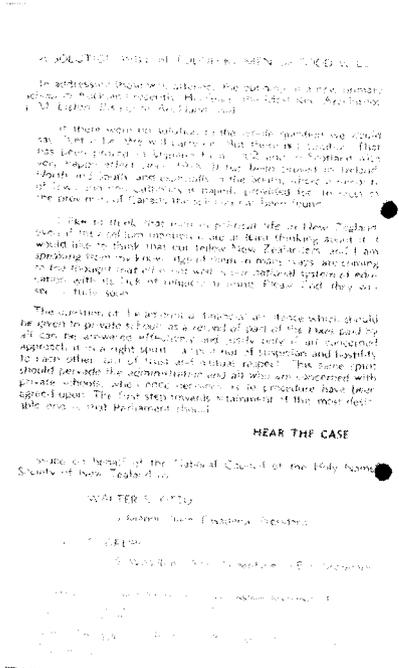


Illustration 6.3: Confident that the public was sympathetic, and realising that the cause of state aid might be better served by a campaign led by laymen, the bishops authorised the Holy Name Society to launch an appeal for a parliamentary inquiry under the slogan "Hear the Case" The cover of the "Hear the Case" pamphlet published by the Holy Name Society, c.1956. *Hocken Library Archives and Manuscripts 96-124-19/8*

Chapter Six:

Maintaining a “ground of difference”: Church-State relations

Introduction

An examination of the Catholic educational mission in the years after 1943 provides an opportunity to examine the influence of changing relationships between the Catholic Church and the State and their impact on educational policymaking. In order to understand my thesis regarding the significance of the Thomas reforms in chapters seven and eight, it is first necessary to understand the complex relationship between the Catholic hierarchy and the state educational authorities. For the Catholic educational authorities, as this chapter will demonstrate, this relationship was predicated on protecting the autonomy of the Catholic education system from state interference, and the incursion of secular values. Crucial to the success of the Catholic educational mission was the maintenance of a “ground of difference” between the Catholic and State educational systems, differences that were premised on distinctive religious and cultural values and historical differences between the Catholic education system and state education. As this chapter will highlight, Catholic challenges to state hegemony in the area of educational policymaking were to set the tone for relations between Catholic educators and the State during the years of this study.

By challenging the notion that education was primarily a state enterprise, they challenged state supremacy from that “ground of difference”.³³¹

The following will outline historic influences on that relationship including the significance of the 1877 Education Act, the role of Bishop Patrick Moran, the Bible in Schools debate and the hotly contested issue of state aid to Catholic schools. In this discussion I will argue that relations between the State and Catholic educators were dominated by a tradition of grievance and crisis, a tradition invoked by Moran to encourage New Zealand Catholics to support a comprehensive elementary education system for all Catholic pupils that would ensure the transmission of the Catholic faith and the survival of Irish religious and cultural values. In this way Moran established, and subsequent “Irish-Catholic” bishops reproduced, a relationship between the State and Catholic educational authorities that was a continuing cause of protracted disputes regarding the funding of Catholic schools and the role of religion in schools.

The impact of the 1877 Education Act

The Church-State issue had been hotly debated in New Zealand long before the Education Act of 1877 and its famous “secular” clause. The Act did not create a national system out of nothing: rather it knitted together a number of existing school systems set up by the provincial governments, which had been responsible for education until 1876. Most provincial governments had initially funded denominational schools but except for Nelson had ceased to do so prior to their abolition in 1876. Debate raged over the place that religion would play in the

³³¹ See also Nozaki and Inokuchi, "Ethnic minority students," 139-52.

new national system.³³² A majority of legislators believed that secular schooling would ensure that no particular church enjoyed an unfair advantage. The decision to withdraw financial aid from schools outside the state system failed to prevent their existence, but by starving them of fund, the government threatened their survival.³³³ Essentially the Act resulted from a deadlock between those, on one side, who supported secularism and those on the other side who advocated rival forms of religious education. As Rory Sweetman puts it, the Catholic and Protestant advocates of religious education failed because rivalry between them made the compromise of a “secular” education system almost inevitable.³³⁴ The inclusion of the secular clause in the 1877 Act, and the denial of public funds to church schools, merely represented the triumph of one set of provincial practices and precedents over another.³³⁵

When he introduced the Education Bill in 1877, Charles Bowen, an Episcopalian of Anglo-Irish descent, acknowledged the presence of “energetic and powerful” denominations in the community that prevented religion from being a part of a comprehensive education system.³³⁶ In choosing “secular” education, Bowen was attempting to make government schools acceptable to the

³³² McGeorge and Snook, *Church and state in New Zealand education*.

³³³ Sweetman, *A fair and just solution?* 27.

³³⁴ *Ibid.* 24.

³³⁵ McGeorge and Snook, *Church and state in New Zealand education*.

³³⁶ Charles Bowen, an Irish Episcopalian, was suspicious of ultra-Protestantism. He criticised partisan religious instruction but defended the use of the Bible in schools. Peter J Lineham, Bowen, Charles Christopher 1830-1917 ([cited 1 June 2005]); available from <http://www.dnzb.govt.nz/>.

whole community.³³⁷ He hoped it would be a way of reconciling Catholics to the state school system, believing that schools could become agents of social harmony and egalitarianism, as well as a way of dissolving the class distinctions that many of the settlers had deplored in England. But he failed to understand the fundamentals of the Catholic educational mission and a Church policy built around the notion that education entailed an initiation into a way of life. This argument, detailed in chapter three, was one that arose out of the Church's battle against "liberalism" and a general stiffening of the attitude of Catholic authorities toward the emerging phenomena of state education in the middle of the nineteenth century.³³⁸

For the Catholic hierarchy in New Zealand the main issue was how quickly a separate system could be built up post-1877, and whether the State could be convinced to fund this system out of general government revenues. The fact that education in European society had historically been an adjunct of religion, provided mainly by the Church and that Government-directed comprehensive education was a relatively recent phenomenon meant it was too

³³⁷ Bowen included the Lord's Prayer and a reading from the Scriptures in the Bill that went to Parliament. This was deleted in the Act. See John Mackey, *The making of a state education system* (London, 1967).

³³⁸ The main reason for the "stiffening" was the issue of the Syllabus of Errors by Pope Pius IX in 1864, which condemned the propositions first that secular education was sufficient and second that public schools should be withdrawn from the control of the Church. Hugh Laracy, "Paranoid popery: Bishop Moran and Catholic education in New Zealand" (paper presented at the Perspectives on Religion: New Zealand viewpoints 1974, Auckland, 1974); Pius IX, *The syllabus of errors* ([cited]).

important an issue for Rome to ignore.³³⁹ These factors alone would have ensured that Catholic policy regarding a proposed system of “secular” state education would be hostile.³⁴⁰ By refusing to aid denominational schools and by making primary education compulsory, the implementation of the 1877 Education Act hastened the development of a separate Catholic system. As a consequence of the Act, the Catholic hierarchy set about building a separate elementary education system and mounted a long-running campaign to secure a measure of government funding for their schools. By contrast, a number of Protestant denominations, including the Anglican Church, largely accepted the legislation. Instead, as I will detail later in the chapter, they pressured successive governments to restore religious instruction to state schools.³⁴¹

The impact of Bishop Moran

In 1871 Bishop Patrick Moran (see photo 6.1) arrived in Dunedin (with ten Irish Dominican Nuns) to take up his episcopate. Determined to impose an Irish model

³³⁹ The papacy, under Gregory XVI (d.1846) and Pius IX, (d.1878), set its face against “the winds of Liberalism”, and nowhere more defiantly than in the latter’s Syllabus of Errors (1864), where he proclaimed that the pope “cannot and should not be reconciled and come to terms with progress, liberalism, and modern civilisation”. McBrien, *Catholicism*. 642, Pius IX, The syllabus of errors ([cited]).

³⁴⁰ Laracy, 1974.

³⁴¹ The Anglican, Presbyterian and Methodist Churches supported the teaching of religion in state schools. The support of Congregational Union and Baptist Churches was by no means unanimous. Among the Churches, opposition came from some Baptist Churches and some non-conformist groups. D.V. MacDonald, “The New Zealand Bible in Schools League” (Master of Arts, Victoria University, 1964). 6, 30.

of ecclesiastical organisation and the disciplines of religion on this raw province he challenged first the provincial and then the national government over the question of aid for Catholic schools.³⁴² He was appalled to discover that the only schools funded by provincial government were essentially Presbyterian in nature despite claiming to be religiously neutral or secular:

I am an advocate for religious education. I am opposed to the mixed or secular system, and I am opposed to the system that exists in this province. I demand for the Catholic body help from the state to educate their children in their own way.³⁴³

Moran held the Catholic view, promulgated by the 1864 Papal Syllabus of Errors and fully articulated by the Catholic bishops of Australia and New Zealand in 1885, that all education was religious. Secular education was a contradiction in terms.³⁴⁴ The crux of his argument, one that would become familiar right up until the Integration Act of 1975, was that Catholics paid taxes and should not have to pay a second time to have their children educated. The new bishop rapidly became a focal point of Irish sentiment and nationalism.³⁴⁵ In 1883 he stood for Parliament as a way of achieving a better hearing for his education claims.

³⁴² This section develops concepts first articulated in my earlier research. See Collins, "Hidden Lives". 91-93.

³⁴³ Diary of Bishop Moran, 24 March 1871, cited in Sweetman, *A fair and just solution?* 24.

³⁴⁴ The first Plenary Council of Australasian bishops met in Sydney in 1885. They decreed that every Catholic parish was to establish a primary school, which was to be erected before a chapel, should parish resources not stretch to both. See *NZ Tablet*, 11 January 1889. See also *Ibid.*, 233.

³⁴⁵ Laracy, "Bishop Moran, Irish politics and Catholicism in New Zealand."

Catholics, who sent their children to state schools in places where Catholic schools were available, were refused the sacraments and a Christian burial. In a country that had for nearly forty years grown accustomed to genial Catholic bishops co-operating with civil authorities, many found Moran's opinions and tactics rather shocking.³⁴⁶

The *New Zealand Tablet* was established in 1873 as a mouthpiece for his causes. The Irish-dominated contents of the *Tablet* were evidence of Moran's stated conviction that his diocese was a branch of the Church in Ireland.³⁴⁷ The religious justification for crowding the *Tablet* with Irish news, stories and history was explained by a Father Hurley who argued that the Irish often lost their faith when they forgot Ireland. Even if parents retained their faith, they might not effectively transmit it to their children in the New Zealand environment.³⁴⁸ This was an important reason for Moran's insistence on the need for Catholic schools:

In the old country we had to support an alien church for men who robbed us of our property, (here) we are compelled to support a godless system of education for children of men who tax us but do not give us a share.³⁴⁹

Moran also argued that Irish bishops and priests should serve the predominantly Irish-Catholic population in New Zealand. He disputed the

³⁴⁶ King, 1997.

³⁴⁷ *NZ Tablet*, 23 August 1889, cited in Laracy, "Bishop Moran, Irish politics and Catholicism in New Zealand," 65.

³⁴⁸ An article entitled "Some Reasons why Catholics lose their Faith in New Zealand" *NZ Tablet*, 15 July 1887, cited in Laracy, 1970.

³⁴⁹ *NZ Tablet*, 14 May 1880.

appointments of the Dutch Walter Steins and the English John Edmund Luck as bishops of Auckland and disapproved of the “English” Francis Redwood being appointed to the Wellington Diocese.³⁵⁰ The vigour with which he fought the increasing power of the secular state in New Zealand in the 1880s and 1890s owed a great deal to Moran’s belief in the existence of a world-wide conspiracy of anti-Catholicism against which it was his responsibility to hold the line. In his view the conspirators were Freemasons, backed by anti-Christian Jews and ultimately by Satan. The threat was immediate:

Nothing but Catholic education can save the rising generation from the baeful influence of the infidel system of education, and from becoming the victims of secret societies, whose hatred of the Christian religion is the characteristic and opprobrium of this age.³⁵¹

While Moran’s “great conspiracy” proved to be sheer fantasy, this was not sufficient to destroy his argument that the education experience was an all pervasive one, nor his conviction that it was impossible to construct a value-free one.

³⁵⁰ Before the appointment of a new bishop a “list” of suitable candidates is sent to Rome for approval. According to O’Farrell “when Roman authority went against the Irish bishops... the docility of the Irish bishops vanished... Rome was bombarded with protests, personal visits and vigorous manoeuvres to secure a reversal”. O’Farrell, *The Catholic Church and community*. 216. The claim that Redwood was English was rather unfair as he had left Staffordshire at the age of three.

³⁵¹ *NZ Tablet*, 11 February 1881, cited in Hugh. M. Laracy, “Paranoid popery: Bishop Moran and Catholic education in New Zealand.” *New Zealand Journal of History* April (1976): 59.

Moran's was a Catholicism of grievance and crisis. Although he left Ireland in 1856 and paid only a few short visits to it after that date, in one sense he did not leave at all. He once told an audience while visiting Cashel, Ireland, that his New Zealand flock were as Irish as they were, professing the same faith, having the same aspirations and imbued with the same heroism.³⁵² The Irish-Catholic immigrants' enormous love for and commitment to their church showed – as both Moran's and subsequent fund-raising drives demonstrated – that they were always ready to give their hard-earned money and often their labour, to build Catholic churches and schools and to support the Church's mission of providing a place in a Catholic primary school for every Catholic child. At the same time the Catholic hierarchy argued its case for state aid for Catholic schools, an argument, as I will detail later, that was first made in the context of the 1877 Education Act and continued to be made for almost one hundred years.

Bible in schools

The "Bible in Schools" issue was the source of long-running political debates over the role of religious instruction in the primary schools. It fuelled continued antipathy between Catholics and other denominations, and between Catholics and the rest of New Zealand society. On the one hand the Catholic hierarchy spoke out against the "godless" education provided in state schools as a way of promoting the Catholic educational mission and to convince Catholic parents to enrol their children in parish schools. On the other hand they resisted the introduction of religious instruction into state schools, arguing that any such

³⁵² *NZ Tablet*, 23 August 1889. See also Laracy, "Bishop Moran, Irish politics and Catholicism in New Zealand," 51-62.

instruction would reflect a Protestant understanding of Christianity. At the same time the more zealous Protestants opposed any aid to Catholic schools on the grounds that it would support “popery”. Over the years Catholics kept up a steady pressure on Parliament although the fear of the Catholic “block vote” against unsympathetic politicians was to play less of a part in the campaign’s failure than “the doubts in the minds of Protestants”.³⁵³ As Colin McGeorge and Ivan Snook put it, the Catholic problem lay in having to oppose the introduction of religious instruction in state schools while building up a case for aid by roundly condemning secular education:

The Catholics found themselves on one occasion urged to support Robert Stout because as a freethinker he was opposed to “Bible in Schools”; on another occasion they were urged to vote against him because, as a Freemason, he was opposed to aiding church schools.³⁵⁴

Thus in the years from 1877 to 1935 the Catholic hierarchy found themselves having to defend the secularity of state schools against a Bible in Schools campaign that saw 42 bills presented to Parliament and the call for a public referendum on the issue.³⁵⁵

The advocates of Bible in Schools argued that New Zealand was a “Christian country” and that bible reading in schools was a solution to the country’s moral decline. Like the Catholics, the Bible in Schools League argued that education was incomplete without religion and that the morals of the country

³⁵³ MacDonald, “The New Zealand Bible in Schools League”, 244; Mackey, *The making of a state education system*.

³⁵⁴ McGeorge and Snook, *Church and state in New Zealand education*.

³⁵⁵ Richard P. Davis, *Irish issues in New Zealand politics. 1868-1922* (Dunedin, 1974). 8-9.

would benefit from the presence of religious instruction in schools. It produced evidence, albeit highly selective, to show how the scheme was working in Australia and other English speaking countries.³⁵⁶ In opposition, the Catholics argued that any scheme that imposed religious instruction in state schools usurped the function of churches while compelling all citizens to pay for religious teaching that was acceptable only to some people. As Colin McGeorge and Ivan Snook explain, the debate focussed on the role of religious instruction in primary schools. High schools, established under separate Acts of Parliament, were not subject to the “secular clause”.³⁵⁷

The League’s most persistent critic was Father Henry Cleary. As editor of the *Tablet* from 1898 to 1910 and Bishop of Auckland from 1910 to 1929, he took up the cause of Catholic education where Moran left off.³⁵⁸ Accusing the League of promoting an “established and endowed state religion”³⁵⁹ he argued that the safeguards offered to protect the 40 per cent of Catholic pupils and teachers in state schools were inadequate. In his view the League’s version of non-denominational Christianity was pure Protestantism. Secular education was

³⁵⁶ Archdeacon Willis (of Cambridge) published a pamphlet in 1911 suggesting that the New Zealand model of religious instruction should be based on one in New South Wales. In 1914 a D.J. Garland suggested that Bible lessons were given in most British countries and were “universally found to be entirely successful”. He cited a variety of individuals, mainly concerned with education in Australian states, to support the idea of a referendum on the issue. MacDonald, “The New Zealand Bible in Schools League”. 16, 74-75.

³⁵⁷ McGeorge and Snook, *Church and state in New Zealand education*.

³⁵⁸ He was also a kinsman of Bishop Moran.

³⁵⁹ *Month*, 15 September 1925, 4.

bad enough; the implementation of Bible in schools would be used (as it had been in Ireland) to corrupt the faith of Catholics:

Let no personal friendship or party allegiance move you to cast your vote [in the general election] for anyone who would aid the League to take away some of your hard-won religious liberties, and make your education system a new instrument of oppression of conscience.³⁶⁰

On the other hand, the League leaders believed Catholic opposition to be inconsistent and hypocritical: that Catholics complained about the absence of religion in state primary schools but were opposed to any solution. They felt that it was unfair that Catholics, who had their own system, in which religious instruction was central, would oppose the introduction of religion in state schools. The continued standoff resulted in the Bible in Schools advocates “making a scapegoat of their foremost critics”.³⁶¹ As a consequence the League refused to recognise efforts made by Catholics to promote religious education or by not supporting their claim to state funds.³⁶²

Despite claims that the threat of a Catholic “block vote” had forced politicians into opposing the League’s call for a public referendum, there were other reasons for the League’s failure including public apathy, the opposition of secularists, state teacher resistance and the adroitness of politicians.³⁶³ After

³⁶⁰ Cleary, Circular to be read in all churches, n.d. (c.1913) cited in McGeorge and Snook, *Church and state in New Zealand education*. 13.

³⁶¹ Sweetman, *A fair and just solution?* 25.

³⁶² Ibid.

³⁶³ The New Zealand National Schools’ Defence League was formed in 1912 with the specific purpose of opposing the League. Along with the Catholics they presented a number of petitions

several Bills were defeated in the 1920s by Catholic opposition the League did attempt to meet Catholic objections, and by 1930 it looked like a compromise solution had been found. However the draft Bill failed as a result of continuing antipathy between the churches.³⁶⁴ In addition, as Sweetman points out, a key argument against the Bible in Schools campaign concerned the likely consequences of its implementation.³⁶⁵ Politicians realised that they were caught in a dilemma; how could they subsidise Protestant religious lessons in the state schools yet continue to deny financial assistance to Catholic schools? The State could not endorse one form of religion, for which all would have to pay taxes without causing further sectarian division.

From the 1930s onward, the Nelson system – a scheme under which voluntary teachers could enter state schools to give religious instruction on one day a week when they were officially “closed” – was increasingly seen by politicians as a way out of the dilemma.³⁶⁶ Although the percentage of state primary schools operating it reached 10 percent in 1936, attempts to legalise the system regularly failed. This is surprising given its widespread acceptance by the New Zealand Education Institute (NZEI) and the National Schools Defence

to Parliament. The NZEI (New Zealand Educational Institute) consistently advocated a purely secular system.

³⁶⁴ For a comprehensive discussion of the issues involved see Snook, "Religion in schools: A Catholic controversy, 1930-1934."

³⁶⁵ Sweetman, *A fair and just solution?*

³⁶⁶ For a designated period of time, typically thirty minutes per week before school commenced.

League (NSDL) and its approval by Catholic leaders who increasingly used it to reach the large number of Catholic children enrolled in state schools.³⁶⁷ The Nelson system became an important mechanism for transmitting the Catholic faith to the significant numbers of Catholic pupils who did not attend Catholic schools.³⁶⁸ In the early years the most vociferous opponent was the Bible in Schools League, which saw the Nelson system as an inadequate compromise. The League's inability to compromise was also evident in its dealings with the Catholic hierarchy. In 1924 Bishop Cleary offered to work with the League to promote religious education in the schools and to achieve a solution "on fair conditions all round", and in 1929 Archbishop Thomas O'Shea supported the League on the incorporation of "conscience clauses" into draft legislation thus exempting Catholic pupils from religious instruction.³⁶⁹ However League spokesmen saw Cleary's proposal as a veiled demand for state aid and refused to put the delicate Protestant coalition at risk by meeting Catholic concerns.³⁷⁰ The latter arrangement was scuttled by other Catholic bishops.³⁷¹

Eventually, in the face of the 1935 Labour victory, the League abandoned its attempts to enact legislation and moved to expand and strengthen the Nelson

³⁶⁷ See van der Krogt, "More a part than apart". 487-89.

³⁶⁸ It was utilized by country pupils and for those who were outside traveling distance to a Catholic school as well as pupils who for other reasons attended a state primary school.

³⁶⁹ *Month*, 17 June 1924, cited in Sweetman, *A fair and just solution?* 27.

³⁷⁰ See Snook, "Religion in schools: A Catholic controversy, 1930-1934."

³⁷¹ MacDonald, "The New Zealand Bible in Schools League"; Snook, "Religion in schools: A Catholic controversy, 1930-1934."

system. Sweetman suggests that the League finally saw the writing on the wall, a situation that sprang from a combination of factors including Labour's historic opposition to the various Bible in Schools measures and the realisation that some religious instruction in state schools was going to be better than none.³⁷² In 1949 the Bible in Schools League became the Council for Christian Education, a body that by 1960 had successfully persuaded 80 per cent of state primary school committees to embrace the Nelson system.³⁷³

Issues of state aid

Catholic educational authorities, concerned for the long-term financial viability of the Catholic education system, undertook a long-running campaign to procure state funding of Catholic schools. Unlike the advocates of Bible in Schools, they seemed undaunted by continued failure. For almost a century every school opening and prize-giving ceremony was marked by a set-piece speech promoting the success of the Catholic educational mission and denouncing the injustice of the continued denial of state funding. For the first twenty years after the passage of the Education Act, Catholics laid siege to Parliament with petitions and private members' bills calling for state aid while Catholic voters were advised to reject parliamentary candidates who were antagonistic to Catholic claims. The years from 1896 to 1914 under Moran's successor Bishop Michael Verdon, saw a shift to a more conciliatory approach, a policy aimed at piecemeal concessions

³⁷² Sweetman, *A fair and just solution?*

³⁷³ The Christchurch School Committees' Association boasted of its role in returning religion to the state primary schools. *Press*, 28 July 1969, cited in McGeorge and Snook, *Church and state in New Zealand education*. 235.

gained via a patient exposition of Catholic educational views. The policy change, which consciously courted non-Catholic opinion, was also a defensive response to the threat posed by the Bible in Schools movement.³⁷⁴

Although successive governments never accepted that the state should subsidise Catholic schools, a number of concessions were made to private ' schools especially during the early years of William Massey's Reform Government.³⁷⁵ However, sectarian conflict, exacerbated by bitter wartime disputes over the conscription of clergy, papal neutrality and Irish self-determination meant that for most of the period from 1915 to 1935 the Catholics were out in the cold again. Lobbying from the Protestant Political Association and the New Zealand Educational Institute resulted in the withdrawal of several pre-war gains, including the hard-won right to take up state scholarships in private schools.³⁷⁶

Although the 1935 Labour Government had made its support for the secular education system clear, there was strong Catholic representation in the Labour Party and Catholic leaders began to enjoy friendly relations with members of the new government. The years after 1916 had bequeathed a legacy of support for the emerging Labour Party. Its support for Irish independence and opposition to conscription were two elements that helped forge an alliance that gave expression to the struggle for political influence by Catholics in New Zealand society. As Sean Brosnahan explains it, "Labour advocacy of the Irish

³⁷⁴ Sweetman, *A fair and just solution?*

³⁷⁵ William Massey's Reform Government took office in 1912.

³⁷⁶ van der Krogt, "More a part than apart". 428.

cause and opposition to conscription (1916), built a bridgehead into the Catholic electoral vote. Once there, Labour was able to broaden its support base by appealing to the working-class concerns of Irish-Catholic ethnics".³⁷⁷

Nevertheless, relations between the Labour Party and the Catholic hierarchy were rather ambivalent. On the one hand Church leaders saw them as tainted with "radical socialism", on the other hand the Labour Party included a number of prominent Catholics, including Michael Joseph Savage, who were supported by a majority of Catholic people as champions of the poor (see photo 6.2).³⁷⁸ As I will illustrate further in chapter eight, Bishop Liston's prediction that "the Labour people, our friends" would be sympathetic to Catholic educational interests was soon to be justified. And Labour's victory in November 1935 brought the promise of much-needed social reform to alleviate some of the ills that had concerned the Catholic population during the years of the depression.³⁷⁹

From 1937, the new government began to grant a number of concessions to Catholic pupils; by 1949 when Labour left office these included free milk and apples, the *School Journal* and primary textbooks, travel on rural school buses, boarding bursaries, access to the school library service, and subsidies for swimming pools, radio and film equipment. More important than any individual grant was the sympathetic hearing the Labour government gave to Catholic

³⁷⁷ Brosnahan, "Shaming the Shoneens: The Green Ray and The Maoriland Irish Society in Dunedin, 1916-22," 117-34.

³⁷⁸ Michael Joseph Savage was the first Labour Prime Minister of New Zealand. See Ernest Simmons, *In cruce salus: A history of the diocese of Auckland, 1848-1980* (Auckland, 1982).

³⁷⁹ Sweetman, *A fair and just solution?* 30.

educational concerns. After twenty years of isolation Catholics found themselves courted by Labour politicians. Labour leaders were present at the Catholic centenary functions in 1938 and 1940 and they frequently expressed their praise for the Catholic school system.³⁸⁰ Nevertheless it would be more than twenty years before a Labour leader endorsed the concept of state aid. In 1949 Labour was replaced by the National government of Sydney Holland and all Catholic approaches on the question encountered stalling tactics, a response that was perceived as duplicity by Catholic leaders.³⁸¹ The belief that service in the Second World War and Korea had earned better treatment resulted in Archbishop McKeefrey's threat:

We are tired of being fobbed off and I say that, should war come, and if it is to be fought overseas, then my thought at the moment is that I should feel inclined to call on our men to stay at home whilst those who deny us justice here can do the fighting overseas.³⁸²

A post-war teacher shortage and accommodation crisis prompted a further state aid campaign in the mid-1950s.³⁸³ Confident that the public was more sympathetic, and realising that the cause of state aid might be better served by a campaign led by laymen, the bishops authorised the Holy Name Society to launch an appeal for a parliamentary inquiry under the slogan "Hear the Case" (see illustration 6.3). A massive publicity campaign utilising pamphlets, stickers,

³⁸⁰ see van der Krogt, "More a part than apart". 456-59.

³⁸¹ Sweetman, *A fair and just solution?* 31.

³⁸² *Dominion*, 16 November 1954, 4.

³⁸³ Ian A. McLaren, *Education in a small democracy: New Zealand* (London, 1974).

radio and film advertising heralded the petition's presentation to Parliament. Walter Otto, the Society's national president, rejected the term "state aid" demanding the full cost of the salaries of lay teachers, an annual capitation grant of forty percent of the cost of educating state pupils and assistance with the capital cost of new schools and extensions to existing ones. However, the petition encountered a complete lack of public sympathy and opposition from the NZEI and Protestant churches, from whom the Catholics had expected support. Thirty three opposing submissions were heard by the Parliamentary Education Committee and after vigorous lobbying and heated debate, Parliament endorsed its rejection.³⁸⁴

As Sweetman explains it, the 1956 campaign, despite its failure, sensitised many observers to the sense of grievance felt by Catholics over the denial of state aid. After National's defeat in 1957, the new Labour government came under pressure to meet Catholic expectations. In February 1960 the Government set up a commission on education, a time-honoured manoeuvre which allowed it to stall any decision on state aid until the Currie Commission could pronounce on the place of religion in schools and the question of financial assistance to private schools.³⁸⁵ After hearing numerous submissions for and against the Committee noted:

Between the Catholic Education Council on the one hand and those organisations which strongly support the continuation of a single State-supported system on the other, there is an

³⁸⁴ These included submissions by the Anglican bishops and Professor Colin Bailey. See *Evening Star* (Dunedin), 25 October 1956, cited in Sweetman, *A fair and just solution?* 236.

³⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

irreconcilable difference of opinion on the importance to be attached to the denominational connection in education.³⁸⁶

The Commission finally concluded that it “could not recommend a change in public policy in this matter”.³⁸⁷ Thus the political resolution of the state-aid issue was left until 1975 when the third Labour Government passed the Private Schools Conditional Integration Act. But that story is beyond the scope of this study. In the meantime the denial of state aid to Catholic schools threatened the financial viability of the Catholic educational mission during a period of ongoing expansion in the primary and secondary sector.

Pressures on the Catholic educational mission: Issues of continuity and change

Despite the pressures on the Catholic education system there were two factors that ensured the continuity of the Catholic educational mission. As Donald Akenson explains it, the first of these was a circle of religious devotion that encouraged the loyalty of adults to the Church and allowed the primary schools to foster the belief that the “religious” pervaded all aspects of human life. Second, there was a high level of social solidarity among New Zealand’s Catholics.³⁸⁸ This was all the more pervasive for its being understated except in times of strong anti-Catholic attacks such as those which occurred after the Irish

³⁸⁶ *Report of the Commission on Education in New Zealand*, (Wellington, 1962). 711.

³⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸⁸ Akenson, *Half the world from home*.

Rising in 1916 and again in 1922 with the trial of Bishop Liston for sedition.³⁸⁹ As the twentieth century progressed and the Church became stronger, it developed an increasing range of activities that allowed the Catholic schools to act as “the locus of a society parallel to the general society”.³⁹⁰ Bishop Liston, for example, not only founded thirty new schools in the diocese of Auckland but he introduced various ancillary organisations such as the Catholic Scouts, the Catholic Basketball Association and various girls’ groups.³⁹¹

The existence of these organisations reduced the necessity for Catholic young people to mix with other young people outside their faith. More importantly, it reduced the chances of a “mixed marriage” with someone outside the faith. During the 1920s and early 1930s, despite the increased focus on “moral citizenship”, many Catholics failed to take part in New Zealand society: they maintained what was, in effect, a ghetto mentality. As E.R. Simmonds explains it, this position was rationalised by the idea that Catholics had always been poor, and prejudice against Catholics (by Freemasons and others who were thought to control New Zealand society) was blamed for the failure of Catholics to reach high positions.³⁹² In an era of growing Catholic populations, the Church’s primary emphasis was on providing churches, priests and schools and promoting ongoing contact with the Church through the Holy Name Society, the

³⁸⁹ See also Rory Sweetman, *Bishop in the dock: The sedition trial of James Liston* (Auckland, 1997).

³⁹⁰ Akenson, *Half the world from home*. 172.

³⁹¹ Simmonds, *In cruce salus: A history of the diocese of Auckland, 1848-1980*.

³⁹² Simmonds, *A brief history of the Catholic Church in New Zealand*.

Children of Mary and a variety of women's societies. The prevailing attitude towards the outsider remained defensive and triumphalistic.³⁹³ The Catholic journals of the period continued to express a rather smug apologetic and cosy praise of "our" bishops and "our" schools, and the legacy of sectarianism continued to be felt in the verbal and sometimes physical confrontations between Catholic and Protestant children.³⁹⁴ During these years the Catholic community remained largely inward looking, preserving the distinctive cultural practices and highlighting the "ground of difference" that separated it from the rest of New Zealand society.

Nevertheless, the 1920s and 1930s was also a time of transition for the Catholic community. The focus on Irish politics that had been a feature of the years after World War I was gradually replaced as the rise of the Labour Party gave expression to the struggle for political influence by Catholics in New Zealand society. The decrease in sectarianism after the 1920s and the adoption by Catholics of notions of patriotic "kiwi" citizenship began to locate "Irishness" in the area of culture, rather than that of politics.³⁹⁵ The Irish-Catholic immigrant identity formed in 1870s was gradually replaced by the mid-twentieth century by a sense of being, first, good Catholics, and, second, patriotic New Zealanders of Irish ethnicity.³⁹⁶

³⁹³ Akenson, 1990.

³⁹⁴ Simmons, *A brief history of the Catholic Church in New Zealand*.

³⁹⁵ See Akenson, *Half the world from home*; Sweetman, *Bishop in the dock: The sedition trial of James Liston*.

³⁹⁶ Akenson, *Half the world from home*.

This sea change of attitude also took place, as I have detailed in chapter three, in the context of moves on the part of the Catholic hierarchy to support a more “active” spirituality and a gradual involvement of Catholics in New Zealand society through social, economic and educational advancement (see chapter four). As I will detail in chapter eight, the improvement in relations between Catholic and state educational authorities would result in productive negotiations between the Catholic hierarchy and the Department of Education over Catholic concerns about the reforms proposed by the Thomas Committee.

Data on age cohorts and school attendance statistics suggest that fifty-eight percent of Catholic primary school pupils attended Catholic schools in 1926. These figures indicate that during the early part of the twentieth century approximately six percent of the children in state schools were Catholics. By 1950, however, seventy five percent of Catholic children of compulsory school age were in Catholic schools and state school attendance had fallen to three and a half percent. At the mid-point of the twentieth century an overwhelming majority of Catholic children attended Catholic primary schools; the Catholic educational mission to provide a place in a Catholic school for every Catholic pupil seemed likely to succeed.³⁹⁷

Thus by 1943, when the Thomas Committee first met, there was in existence in New Zealand a fully-formed Catholic school system filled with a majority of pupils of Irish descent and staffed by religious teachers of Irish-

³⁹⁷ The age cohorts for each denomination are sourced from *Census, 1926*, vol. VIII, *Religious Professions*, 32-33. The numbers enrolled in various schools come from the *Yearbook, 1928*, 1950, 224, 229. The figures are cited in *Ibid.*, 165, 53. See also Spenser, "Interim Report," 462-63.

Catholic descent.³⁹⁸ Pupils in Catholic schools received some state aid but crucial to our concerns in the following chapters, the real expenses, the payment of teachers and the erection of school buildings still fell on the shoulders of the Catholic parents and on the fund-raising efforts of the parish priest and the Sisters.³⁹⁹ It was a time of rapid expansion, soon to be fuelled by the post-war “baby boom”, and the capacities of Catholic schools were beginning to be seriously strained.

Conclusion

By examining events leading up to the reform of post-primary education in New Zealand in the mid-1940s this chapter has examined the changing relationships between the Catholic Church and the State, Catholic challenges to state hegemony over educational policymaking and their impact on the Catholic educational mission in the years leading up to the release of the Thomas Report. It outlined historic influences, highlighting the role of Bishop Patrick Moran and subsequent Irish-Catholic bishops whose relationship with the State over educational matters was based on patterns of suspicion, grievance and crisis. The Bible in Schools campaign prompted long-running political debates over the role of religious instruction in schools and fuelled continued antipathy between the Catholics and the rest of New Zealand society. The hotly-contested issue of state aid to Catholic schools, seen as crucial to the long-term viability of the Catholic

³⁹⁸ While most pupils in Catholic schools in 1950 were of Irish descent, a number of other ethnic groups attended Catholic schools including children of Maori, Lebanese, Dalmation and Italian descent. Akenson, *Half the world from home*; King, *God's farthest outpost*.

³⁹⁹ Akenson, 1990.

education system became a continuing cause of protracted disputes between Catholics and the State. The chapter then summarised achievements of the Catholic educational mission in the mid-twentieth century noting that by 1943, when the Thomas Committee first met, there was in existence in New Zealand a fully-formed Catholic school system, which received some state aid but which was held together by a circle of religious devotion and survived mainly on the fund-raising efforts of Catholic community. In a time of educational reform and rapid expansion, as the following chapters will demonstrate, the capacity of the Catholic education system to cope with the demands placed upon it would come under serious strain.

Chapter Seven

The politics of educational reform

In this education crisis of 1944, when the future of generations of New Zealanders is at stake, we as Catholic New Zealanders must keep a look-out on those in power and on what they are proposing to do.⁴⁰⁰

Introduction

Much of the written history of Catholic schooling focuses on interactions between the Catholic educational authorities and the politically dominant “Protestant” state education system. In some cases, as I will demonstrate in chapter ten in the context of teacher training, Catholics imitated state models in a desire to incorporate state “expertise” and to protect the educational standards of Catholic schools. Sometimes, however, they took a different course, rejecting aspects of the dominant culture in order to maintain a “ground of difference” between Catholic and state educational values.⁴⁰¹ The debates over the high school curriculum exemplify this dynamic.

In the previous chapter I examined the complex relationship between the Catholic Church and the State and the implications of changes in that relationship

⁴⁰⁰ Dorothea Loughnan, “A criticism of the report on post-primary education,” (Auckland, 1944), 4.

⁴⁰¹ For an analysis of similar debates in the United States see A.S. Bryk, V.E. Lee, and P.B. Holland, *Catholic schools and the common good* (Cambridge, 1993).

for the Catholic educational mission and the process of educational reform. In the following chapter I will consider the process of educational policy-making and debates about the role of education within the Catholic community and amongst liberal state educators in the years leading up to the Thomas Report. The first section of the chapter will focus on the way the prospect of the curriculum reforms focussed Catholic fears on the incursion of secular values into Catholic schools, raising yet again the spectre of state surveillance and control and threats to the distinctive Catholic educational mission. It will argue that state educational policy-makers were far more radical in their approach to pedagogical reform than New Zealand society in general and Catholic educators in particular. Seeing the school as a liberating force, state educational policy-makers held the view that a technically-educated citizenry was necessary to the development of the modern democratic state and the key to economic prosperity and industrial harmony. Catholic educators, on the other hand, resisted these policies as promoting a secular, not to mention, socialist ideology.

The chapter will then consider the role of the Thomas Committee, demonstrating how Beeby's omission of a Catholic representative from the committee caused resentment on the part of the Catholic hierarchy and increased the likelihood of a Catholic challenge to the proposed reforms. Catholic responses to the common core curriculum were based on objections to its liberal secular values and its threat to the authority of parents, teachers and the Church. Yet, behind the united front of official public statements highlighting the dangers of state control and secular values, as the chapter will argue, individual Catholic educators saw some potential in the new reforms.

Educational policy debates and the reform of post-primary education

State control and religious values

During the interwar years Catholic educators took part in the fierce debates about the nature of schooling, the students for whom it would be offered and for what purpose. In *state schools* the debate reflected contemporary social class, regional, ethnic, gender considerations and took place in the context of the expansion of secondary schooling; in *Catholic schools* issues of state control, educational standards and religious values took centre stage. The following section will consider these debates, the context within which they occurred and the factors that led to the reform of post-primary education. Catholic commentators and other members of the educational community expressed concerns regarding the loss of religious and moral values and the “liberal” values implicit in the proposed reforms.

Catholic concerns

Publicly, Catholic concerns focussed on the spectre of state interference, the rejection of classical humanist philosophy and the imposition of a curriculum based on “progressive” secular values as a 1936 article in the *Month* explains:

The dangers now imminent through the increase of secularism on the one hand and the pressure of State control on the other, and the possibility of “the adoption of a radically vicious educational policy”... Father Thompson quoted the Pope’s encyclical on the subject of State interference with the Church in the matter of education... the Church had educated the world, even in secular learning, long

before the State awoke to its duty in the matter.⁴⁰²

While Catholic commentators acknowledged schools' "vital responsibility of moulding character and laying the foundations of future citizenship", they maintained that the work of teachers extended "not merely to learning and culture of the pupil but to virtue and happiness...not for school but for life".⁴⁰³ Critics also argued, as I will detail in the following chapter, that an education in the classics, long the basis of "secular learning" in Catholic secondary schools, provided the disciplined intellectual framework necessary to the "moral" training of pupils.⁴⁰⁴ By emphasising the importance of schooling for "moral" citizenship and "for life", as I have argued in chapter four, Catholic commentators were once again highlighting the distinctiveness of a Catholic educational mission that trained its pupils for their future salvation as well as success in "in the world". So it was not surprising that the same commentators rejected "the Dewey method of educating children away from God and the moral law", the "so-called progressive education" based on "positivism and naturalism; in method an exhibition of anarchic individualism masquerading as the democratic manner".⁴⁰⁵ Some commentators also expressed fears about the harmful "domination by an

⁴⁰² "State control. Danger to schools. Warning note sounded. Father Thompson's view."

Auckland Star 7 January 1936, Green Cuttings Book 1856-1936, 105, ACDA.

⁴⁰³ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁴ See also Bryk, Lee, and Holland, *Catholic schools and the common good*.

⁴⁰⁵ *Zealandia* 21 September 1944, 3.

external exam” which is “educationally bad” because its influence reflected “secular” rather than religious and cultural values.⁴⁰⁶

Individual Catholic teachers were aware of the atmosphere of educational change. One of the participants in this study was a young brother in the Marist Brothers’ Novitiate at the time. He recalls the late 1930s as a period when a number of Catholic educators were receptive to the need for educational change:

Well it was fascinating because we had been living in a religious life world in the novitiate and now we were out there with the people. Peter Fraser had just set up the New Education Fellowship [1937] and there were tremendous reforms going on in education and some big names from overseas had just visited here. Percy Nunn and I don’t know whether John Dewey came [he didn’t], but they were all important. (FP6)

Living “in a religious world” cut off from the outside world, the novices’ first experience of teaching was also their first exposure to contemporary educational debates. The enthusiastic response to the “tremendous reforms” is a far cry from “Catholic” views expressed in contemporary publications that labelled “progressive” education as “the Dewey method of educating children away from God and the natural law”.⁴⁰⁷ The narrative highlights two issues that are important in this research. First, life history research in general and oral accounts in particular can provide valuable historical insights, insights that are not available to a researcher who relies on documentary and archival sources alone. And second, despite official public statements that highlight the dangers of state control and secular values, individual members of the Catholic education

⁴⁰⁶ “External exams. Harmful dominance. The Catholic viewpoint” *Auckland Star*, 23 December 1935 and 9 January 1936, Green Cuttings Book 1856-1936 104. ACDA.

⁴⁰⁷ *Zealandia*, 21 September 1944, 5.

community held diverse views on the nature and purpose of education and the role of educational reform. It is a subject to which I will return.

State educational policy-makers

The attitudes of state educational policy-makers towards post-primary schooling in the years between the wars contrasted markedly with the publicly-expressed views of Catholic educators. They also reveal a complex mixture of ideas as

Openshaw explains:

Educational policy-makers often blended notions of social efficiency, with a view to creating a better skilled and socially adjusted workforce; a concern with the developing child, which stressed the importance of individual needs and interests in curriculum development and school organisation, and social meliorism, which envisaged schools as institutions which sensitised students to the outstanding social issues and problems of their times.⁴⁰⁸

As early as 1900 a combination of educational liberalism and social efficiency concerns reflected a growing belief among educators and politicians that a technically-educated population held the key to modern national development and would underpin economic prosperity, military strength and industrial harmony. George Hogben, the Inspector-General of Schools, believed that instruction that gave pupils a wider world outlook, created better citizens and was more vocationally-oriented would secure social efficiency “much more certainly for most pupils than by time-honoured subjects and methods that have no practical outlook on life”.⁴⁰⁹ Some of these ideas were to be incorporated into

⁴⁰⁸ Roger Openshaw, *Unresolved struggle: Consensus and conflict in state post-primary education* (Palmerston North, 1995). 37.

⁴⁰⁹ AJHR, 1900, 17-18, 69, cited in *Ibid.*,38.

Catholic educational practice in the years after 1945 as I will demonstrate in part four of this thesis.

However there were conflicting views even amongst policy-makers. The 1928 Lawson Committee, aware that the imposition of a differentiated curriculum (in the context of a raised school leaving age to fifteen), would have consequences for socioeconomic differentiation, strongly opposed definitive vocational training until pupils had completed their fifteenth year. A minority report, however, argued that many children did not have the intellectual capacity to undertake post-primary schooling and upheld the value of selection. The Bodkin Committee suggested that the great bulk of children needed to shift their emphasis from academic studies to those related to primary industries. Yet, H. Atmore himself, as Minister of Education in the Forbes-Coates government (1928-1931), sympathised with the 1930 Bodkin Committee's recommendation that both practical and cultural subjects be included with a common core framework.⁴¹⁰

By the end of the interwar period a number of factors favoured the advocates of a common core curriculum. In the first place, the New Zealand Labour Party had always been suspicious of premature vocational training for the working-class and their views had to be considered in light of their growing political strength. Secondly, educational progressives were also concerned from the 1930s onwards about the wisdom of making early decisions about how the

⁴¹⁰ Openshaw, Lee, and Lee, *Challenging the myths*.

learning capacity of different groups of children.⁴¹¹ In addition, as Openshaw explains, the Department of Education seems to have eventually supported comprehensive schooling on pragmatic grounds, particularly in light of the heterogeneous nature of the expanding post-primary population.⁴¹²

However, many parents and secondary school principals resisted political pressure to extend comprehensive education. There was opposition to Labour's ideal of general education as a means of opening up opportunities for working-class children. Debates among Catholic educators, to be detailed in chapter nine, illustrate the diversity of views about the role of a post-primary education while Catholic educational hierarchy, as I have already illustrated, were suspicious of any developments that smacked of state control. Catholic educators were also concerned to protect "academic standards" in Catholic schools as a way of ensuring the educational advancement of able Catholic pupils and the survival and success of the Catholic educational mission.

International debates about comprehensive education

The New Zealand debate about the scope and function of post-primary schooling took place in the context of similar debates in Britain and the United States. In the United Kingdom, the Spens Report (1938) and the Norwood Report (1943) recommended a tripartite system of schools which would cater for what was believed to be three distinct types of adolescent. Although training for citizenship was central to the educational values of grammar schools, technical schools and

⁴¹¹ J.D.S. McKenzie, Gregory Lee, and Howard Lee, *The transformation of the New Zealand technical high school* (Palmerston North, 1990).

⁴¹² Openshaw, *Unresolved struggle*.

secondary modern schools, the style of delivery and context was to be different for each type of pupil.⁴¹³ In the United States a twentieth century expansion in high school enrolments reflected a change from nineteenth-century expectations of high schools as elitist institutions to a belief that high schools could provide the majority of adolescents with a crucial training in the values of democracy. Democracy training was seen as a way to maintain social order in an environment which encouraged all to make use of their talents for the good of society. A common core curriculum that reflected those values was believed to be the best way to implement these ideas in a post-primary education.⁴¹⁴ The notion of a common core curriculum which could meet the need for a broad, generous education for all citizens was also to become a major policy plank for the reform-minded Labour government as the following will illustrate.

Labour policy developments

Although the policy direction of Fraser and the Labour Party had been signalled before the 1935 election and again strongly in the 1939 Annual Report, implementing this change was to prove problematic for Fraser and the new Director of Education C.E. Beeby. Despite wide-ranging discussion in the 1920s about the need to reform a post-primary school curriculum which still was largely confined to classics, modern languages and mathematics, there had been relatively few changes in practice. The University of New Zealand continued to support a classics-based curriculum, primarily through the weighting given to the

⁴¹³ Gregory Lee, "From rhetoric to reality: A history of the development of the common core curriculum in New Zealand post-primary schools" (Ph.D. diss, University of Otago, 1991).

⁴¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 527.

various Scholarship and Matriculation examination subjects. The content of post-primary curricula was controlled by examination prescriptions, inspections and the limited list of textbooks approved by the Department. As J.H. Murdoch noted in his 1943 survey of high schools it was “a restriction that may make for efficiency but tends again to uniformity”.⁴¹⁵

However, Labour’s landslide victory in 1935 was to pave the way for major reforms of the primary and post-primary school system. The extension of free secondary schooling to all children and the raising of the compulsory school leaving age to fifteen were key features of the Labour Government’s plans for the social and economic reconstruction of New Zealand life.⁴¹⁶

It is not enough to provide more places in schools of the older academic type that were devised originally for the education of the gifted few. Schools that are to cater for the whole population must offer courses that are as rich and varied as are the needs and abilities of the children who enter them.⁴¹⁷

The first step towards implementing this policy was taken in 1937 with the abolition of the Proficiency Examination which had controlled entry to post-primary education. A broader choice of subjects for the less academic pupils became available with the introduction of the School Certificate in 1934 as an alternative to the University Entrance examination but this foundered when the

⁴¹⁵ J.H. Murdoch, *The high schools of New Zealand: A critical survey* (Christchurch, 1943). 79.

⁴¹⁶ Clive Whitehead, "The Thomas Report: A study in educational reform," *New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies* (1974).

⁴¹⁷ *Annual Report for the Minister of Education*: E:1, 1939, 6.

general public and the business world continued to rely on Matriculation as the basis for evaluating secondary school performance.⁴¹⁸ As J.H. Murdoch observed:

University Entrance... has in effect imposed on a large section of pupils a much more limited course than one might be inclined to gather from a perusal of the regulations. Its powerful hold on the public mind has prevented the School Certificate, with its wider range of options from having any marked influence on courses of study.⁴¹⁹

The pressure for change in the post-primary school system took a number of forms. Some wanted to curb the apparently limitless autonomy of individual secondary school boards. In 1930 the Bodkin Committee had recommended the unification of control over all schools while the NZEI's blueprint, *Order out of Chaos*, advocated administrative unification and a unified teaching scale. Not surprisingly, many secondary school principals criticised these ideas. In 1938, Fraser, who had been a member of the Bodkin Committee, introduced an Education Bill that proposed the establishment of twelve district education boards and the raising of the leaving age to fifteen. However the Bill failed to become law in part due to its being overtaken by the advent of war and Savage's illness which deflected attention from it.⁴²⁰

⁴¹⁸ Whitehead, "The Thomas Report."

⁴¹⁹ Murdoch, *The high schools of New Zealand: A critical survey*. 75.

⁴²⁰ Noeline Alcorn, *To the fullest extent of his powers: Beeby's life in education* (Wellington, 1999).

Key moves towards post-primary curriculum reform, however, had begun as early as the 1920s with the promotion by Frank Milner of a liberal core for all students, supplemented by optional courses. Milner, the charismatic Rector of Waitaki Boys' High School, argued that education involved the "development of the whole humanity of its pupils" and that it should not focus exclusively on students' "intellectual development".⁴²¹ Milner proposed a common core curriculum that would provide every student with "cultural education" and included art, English, arithmetic, general science, handiwork, health, Social Studies and music.⁴²² The Labour government's general endorsement of the Milner curriculum was assisted by the combined effect of the "liberalising" of primary school curriculum following the abolition of the Proficiency examination in Standard 6 in 1937 and the success of the government sponsored New Education Fellowship (NEF) Conference which was held in July 1937.

International speakers at the NEF conference included Dr Cyril Norwood and Dr Susan Issacs. Speakers presented a number of solutions to "the problem of the relation of school and society", suggesting that education should act as a

⁴²¹ Gregory Lee and Howard Lee, "Making Milner matter: Some comparisons between Milner (1933-1936), Thomas (1944), and subsequent New Zealand secondary school curricula reports and developments" (paper presented at the NZARE Conference, Massey University, 5-8 December 2002).

⁴²² F. Milner, "Secondary schools' curriculum with special reference to its suitability for our national needs," (1936). STA cited in Lee and Lee, "Making Milner matter".

liberating force, that home and school could work together and that learning could and should be an active process.⁴²³ As Dr. Issac Kandel explained it:

To provide educational opportunities for all is an essential need in all democracies... but what is more urgent if the phrase "school and society" is to have genuine meaning and validity is a fresh start in our thinking on curriculum and methods and a more realistic approach to the life that the changes of the last generation has produced.⁴²⁴

Conference speakers criticised formal examinations, advocated newer forms of testing and recording progress, strongly supported post-primary education for all and the reform of rigid academic programmes. They saw "equality of educational opportunity" as the essence of a democratic system and promoted programmes that would meet the diverse needs of students. Not surprisingly these ideas were challenged by Catholic educators who saw such "progressive" education as based on a secular, socialist ideology in which pupils experienced an "education without discipline".⁴²⁵ Crucial to Catholic concerns was the threat to the moral authority of the Church, the fear that the new model of education would "repudiate parental and teacher authority", replace the "direction and formation of youth" with "self-education for self-expression" and make the "modern state... the ultimate guardian of all children... replac[ing] the parent as supporter,

⁴²³ A.E. Campbell, ed., *Modern trends in education: The proceedings of the New Education Fellowship Conference held in New Zealand in July 1937* (Auckland, 1938), 1.

⁴²⁴ I.L. Kandel, "Education in the modern world," in *Modern trends in education: The proceedings of the New Education Fellowship Conference held in New Zealand in July, 1937*, ed. A.E. Campbell (Auckland, 1938), 8.

⁴²⁵ *Zealandia*, 21 September 1944, 5.

guardian or educator”.⁴²⁶ It is relevant to note here that later Catholic suspicions about Department of Education’s intentions for reform which surfaced in the context of the Thomas reforms (to be detailed further in chapter eight), may have been fuelled by C.E. Beeby’s key role as organiser of the enormously successful conference.⁴²⁷

The argument Labour now advanced was that a “democratic” schooling system could operate only when it was made available to the entire youth population. The Milner curriculum model was widely seen as a way of satisfying the various educational and prevocational requirements and the expectations of the increasing numbers of adolescents who were staying on at school. As before, opposition to the Milner model came, not only from Catholics, but from other sectors of the educational community. James Hutton, President of the New Zealand Secondary Schools’ Association warned that as a consequence “the whole population will come to our post-primary schools” while the President of the New Zealand Institute, Norman Matheson, gloomily foretold “an influx of non-academic types” into high schools as an immediate consequence of raising the school leaving age.⁴²⁸ There was considerable opposition too from the University of New Zealand. Professors at Otago and Auckland University College lamented the new trends in educational policy. One of them, William

⁴²⁶ “The threat to our schools from within: Naturalism in present-day education”, *Zealandia*, 25 May 1944, 4.

⁴²⁷ At the time of the New Education Fellowship Conference, Beeby was the Director of the NZCER.

⁴²⁸ STA, October 1938, 6, and ODT, 4 June 1938 cited in Openshaw, Lee, and Lee, *Challenging the myths*. 167.

Anderson, a professor of Philosophy at Auckland and a Scot, took the lead in denouncing what he called the “soft pedagogy”. In an address later published by the Auckland Catholic Teachers’ Association, he lamented the abolition of Proficiency, and feared the lowering of standards for University Entrance.⁴²⁹ The Catholic educational hierarchy were to draw on his objections to “new education” in their response to the Thomas reforms as I will illustrate in chapter eight.

The outbreak of the Second World War in 1939 encouraged the Labour government to promote its new educational “vision” with some urgency. The opportunity came in 1942 when the University of New Zealand announced a new system of accrediting and the movement of the University Entrance qualification from the third to the fourth year at post-primary school. As a consequence “Matriculation” no longer held sway as the chief measure of post-primary school achievement. This freedom for post-primary schools brought with it a number of problems as Dr C.E. Beeby, newly appointed to the role of Director-General of Education, was later to note:

The new freedom they had gained, though less than some had hoped for, was greater than many schools were prepared to use. Now the majority of pupils were to be free in large measure from the demands of the entrance examination, teachers and pupils alike were in danger of losing all sense of direction unless there could be substituted for it another goal relevant to their purpose.⁴³⁰

⁴²⁹ See William Anderson, "The flight from reason in New Zealand education," (Auckland, 1944); Keith Sinclair, *A history of the University of Auckland, 1883-1983* (Auckland, 1983).

⁴³⁰ *Report of the Minister for Education, 1957, 2-3.*

At the same time the government and the inspectorate had to take account of the long-held public expectation that changes in educational policy would not disadvantage the needs of the academic minority of pupils. The new Form Six University Entrance examination was intended to meet the needs of these pupils. In addition the new School Certificate would include academic subjects which could be sat by the minority in their Fifth Form year. The new or revised School Certificate was expected to mark out “a complete secondary education” for those pupils who did not intend to go on to a University. Mason, the Minister of Education (1940-1947) predicted that “the choice of subjects, both academic and practical, will be so wide that every pupil should be able to take a course for which his own powers and limitations best fit him”.⁴³¹

The Thomas Committee as liberal secular educators

Alcorn suggests that while it was relatively easy to criticise the traditional academic curriculum as elitist and unable to address the fundamental problems of living in a modern, scientific world or those of a newly emerging Pacific nation, it was less easy for the Labour Government to design something more comprehensive, relevant and egalitarian that was acceptable to the public and teaching professionals.⁴³² In November 1942, the complex problem of how to reorganise the curriculum of the post-primary schools was referred to a consultative committee under the chairmanship of William Thomas, a former Rector of Timaru Boys' High School. In advising the Minister to appoint

⁴³¹ See AJHR, (1944), (1942-1942) cited in Openshaw, Lee, and Lee, *Challenging the myths*. 168.

⁴³² Alcorn, *To the fullest extent of his powers*.

William Thomas ahead of Frank Milner, who had been an articulate advocate of curriculum reform, Beeby was opting for a committee man rather than one of “individual brilliance, eloquence and forcefulness who might sweep all before him”.⁴³³ However, considering the strength of the opposition to the educational reforms, there were likely to be additional reasons for selecting Thomas over Milner. The former showed “more capacity to listen to others”, in Beeby’s opinion, while “stand[ing] up for his own ideas on matters of principle”.⁴³⁴ While Beeby never commented on the reasons for Milner’s exclusion from the committee itself, some commentators suggest that it was because he was seen as “vain, overbearing and dictatorial” and with tendency to a “rightist allegiance” that led to his exclusion from a Labour government committee.⁴³⁵ Whatever the case, the committee, recruited under Beeby’s direction, aimed to be representative of a broad spectrum of parties interested in post-primary education. There were, however, key omissions; there being no primary, intermediate, or Maori members. Crucially, as Beeby recalled later, the committee also failed to include a representative of the Catholic schools:

I wanted to keep the Committee as small as possible and yet numerically reflect the sizes of the various groups of institutions. I recommended one representative of the private schools, the principal of a leading Presbyterian girls’ college, and I stupidly omitted to propose someone from the Catholic

⁴³³ Ibid. 126.

⁴³⁴ Beeby, 1981, quoted in Lee and Lee, "Making Milner matter", 26.

⁴³⁵ I. Milner, *Milner of Waitaki: Portrait of the man* (Dunedin, 1983); A.R. Tyrrell, *Strong to endure: Waitaki Boys' High School, 1883-1983* (Dunedin, 1983). cited in Lee and Lee, "Making Milner matter", 26.

schools. (Peter Fraser would never have let that one slip by him.)⁴³⁶

This omission caused resentment on the part of the Catholic hierarchy. Already suspicious of the implications of the proposed reforms, their exclusion from the process of consultation was seen by the Bishops as cutting across the carefully constructed Labour-Catholic accord (see chapter six). As a consequence Catholic educators were ready to challenge the report and its recommendations as the next chapter will illustrate.

Nevertheless, Beeby prepared a long and careful memorandum for the first meeting of the committee which set the task in the context of Government policy:

The Department is anxious to maintain high academic standards for the scholarly but even this end must not be allowed to interfere with schools' main function of giving a full and realistic education to fit the bulk of the population, culturally and economically, for the world of today. The Department would, however, welcome the Committee's advice on the best methods of combining these two functions in the one institution.⁴³⁷

The Thomas Committee met on a number of occasions during 1943 as it examined written and oral evidence. Subcommittees were set up to consider more detailed syllabus prescriptions. There was considerable interest in the process with requests for information on the proposed syllabus by the Technical

⁴³⁶ C.E. Beeby, *The biography of an idea: Beeby on education* (Wellington, 1992). 171.

⁴³⁷ Beeby, Memorandum for the Consultative Committee on the Post Primary Curriculum, presented to the Thomas Committee at its opening session, November 1942, cited in Alcorn, *To the fullest extent of his powers*. 126.

School Teachers' Association which planned a Social Studies conference for August 1943. These were denied on the grounds that the conclusion had still to be finalised. On 27 October copies were circulated to members of the Inspectorate, representatives of the teachers' associations, and the Association of Heads of Registered Secondary Schools. The response was generally favourable. Secondary inspectors were supportive although they raised practical implications: the need for texts, for refresher courses, and for specialist teachers in new subjects. For some the changes did not go far enough. The Technical School Teachers' Association criticised the generality of the overall aims. They recommended the addition of economics, extending homecraft to boys, and the inclusion of human relationships.⁴³⁸

The report was presented to the Minister in November, published by the Government Printer, and made available to the public from February onwards. Alcorn suggests that its underlying assumption was the need for a careful compromise between the rights of the State and those of schools:⁴³⁹

Our general view is that the State as trustee for the community has the duty to insist on certain minimum requirements and to encourage progressive developments, but that it exceeds its functions if it tries to impose a cut-and-dried philosophy on the schools or to control curriculum in any detail ... Hence much of what we say consist of suggestions to teachers... Likewise when we touch on philosophical issues, we deliberately employ broad and general terms.⁴⁴⁰

⁴³⁸ Ibid.

⁴³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁰ "The post-primary school curriculum: Report of the committee appointed by the Minister of Education in November, 1942," (Wellington, 1959), 1.

The report declared support for a common core curriculum and the idea that post-primary schools should cater for the non-academically minded as well as providing for “the special interests of the few”. The common core was outlined as follows:

That up to the School Certificate stage the curricula of all full-time pupils in post-primary schools include a core of studies and activities comprising English Language and Literature; Social Studies (preferably an integrated course of History and Civics, Geography, and some descriptive economics); General Science; Elementary Mathematics; Music; a Craft or one of the Fine Arts; and Physical Education. For girls Home Crafts are regarded as satisfying the requirement of “a craft”.⁴⁴¹

In contrast to the selective, separatist forms of post-primary schooling adopted in England and Wales after 1944, the Thomas Committee proposed a post-primary school system where students would study a common core curriculum including art, music and physical education for their first two or three years. A School Certificate, awarded on the basis of a Department controlled external examination, was expected to be attempted at the end of four years. For this examination only English would be compulsory and students would select three or four other subjects from a wide range of subjects including practical ones.

The initial Catholic response to the proposed reforms, as will be seen in the following chapter, was muted. It is significant that Catholics accepted the State’s right (through the Department of Education) to “giv[e] attention to the physical environment of teaching – the state of the school buildings, the size of classes, the classroom equipment, and ... the conditions of work of the teachers”.

⁴⁴¹ Ibid., 12.

However Catholic educators would eventually contest what they considered to be “the revolutionary character” of the proposed reforms, the threat they posed to Catholic educational autonomy and, by implication, Beeby’s role in bringing them about.⁴⁴² Catholic objections to the Thomas Report were to acquire the momentum of an “education crisis”. As Sister Dorothea Loughnan RSCJ described it:

In this education crisis of 1944, when the future of generations of New Zealanders is at stake, we as Catholic New Zealanders must keep a look-out on those in power and on what they are proposing to do. If we sit back and let them do our thinking for us, we shall have only ourselves to blame if we find our children growing up into men and women whose horizons are bounded by the map of New Zealand. If they are subjected to an education that prepares them to settle down submissively in a State managed like a bee-hive or a stud-farm, believing all they are told, content to be herded about so long as there is plenty of food and amusement, we shall find to our cost and bitter regret that it is too late to protest. The protest must be made now.⁴⁴³

And, as the following chapter will consider in detail, protest they did.

Conclusion

By examining events leading up to the reform of post-primary education in New Zealand this chapter has examined the process of educational policy-making and the implications of debates around the conception of education and its role in society for the Catholic educational mission. Catholic commentators were part of a wider group of educators who publicly objected to the “secular” values implicit in the curriculum reforms. They resisted the imposition by state educational

⁴⁴² “Questions in Education” *Zealandia*, 12 October 1944, 4.

⁴⁴³ Loughnan, “A criticism of the report on post-primary education,” 4.

authorities of the “progressive” values of “new education”, and state moves that would pose a threat to the authority of parents, teachers and the Church and the integrity of the Catholic educational mission. Yet oral evidence suggests that behind the united front of official public statements highlighting the dangers of state control, the threat of secular values and the loss of a “classical” academic curriculum, individual members of the Catholic education community held diverse views on the nature and purpose of education and the role of educational reform. It is an issue that will be taken up further in chapter eight.

The second section of the chapter examined the role of the Thomas Committee as liberal secular educators showing how Beeby’s omission of Catholics from the committee caused resentment on the part of the Catholic hierarchy and increased the likelihood of a Catholic challenge to the Report and its recommendations. It outlined key recommendations of the Committee which declared support for a common core curriculum catering for the needs of all adolescents as well as catering for the academically minded. Catholic responses, though initially muted, took the form of objections to “the revolutionary character” of the proposed reforms and the perceived incursion of secular values into Catholic schools. Catholic reaction to the Thomas Report was soon to gather momentum and, as the next chapter will detail, during the early months of 1945, it reached the status of an “education crisis”.



Photo 8.1: The Wellington director of Catholic education, Dr Noel Gascoigne, took a leading role in the consultation process between the Catholic hierarchy and the Education Department. Father Noel Gascoigne, n.d. *Auckland Catholic Diocesan Archives*



Photo 8.2: Dr C.E. Beeby c1930s. Good relations between Dr Beeby and Dr Gascoigne facilitated negotiations between the Department of Education and the Catholic bishops over the Thomas Report.



Photo 8.3: Bishop Patrick Lyons. Bishop of Christchurch from 1944 to 1950, acted as advisor to Gascoigne in his dealings with the Department of Education. He viewed the policy of "secular" education with considerable suspicion. *Christchurch Catholic Diocesan Archives*



Photo 8.4: Dr F. H. K. Terry, the Director of Catholic Education in the Auckland Diocese, complained about the "tendencies and trends of present-day educational naturalism" in the Thomas Report. *Auckland Catholic Diocesan Archives*



Photo 8.4: Brother Borgia (Marist Brother and Headmaster of Sacred Heart College) thought that the Thomas Report "savoured too much of theorists and enthusiasts". *Archives of the Marist Brothers*



Photo 8.5: Bishop James Liston the Bishop of Auckland described the Thomas reforms as a threat to "the schools in the Dominion". *Auckland Catholic Diocesan Archives*



Photo 8.7: While Sister Dorothea Loughnan rscj identified a number of good points in the Report, she challenged the lack of a "true core" centred on religious values, the implication that citizenship in a democracy could be taught by running a school along democratic lines, and the tendency to deprecate the "principle of authority". Photo taken c.1960s. *Archives of the Religious of the Sacred Heart*

Chapter Eight

A crucible for change: Catholic reactions to the Thomas Report

We do not wish our schools to stand isolated.⁴⁴⁴

Introduction

As a consequence of the intense debates that followed the release of the Thomas Report, Catholic educators found themselves making a detailed consideration of the impact of the educational reforms on their secondary schools and how they might best respond in order to protect the integrity of the Catholic educational mission. In the previous chapter I demonstrated how Catholic opposition to the reform of post-primary education reflected a long-held antipathy to any suggestions of state surveillance and control over Catholic schooling, a resistance to the incursion of secular values and fears for the loss of an “academic” curriculum. In the following chapter I will utilise a variety of documentary sources to consider Catholic reactions to the release of the Thomas Report, an event which prompted an extended period of consultation within the Catholic education community followed by a complex series of negotiations between the Catholic hierarchy and state educational authorities. It was a situation marked on the one hand by a Labour Government eager to maintain good relations with its

⁴⁴⁴ “Precis of meeting with Prime Minister”, 6 September, 1944, 2. Education Box 3, CCDA.

defend the autonomy of Catholic schools while at the same time wanting to protect the educational standards of its schools. The Catholic response to the Thomas Report was led by the hierarchy, senior representatives of teaching religious orders, and involved a process of consultation with Catholic teachers in all four dioceses. Catholic objections centred on opposition to the values of “new education”, fears about the impact of state control and over the lowering of academic standards. In the following sections I will examine the process of consultation within the Catholic community, the negotiations between the Catholic hierarchy and state educational authorities and the nature of the compromise that was reached by the end of 1945.⁴⁴⁵

Catholic reaction to the Thomas Report

The Catholic consultation process

Commentators have described the Catholic education authorities as “the most vociferous critics”⁴⁴⁶ of the 1944 Thomas Report and its new “common core” curriculum for post-primary schools. Yet to dismiss the Catholic response as “a reactionary stance”⁴⁴⁷ fails to address the complexity of the Catholic position and the nature of the relationship between key figures in the Department of Education and the Catholic hierarchy. It also fails to acknowledge a significant factor which I wish to address in this chapter: that the Catholic response was not a fixed one.

As the documentary evidence will show, it evolved as a result of extensive

⁴⁴⁵ Key issues examined in this chapter are discussed in Collins, "Ideology and accommodation."

⁴⁴⁶ Lee and Lee, "Making Milner matter".

⁴⁴⁷ O'Reilly, "Roman Catholic reactions to the Thomas Committee Report."

discussions within the Catholic educational community and in the light of negotiations with the State. Presented alongside the oral evidence of Catholic teachers in chapter nine it will demonstrate the diversity of Catholic attitudes to the proposed reforms and their significance for the Catholic educational mission. The problem is that whilst many commentators mention Catholic opposition to the Thomas Report, they tend to over-generalise it as merely “conservative”. More significantly, earlier commentators also miss the opportunity to look at the way educational politics actually worked in this crucial instance. In the following I will demonstrate how a well organised but otherwise diverse minority group, faced with a major new state initiative in post-primary education is able – after wide-ranging internal consultations among Catholic education groups, followed by confrontations with state educational authorities and and protracted discussions which reflected a willingness to compromise on both sides – to successfully negotiate an acceptable solution. Had this solution not been achieved, then the alternative may have been a separate curriculum for Catholic post-primary schools. The negotiations between state and Catholic educational authorities involved a power struggle over religious and pedagogical values and the extent of the autonomy of Catholic schools. The period after the release of the Thomas Report became the crucible in which Catholic educators began to re-shape the educational mission of their schools.

The Catholic reaction to the Thomas Report was the result of a lengthy process of consultation among Catholic teachers and public representations of the views of different interest groups to the wider Catholic community. The views of a wide range of Catholic teachers were included in diocesan submissions to the bishops and public statements of teachers’ concerns were expressed by clerics

and by prominent educators from teaching orders such as the Society of Mary, the Religious of the Sacred Heart and the Marist Brothers. These included individuals seen to have a high profile in the provision of “quality” academic post-primary education in New Zealand. The Wellington director of Catholic education, Father Noel Gascoigne took a leading role in the consultation process within the Catholic education community and presented the views of Catholic teachers to the hierarchy.

Fears of state interference and threats to Catholic values were expressed in the Catholic media and the newspapers by Catholic bishops, individual clergy and a variety of international commentators.⁴⁴⁸ Bishops also consulted senior representatives of the teaching orders including Brother Borgia of the Marist Brothers, Fathers J.W. Dowling and Cyril Callaghan of the Society of Mary, Sister Dorothea Loughnan of the Religious of the Sacred Heart and prominent lay Catholics such as J.C. Reid. Catholic responses to the Thomas Report, first formulated in November 1944 by the bishops in consultation with teaching religious orders gathered momentum as public concerns were aired in the Catholic media and in the national newspapers in the early months of 1944.

Yet, as I indicated in chapter seven, Catholics were not alone in expressing public disquiet over the implications of the Thomas Report. The Association of Heads of the Registered Secondary Schools of New Zealand expressed cautious approval of the curriculum’s aim to meet the needs of the “average pupil”, while raising questions about the suitability of History, Social Studies and General Science for the “limited capabilities” of some pupils. They

⁴⁴⁸ See for example “America disowns her child” *Zealandia*, 21 September 1944, 5.

Studies and General Science for the “limited capabilities” of some pupils. They noted that the Report had failed to take into account “the inter-relation between Primary and Post-Primary curricula” and that it lacked emphasis on “Christian principles and truths”.⁴⁴⁹ Some commentators thought that the Committee had assigned too much importance to craft subjects, fearing that foreign languages, as well as other academic subjects would soon become marginalised. The main objection to the compulsory core curriculum was that it would result in a “levelling down” effect for academic students.⁴⁵⁰ The views of William Anderson, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Auckland, were given a high profile in Catholic newspapers. He denounced the educational philosophy and practice underlying the Thomas Committee recommendations in a presentation to Auckland Catholic teachers called, *The Flight from Reason in New Zealand Education*, which was later published in pamphlet form by the Catholic Teachers’ Association. He prophesied that only parents wealthy enough to send their children to Australia or England would be able to gain “what has hitherto been the right of all, a grammar-school education”.⁴⁵¹ This response represented the views of Catholic educators who wished to protect “educational standards” and the rights of “academic” working-class pupils to

⁴⁴⁹ "The post-primary curriculum: Letter and memorandum to the Minister of Education," (Wellington, 1944).

⁴⁵⁰ Lee and Lee, "Making Milner matter".

⁴⁵¹ Anderson, "The flight from reason in New Zealand education." See also *NZ Tablet* 9 August 1944, 10.

Nevertheless, the initial Catholic response to the Thomas Committee report was marked by caution. At a meeting of Catholic Teachers at the Sacred Heart Convent in Remuera, Brother Borgia (Marist Brother and Headmaster of Sacred Heart College – see photo 8.5) thought that “it savoured too much of theorists and enthusiasts”. Bishop Liston (photo 8.6) saw some potential advantages in the “new freedom” offered to schools while Dr F. H. K. Terry (photo 8.4), the Director of Catholic Education in the Auckland Diocese, complained about the “tendencies and trends of present-day educational naturalism”.⁴⁵² The meeting recognised advantages in the raised leaving age, as well as freedoms offered by “choice and treatments of topics in English and Social Studies”.⁴⁵³ It identified potential difficulties in staffing and resourcing an expanded secondary system and suggested “a central Training School” for Catholic teachers to meet an anticipated demand for more qualified Catholic secondary teachers, a topic that will be considered further in chapter eleven.⁴⁵⁴

⁴⁵² Naturalism was a reaction to “rationalism”, which upheld the use of reason as the highest form of intellectual activity. Naturalistic education, as developed by Rousseau, incorporated three objectives: 1) education according to nature; 2) the preservation of the goodness of humanity; and 3) society based on the natural, individual rights of humans. These ideas directly conflicted with Catholic views of the “fallen” nature of humanity. See Redden and Ryan, *A Catholic philosophy of education*. 109.

⁴⁵³ Precis of Proceedings at a Meeting of Catholic Secondary School Teachers at Sacred Heart Convent, Remuera, Auckland, November, 1943. Education Box 3, Christchurch Catholic Diocesan Archives - hereafter CCDA.

⁴⁵⁴ Ibid.

Threats to Catholic values

By early 1944 however, commentators in the Catholic press began to identify a conflict of values between the proposed reforms and Catholic principles.

Catholic educators were asked to examine

not only how far (the reforms) will help in producing an educated democracy but how effective they are likely to be in preparing the younger generation for the grave responsibilities of the future, to carry on the sound traditions of the past, and to face with courage, intelligence and determination the developments to come.⁴⁵⁵

Serious ideological differences between the state-sponsored reform process and the Catholic worldview were articulated in a series of pamphlets published by the Auckland Catholic Teachers' Association. In one, J.C.Reid lamented the Thomas Committee's adoption of what he saw as "Russian reforms" just at the point where the Russians were abandoning them.⁴⁵⁶ In a second commentary Sister Dorothea Loughnan of the Religious of the Sacred Heart (see photo 8.7) suggested that "if the new scheme becomes compulsory, it will be the only gate to public positions" and that "no Catholic can afford to let the Report go unchallenged".⁴⁵⁷ While she identified a number of good points in the Report — "freedom for schools, though a limited freedom" the stressing of "aesthetic education" and opportunities to widen the field of History — she challenged the Report on three key points. First, she lamented the lack of a "true core" centred on religious values. Second, she challenged the implication that citizenship in a

⁴⁵⁵ *NZ Tablet*, 26 January 1944, 7.

⁴⁵⁶ J.C. Reid, "Educational change in Soviet Russia," (Auckland, 1944).

⁴⁵⁷ Loughnan, "A criticism of the report on post-primary education."

democracy could be taught by running a school along democratic lines, that is, by allowing the pupils who have “no experience”, a measure of self-government – a “voice in the framing of the rules”. The “tendency to deprecate the principle of authority and the need for self-control” formed the basis of her third objection for “without authority society would dissolve into anarchy”.⁴⁵⁸

What we Catholics want is not only a well-informed, cultured mind, good taste, clever fingers, sharpened brains, but moral goodness, a sense of duty, a strong straight reliable will that will turn to good ends the aptitudes acquired at school... It is the absence of religion, the complete ignoring of God and His rights that vitiates the whole syllabus.⁴⁵⁹

Loughnan expressed the long-held Catholic position that the influence of a “secular” state-controlled curriculum would directly threaten the values implicit in the Catholic education system. She underlined the importance of “religion” and highlighted the key mission of Catholic schools to train pupils for “moral goodness”, and “a sense of duty”: principles that implied a subtle blend of distinctive Catholic religious values and moral citizenship. In this view of the duties and responsibilities of “moral citizenship” Catholics were not alone, evidence of this concern being expressed, as I have already detailed, by the Association of Heads of the Registered Secondary Schools of New Zealand.⁴⁶⁰

⁴⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid., 12.

⁴⁶⁰ Catholic agreement is also apparent on issues such as the “ultimate ends” of education. See “Letter and Memorandum,” 3.

Defining educational values

Further criticisms of the Report were based on the effect of the reforms on “academic standards”. Here, as we have seen, Catholics were supported by a range of commentators. In an article published in the *Zealandia* in 1944, Rev. C.J. Callaghan S.M. from St Patrick’s College, Wellington, argued that the new English syllabus failed to put “first things first” and that it “rejected without good grounds the traditional methods of training”:

The literatures of old Europe were well named the Humanities: from them men caught the power to observe, to reflect, to feel deeply and nobly... It is the privilege and duty of the English teacher gradually to introduce his pupils to the best, according to their capacity.⁴⁶¹

These views represent the concerns of those who wished to protect the academic standards of schools like St Patrick’s, Wellington, which as I detailed in chapter four was established to provide “the advantages of the great public schools of Europe” and to promote Catholic leadership.⁴⁶² Here Catholic educators were concerned to protect a central tenet of Catholic educational philosophy – that a post-primary education should foster the intellectual, cultural and spiritual development of pupils for their role as future Catholic leaders. Such development, epitomised in curricula such as the *Ratio Studiorum* (see chapter four), was seen to be crucial to the passing on of Catholic understandings about the person, society and God. However another commentator saw that the new freedoms offered an opportunity to meet the needs of the increasing numbers of

⁴⁶¹ *Zealandia*, 21 September 1944, 5, ACDA.

⁴⁶² King, *God's farthest outpost*. 102.

pupils “not academically minded” and to devise a Catholic course of Social

Studies:

If the schools are left really free to devise their own courses in Social Studies, a really valuable course could be drawn up by Catholic teachers... The needs of pupils not academically minded not have been properly catered for. They have been too much neglected in the past. On the other hand it is desirable that even the academic be obliged to acquire some proficiency in crafts and or music.⁴⁶³

At an April 1944 meeting of Catholic post-primary teachers in Christchurch, Mother Domitille of the Sisters of Our Lady of the Mission saw opportunities to include the Catholic viewpoint in the teaching of history:

Mother Domitille said there was nothing to prevent our devoting an hour of the history units to Bible history. Moreover, we could teach the history of the great Catholic countries instead of confining our work to the British Commonwealth.⁴⁶⁴

However Father O’Brien of the Society of Mary “doubted the wisdom of teaching a culture that was really foreign to us... we should not substitute “all sorts of smatterings” for history”.⁴⁶⁵ Concerns expressed at the meeting included the “vagueness” of General Science, the problems of “equipment and qualified teachers” and the need to safeguard pupils from the “evils and dangers” arising in

⁴⁶³ “D.J.C. Notes on the Post-Primary Curriculum”, 4 July 1944. Education Box 3, CCDA.

⁴⁶⁴ “Précis of proceedings at a meeting of Catholic Post-Primary Teachers held to consider the Report of the Consultative Committee on the Post-Primary School Curriculum, held at the Mission Covent, Ferry Road, Christchurch on Tuesday, April 25 1944”, 2. Education Box 3, CCDA.

⁴⁶⁵ Ibid.

the teaching of sex education. However the meeting did agree with the general aims as expressed in chapter two of the Report:

We agreed with such objectives as the following: "the full development of the adolescent as a person" "strength and stability of character are fundamental" "to create people who are self-disciplined and free in spirit" and "who are responsible and generous in social life."⁴⁶⁶

The responses of Catholic teachers represent some of the diversity of views among Catholic educators over the relevance of the reforms for the Catholic educational mission. They also express key tensions within the different interest groups in the Catholic educational community. While Father Callaghan argues in support of the high academic standards and a continuation of the liberal arts curriculum that will cater for the selected few, the second (unidentified) commentator is supporting a curriculum that will more appropriately meet the needs of the non-academic pupil. Others, including Sister Domitille, can see ways in which the freedoms offered by the reforms can be used to express Catholic values in particular curriculum areas such as History. Concerns expressed about the shortage of qualified teachers and the lack of equipment for the teaching of the new General Science Curriculum highlight the pressures being felt by an expanding Catholic post-primary system. The specific Catholic responses to the proposed reforms are important because they illustrate Catholic concerns about the reforms, concerns that were shared by other sections of the education community. Nevertheless, what is more significant is the unique way Catholic educational politics worked in the context of the national debate over

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid., 2.

the values of the Thomas Report. During 1944 what was initially a diverse group was able, through a process of internal consultation among its own educators — a process which was led by prominent members of the teaching orders and the Catholic hierarchy and fuelled by a public media campaign — to come together to formulate many of their criticisms into specific objections and a challenge to state educational policymaking. These objections centred on English, Social Studies, arithmetic, botany and physical education and the values of “new education”. At the heart of these expressed criticisms of the proposed syllabus was the fear that a state-imposed philosophy of education would supplant “Catholic truth” as the “only core” of the curriculum.⁴⁶⁷ At the same time Catholic teachers found themselves coming face to face with the issues arising out of their rapidly-expanding post-primary system. How could they ensure the success of the Catholic educational mission, the transmission of faith and cultural practices and the social, economic and educational advancement of the increasing number of pupils for whom the selective academic curriculum was no longer appropriate”? As Loughnan put it:

If Catholic Schools are going to fall in with the requirements of the Report, as they must do to some extent if they are to compete in external examinations, will there be any real difference between Catholic and State schools given (the freedom given to State Schools) the daily period for religious knowledge?⁴⁶⁸

⁴⁶⁷ O'Reilly, "Roman Catholic reactions to the Thomas Committee Report."

⁴⁶⁸ Loughnan, "A criticism of the report on post-primary education," 17.

Threats to Catholic autonomy and religious values

As I mentioned in the introductory chapter, the Department of Education's publication of prescribed texts was seen as a particular threat to Catholic autonomy, "a long step towards tyranny".⁴⁶⁹ Catholic commentators were concerned too at the loss of religious values. In the Catholic view, textbooks for subjects like Botany, Physiology, Geography and History needed to reflect the presence of God in the world.⁴⁷⁰ A Social Studies textbook called *Man and his World* by Professor Mainwaring became the focus of considerable alarm as is evidenced in the following extract from an address by Archbishop Liston (see the full text in illustration 1.2):

There is no mention of God in the creation of the world: somehow it just happened. No mention of the supreme book in the history of man, the Bible... If parents allow the Education Department to impose this book on teachers and pupils our country will pay the penalty.⁴⁷¹

There was a measure of public support for Catholic concerns with Departmental control of textbooks expressed in newspapers such as *The Auckland Star*:

It would be interesting to know why the preface to the catalogue of text-books (in the Education Gazette) stated that "except under the approval of the Director", books not on the list were not to be as class books... it was a simple transition, in the course of time to "These books and no others" shall be used.⁴⁷²

⁴⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁰ O'Reilly, "Roman Catholic reactions to the Thomas Committee Report."

⁴⁷¹ *Zealandia*, 3 August 1944, 5.

⁴⁷² *The Auckland Star*, 2 August 1944, 6

Paradoxically, by taking issue with the Thomas Committee recommendations, Catholic education authorities found themselves not only challenging state surveillance and control, the incursion of secular values and the threatened loss of “academic” standards in Catholic schools, but they also found themselves making a detailed assessment of the Catholic educational mission in New Zealand. In a series of meetings and conferences held in the four dioceses from late 1944 until mid-1945, Catholic secondary school teachers analysed the Thomas Report, examining its implications for Catholic secondary schools. For the first time since the 1877 Education Act had made elementary education free compulsory and secular, Catholics faced issues of how they might in the post-war years organise and maintain a system of secondary schools that catered for the needs of pupils with a wide range of abilities yet was distinctively and qualitatively different from the state system. Father Noel Gascoigne, the director of Catholic education in the Wellington diocese (see photo 8.1) saw in the publication of the Report some opportunities to promote the scholarship of Catholic schools, “by making full use of the liberty given us, maintain the high standards of the past, and... like the Monasteries of old, to save true scholarship for our country”.⁴⁷³ He felt that the time was right for Catholic education to consider its own system along the lines of the American and Scottish models:

The present Director of Education is an experimentalist, and, although our ideal in Education is quite different from his, he would not, in the opinion of the lecturers, oppose our setting up our own system. The standard of

⁴⁷³ “Auckland Catholic Secondary Teachers’ Conference”, 10 May 1944. Education Box 3, CCDA.

education in the State schools is being lowered, and we can capitalise on this.⁴⁷⁴

By mid-1944, the Catholic hierarchy had narrowed the focus of its criticisms to two aspects of the Report: the values of “new education” and the lowering of academic standards. First they argued that the “new education” values implied in the Report would signal an increase in secular values in post-primary education and a consequent move away from traditional beliefs and disciplines fundamental to Catholic schools. Second, they pointed out that the new curriculum would result in a lowering of academic standards and prevent academically able Catholic pupils from benefiting from a traditional “liberal” education based on the humanities: an education seen as essential to the development of future intellectual and religious leaders in the Catholic community. Catholic educators also expressed the view that the curriculum reforms might threaten the access by Catholic pupils to higher education and social mobility, access which had been guaranteed via the public examination system.⁴⁷⁵ A memo from Gascoigne to the principals of the secondary schools of the Archdiocese of Wellington reported on the consultation process with Catholic teachers and summed up the bishops’ concerns:

The Hierarchy, bearing in mind the views expressed in Diocesan conferences held throughout the year, are deeply concerned with the trends expressed in the Post-Primary Report... (they) desire our schools to be

⁴⁷⁴ Ibid., 2.

⁴⁷⁵ Concerns also highlighted by contemporary Catholic educators in Western Australia. See K Tully, “State secondary education in Western Australia 1912-1972,” *Education Research and Perspectives* 29 (2002).

shielded from the outlook of the New Education... viz, the giving of such liberty to the pupil that he may be able to pursue whatever he feels an urge or impulse to do, the safeguarding of him from the discipline of hard work, the relegation of the classics to a place of inferior importance, and the rendering impossible of a truly academic education. They desire to safeguard the standards of scholarship of the past, if not to excel them, and they strive also to preserve the children of our schools from the insidious influence of text-books which flout Christian standards of thought and conduct.⁴⁷⁶

The decision was made to begin work on a “syllabus for our corresponding common core”⁴⁷⁷ including a suggested list of text-books for English, Social Studies, Mathematics, Science and Physical Education. Music and Craft were to be omitted from the Catholic common core although teachers were asked to give their views upon what a “voluntary” syllabus might contain. Teachers of Latin and French were also asked to prepare a syllabus, recommend textbooks and to indicate the amount of time that should be given per week to “these important subjects”⁴⁷⁸. The study of languages and Latin, in particular, reflected Catholic concerns with an area of learning that was deemed to be a necessary preparation for religious studies for clergy and religious life. Teachers were asked to map out a science course “suitable for our boys’ schools and another suitable for girls’

⁴⁷⁶ Music and Craft were seen to be less “vital” than other core subjects. It was argued that they could be inserted into the curriculum on a “voluntary” basis e.g. Music could form part of Catholic liturgical preparation. Gascoigne to Wellington Principals, 3 August, 1944, 1. Education Box 3, CCDA.

⁴⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁸ Ibid., 2.

schools” and to consider “the differentiation of boys’ education from that of girls” in mathematics. Because “the State seems adamant about Biology” teachers were asked to consider how it might be framed within a Science course.

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Developing a separate curriculum

The justification for a separate Catholic curriculum was based on the Catholic objection to the Thomas curriculum’s “compulsory core”, its allocation of times to particular subjects and its control of the content of courses through prescribed text-books and reading lists. Gascoigne pointed out that in the past teachers had the “guidance of the examination prescriptions”, but were largely left free to plan their courses as they saw fit. Now the fear was that this new control would allow the State to introduce “secular” ideas which were unacceptable in Catholic schools such as evolution in the sciences, “naturalism” in Biology and social sciences, “sex instruction” and a History syllabus that was not taught from a “Catholic viewpoint”. He argued for the Church’s right to “teach and plan her curriculum without detailed direction and supervision by the State”, a right he believed had been infringed by the introduction of the proposed new curriculum in post-primary education.⁴⁸⁰ Nevertheless the argument which the bishops eventually adopted as central to their criticism of the Thomas Report showed less preoccupation with providing an alternative model of curriculum and more focus on ensuring the independence of the Catholic school system from State

⁴⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁰ These extracts come from a memo from Gascoigne to Liston, 10 July 1944, 1-2. Education Box 3, CCDA.

surveillance and control. They were concerned primarily to ensure “freedom” for their schools, a freedom which would make certain that their schools were not subject to social and intellectual influences inimical to Roman Catholicism.⁴⁸¹

Peter Fraser, concerned by the strength of Catholic opposition to the proposed curriculum reforms, invited Gascoigne to a meeting in early August 1944. The Prime Minister was at pains to tell Gascoigne that he had not had a chance to read the Thomas Report due to his “many duties as war-time Prime Minister”, and as a consequence had gotten “out of touch with educational trends in the country and would therefore welcome my outlining the Report and stating wherein lay the Catholic opposition”.⁴⁸² As a consequence a meeting was held in early September with Archbishop O’Shea, a number of Catholic bishops, the Prime Minister and Rex Mason, the Minister of Education, in attendance. At the request of the Catholic delegation, the Director of Education C.E. Beeby was not invited, an omission that was to cause some difficulties later. The Prime Minister, anxious to repair the damage of Catholic exclusion from the Thomas Committee, acknowledged that it had been “a blunder not to have invited a representative of our schools to be one of the Consultative Committee”, and agreed to the appointment of Dr Noel Gascoigne to act as a representative of the interests of the Catholic hierarchy in its dealings with the Department.⁴⁸³ In an atmosphere characterised by “a spirit of constructive friendliness” the Prime Minister offered the bishops a number of olive branches. He would facilitate the

⁴⁸¹ O'Reilly, "Roman Catholic reactions to the Thomas Committee Report."

⁴⁸² Gascoigne to Lyons, 20 August 1944, 1. Education Box 3, CCDA.

⁴⁸³ “Precis of meeting with Prime Minister 6 September, 1944”, 1. Education Box 3, CCDA.

registration of small Catholic secondary schools, he expressed his “full agreement” with the Catholic viewpoint on the matter of sex instruction “ – [he] would not tolerate instruction to a class by a teacher” – and he reassured the bishops that “schools such as [theirs] had a valuable part in the educational life of the country, and should be encouraged to keep their own traditions etc. and go their own way”.⁴⁸⁴ The Bishops in their turn reassured the Prime Minister that they wished to act in close cooperation with the Department:

We did not wish our schools to stand isolated - that we were anxious to co-operate fully with the Department and fit in the general framework... in a special way they insisted on having full recognition for their Syllabus - it would be submitted to the Department and be agreed upon and approved - on examinations and accrediting being on the basis of this approved Syllabus and the work done, and on Certificates carrying the same value as those of other schools.⁴⁸⁵

The subsequent discussions between the Catholic education authorities and the Department of Education brought about an association between two men who were to have an important influence on subsequent developments, Dr Noel Gascoigne, priest and Director of Catholic Schools in the Wellington Archdiocese and Dr C.E. Beeby, the Director of Education (see photo 8.2). The relationship between Drs Beeby and Gascoigne is an extremely important one that this chapter will consider in some detail. The two men, one a Catholic priest and the other seen by the Catholic authorities to be a “liberal secularist”, achieved a working relationship and considerable respect for the other’s

⁴⁸⁴ Ibid., 1-2.

⁴⁸⁵ Ibid., 2.

viewpoint. This understanding was reached despite the strongest reservations on the part of the bishops and initially Gascoigne himself, reservations (detailed in a previous chapter) which stemmed from the perception that Beeby was the personification of the Department with its “new education” and its philosophy of secularism.

Negotiating with the Department

The relationship between Gascoigne and Beeby

The progress of the negotiations between the Catholic hierarchy and the Department of Education is revealed in an exchange of reports and personal letters between Gascoigne and Bishop Patrick Lyons (see photo 8.3) who acted as advisor to Gascoigne in his dealings with the Department of Education. This correspondence throws light on the sensitivity with which the Catholic educational authorities approached any discussion with the State regarding their schools.⁴⁸⁶ Lyons, Bishop of Christchurch from 1944 to 1950, was deeply conservative on matters affecting doctrinal orthodoxy and church order. O’Reilly suggests that he viewed the policy of “secular” education with considerable suspicion. In this respect he represented a return to a nineteenth-century doctrinaire opposition to secular education typified by Bishop Patrick Moran — as discussed in chapter four.⁴⁸⁷ On the other hand Gascoigne represented a moderate conservative Catholic position. As the result of his contact with European developments in educational thought in the 1930s and his later experience in the United States as a Fulbright Scholar he brought a wider

⁴⁸⁶ O’Reilly, “Roman Catholic reactions to the Thomas Committee Report.”

⁴⁸⁷ Ibid.

experience of international trends in education to negotiations regarding Catholic schools.⁴⁸⁸ In contrast to Dr Terry, the Director of Diocesan Education for Auckland, who made public and provocative claims that the new education policy represented state-imposed “rank, poisonous heresy from the Catholic point of view... totalitarian regimentation and State control of every department of national life”,⁴⁸⁹ and the bishops’ public insistence on the autonomy of Catholic education, Gascoigne was able to work behind the scenes and to present a more conciliatory approach that promoted acceptance of the Catholic position and better relations with the Department of Education.

The 1944 Conference on Education

The government chose to confront criticisms of the Report by holding a national education conference in late October 1944. It was assumed that any doubt about the status of the Thomas Report would have been eliminated once Education Minister Rex Mason announced the government’s intention to translate the Committee’s recommendation into legislation in 1945.⁴⁹⁰ Nevertheless, both Mason and Beeby were aware of the need to manage the introduction of the

⁴⁸⁸ Gascoigne was ordained in Rome in 1935, attending Angelicum University and gaining a doctorate in theology in 1936 on the significance of Modern Developments in Psychology for Religious Instruction. He spent three years at Oxford where he gained a diploma in Education, returning to New Zealand to an appointment as Director of Education for the Wellington Archdiocese. He later visited the United States on a Fulbright Scholarship before returning to parish life in New Zealand.

⁴⁸⁹ *Auckland Star*, 14 July 1944, 2. Dr Terry was the Director of Catholic Education for the Auckland diocese.

⁴⁹⁰ Lee and Lee, "Making Milner matter".

Thomas recommendations skilfully in order not to alienate the post-primary sector. With this in mind Mason declared that post-primary teachers should “feel free to work out their own solutions”.⁴⁹¹

The Education Conference, held in Christchurch from 24 to 28 October 1944, drew one hundred and twelve delegates representing sixty-nine different educational organisations: “the consumer public”, as Mason described it. The agenda embraced five main topics: Pre-school Education, Youth services, Adult Education, Religion in Education, and Rural Education. A special “evening session” was reserved to hear criticism of the Post-Primary Schools Curriculum Report.⁴⁹² To Gascoigne’s disappointment he found that “the atmosphere was heavily charged against any criticism... those in favour of the Report were there in their force, and from the opening speech in its defence by the head of the Consultative Committee [William Thomas] to the end there was very effective quashing of any attempt to bring out its shortcomings”.⁴⁹³ Thus any support Catholic delegates may have expected for their call for “freedom” to work out their own curriculum solutions failed to materialise in a public forum as Gascoigne wryly noted in his report to the bishops: “Several spoke in private afterwards of the soundness of the Catholic criticism. It is a thousand pities that they had not the courage to back us up in the public arena”.⁴⁹⁴

⁴⁹¹ H.G.R. Mason, *Education today and tomorrow*, 2nd ed. (Wellington, 1945). 5.

⁴⁹² “The Education Conference: Far reaching recommendations made by representative gathering” *National Education*, 1 December 1944, 335, 361.

⁴⁹³ Gascoigne to Bishops, October 1944, 4. Education Box 3, CCDA.

⁴⁹⁴ Gascoigne to Bishops, Oct 1944, 4. Education Box 3, CCDA.

It is clear from the correspondence that Gascoigne expected support for the Catholic position at the Education Conference, "The private schools await our lead".⁴⁹⁵ In addition a number of principals of state and private secondary schools had outlined cautious support for particular Catholic objections in correspondence to another Catholic delegate, Father Cyril Callaghan SM, before the Conference began. What is not clear is why this did not translate into public support for the Catholic position. The outcome may have been influenced by the fact that it was Father Callaghan, rather than the more diplomatic Gascoigne, who addressed the special evening session on the post-primary curriculum on behalf of the Catholic bishops. Some of those who might otherwise have supported the Catholic position may have been alienated by his revisiting of complaints about Catholic exclusion from the Thomas Committee and by the vehemence of his language regarding the "disastrous implications" of the "rigid" common core.⁴⁹⁶ Gascoigne himself believed it was because earlier discussions of religion in schools had soured the Conference resulting in a "packed" session on the proposed reforms with an atmosphere "heavily charged" against any criticism.⁴⁹⁷

⁴⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁶ "The Education Conference: Far reaching recommendations made by representative gathering," *National Education* 1 December (1944): 362.

⁴⁹⁷ Ibid.. A number of individual principals had outlined their concerns in private correspondence to Father Cyril Callaghan before the Conference. These included C. J Richards, the Headmaster of Christ's College who suggested that "where schools wish to depart for certain forms from the unity laid down for the Common Core, they should have the right to submit to the Department for approval their proposed course" (R.J. Richards to C.J. Callaghan 27 September

Yet the Catholic hierarchy's criticism of state incursions into the jealously guarded autonomy of Catholic secondary education should not be seen as a rejection of the increasing influence of the State in the overall life of the country. Privately at least, the bishops supported the "welfare state" and Labour measures that would promote the welfare of working-class Catholics. Delegates to the conference were instructed to support the Government's proposal to establish kindergartens, nursery schools, youth services, vocational guidance centres and other subsidiary educational facilities. Nevertheless the bishops wanted to ensure a "proper measure of control" so that children were deprived neither of "maternal care" and "Christian training", nor subjected to "un-Christian influences".⁴⁹⁸ In other words, state assistance for the social advancement of Catholics was acceptable but state surveillance was not, particularly where it interfered with a bishop's right to supervise and control

1944). Hatt Insull, the Headmaster of Cathedral Grammar Christchurch, reported that inspectors had told him that he would be unable to teach Divinity to Higher Leaving Certificate candidates as part of the core while indicating that there was "no common agreement about what should be taught" (H.A.H. Insull to C.J. Callaghan, 26 September 1944). E.M. North, the Principal of Wellington Girls' College, prophesied that Social Studies would "lessen considerably what remains of the soundness of education in New Zealand", suggesting that "the chief hope for education is... that some one outside the system will arise, and demand that the wreckers be cast out" (E.M. North to Father Callaghan, 2 September 1944). ACC.201/2A 8 Letters, Thomas Report, Marist Archives Wellington - hereafter MAW.

⁴⁹⁸ "Instructions to delegates October, 1944", 1. Education Box 3, CCDA.

orthodox Catholic teaching⁴⁹⁹ and the integrity of the Catholic educational mission.

Despite his frustration at the “bitter atmosphere” of the Conference “the wave of anti-Catholicism again rampant” and the suggestions that “these Catholics will be out for their own syllabus”, Gascoigne acknowledged the Chair’s (a Professor Cocker) “scrupulous fairness to the Catholic delegates”, and was assured by Mason that “our contentions would be taken note of”.⁵⁰⁰ He utilised lessons from the “splendidly run” format to organise a National Conference of Catholic Teachers in January 1945 which met to discuss an alternative compulsory core curriculum for Catholic secondary schools.⁵⁰¹

Despite an extensive search I have failed to unearth any documentary evidence of the decisions taken by this conference. However one of the participants in this study remembers that in January 1945 when he was a young seminarian that he:

passed through Wellington – the movers and shakers were there. O’Shea had assembled them to decide what to do about the Thomas Report. He said “tell us what you want done”. Each was given a task to look at, Social Studies, P.E. Cyril Callaghan, (an old time Latin and Classics man) was against the changes to Latin and Classics. In the end they discovered there wasn’t all that much that they wanted to change. (SJ)⁵⁰²

At this point the correspondence reveals a small but significant shift in the anti-reform rhetoric and the beginnings of some accommodation with the proposed new curriculum. This is evident in suggestions that “schemes of study” that kept

⁴⁹⁹ O’Reilly, "Roman Catholic reactions to the Thomas Committee Report."

⁵⁰⁰ Gascoigne to Bishops, 13 May 1945, 4 -7. Education Box 3, CCDA.

⁵⁰¹ Ibid.

⁵⁰² Personal communication, 21 August 2003.

close to the Departmental drafting of The Education (Post-Primary Instruction) Regulation, 1945 may be more successful in achieving the desired ends than a proposal for a “new curriculum”.⁵⁰³

Achieving a compromise

Gascoigne met with Beeby (see photo 8.2) in early May 1945, sending him a summary of the proposals made by Catholic teachers’ conferences in “the four centres” and a separate “private” letter which “outlined the Catholic case for a separate syllabus”.⁵⁰⁴ At the beginning of their discussion, Gascoigne raised a number of issues: pre-school education, registration of small schools, bus transportation, boarding allowances, school building permits, the place and importance of physical education, housecraft and clothing, general science, Greek, chemistry, Social Studies and School Certificate History. The meeting was characterised by “the most friendly feeling”.⁵⁰⁵ In an extended cricket metaphor that set the tone for their relationship (Gascoigne had jocularly suggested that he “expected a good many wickets to fall and (he) trusted the bowling would be fair”), Beeby agreed to a number of key Catholic demands, noting:

You have scored what in your paper you claimed was the number one priority - the elimination of sex instruction and that for EVERY (emphasis in original) school in New Zealand. It is true you did not score your second priority - arithmetic as a separate option, but I have told you my policy, and you can see I have not entirely by-passed the Catholic thesis. You

⁵⁰³ Gascoigne to Lyons, 14 May 1945, 2. Education Box 3, CCDA.

⁵⁰⁴ Gascoigne to Bishops, 13 May 1945, 1. Education Box 3, CCDA.

⁵⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 4.

have gained your third priority, the further reduction in the common core, by the reduction of Physical Education to 1.5 units. You have scored re the extension of the time to notify me re Options. We have met you as regards Church Music: we have altered the three languages' syllabuses: we have introduced questions in English Literature: We have satisfied your science masters re Optional Maths.⁵⁰⁶

The Department of Education showed its willingness to accommodate Catholic values in the matter of sex instruction, to protect Catholic cultural values in the area of music and Latin, and to maintain academic standards and the values of a “liberal” education with regard to English Literature. In regard to the proposal for a separate scheme of study for Catholic schools, Beeby assured Gascoigne that he would “never tolerate any attempt to force a non-Catholic or anti-Catholic philosophy” on Catholic schools and that his sole criticism was that “we had aped the state system too much and not Catholicised our schools as we might”.⁵⁰⁷

It was obvious from this meeting that the Government wished to preserve good relations with its Catholic constituency and to reassure the hierarchy regarding its support for the independence of the Catholic education system. Thus it was prepared to compromise over a range of curriculum issues. As I have detailed earlier in this chapter, the September 1944 meeting between the Catholic bishops and Peter Fraser had paved the way for improved relations between the government and the Catholic hierarchy after their exclusion from the Thomas Committee. The effective working relationship between Beeby and Gascoigne produced changes to the new reforms that were acceptable to both parties. As

⁵⁰⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁷ Ibid., 5.

Josephine Bowler notes in her thesis, the final sentence of the 1958 Health Education Syllabus resulted directly from the Beeby-Gascoigne compromise: “There is no place in the primary school for group or class instruction in sex education”.⁵⁰⁸ Significantly however, the meetings between Gascoigne and Beeby revealed a fundamental shift in the position of the Catholic educational authorities in relation to the proposed curriculum reform. While the bishops had made it clear that their first aim was to “safeguard the pupils in their schools from any threat of their being influenced by the current philosophy of today”,⁵⁰⁹ they also wished to protect the general standard of education in Catholic schools. State examinations had historically provided “the chief means by which we have in the past demonstrated our equality (at least) with the state schools”.⁵¹⁰ Gascoigne’s statement to Beeby that Catholic pupils needed to “sit state exams” otherwise they “would be penalised in the employment market... seeing that we have to compete for state exams our syllabus must be very like the State one”⁵¹¹ was a clear acknowledgement that there were few options regarding an alternative curriculum and examination system that could be entertained. The problem was, as Sister Dorothea Loughnan had earlier predicted, that the Thomas curriculum and the new School Certificate were likely to be “the only

⁵⁰⁸ Primary School Syllabus on Health Education, 1958, 2, cited in Josephine Bowler, "The New Zealand controversy over the Johnson Report: The context of the report of the Committee on Health and Social Education, growing, sharing, learning" (PhD diss., Massey University, 2004). 99.

⁵⁰⁹ Gascoigne to Lyons, 7 July 1945, 2. Education Box 3, CCDA.

⁵¹⁰ Gascoigne to Liston, 10 July 1944, 3. Education Box 3, CCDA.

⁵¹¹ Gascoigne to Lyons, 13 May 1945, 5-6. Education Box 3, CCDA.

gate to public positions”⁵¹² for the increasing numbers of adolescents being admitted to Catholic secondary schools and the bishops wanted to do nothing that would prevent the educational and economic advancement of these pupils. It was increasingly apparent that their two aims were in conflict and as O’Reilly points out, the hierarchy was forced to modify the first in favour of the second.⁵¹³

Thus the restrictions on Catholic freedom came, not so much from state education authorities imposing a new curriculum on Catholic schools but from the expanded Catholic educational mission to utilise secondary schooling for the social and educational advancement of all Catholic pupils. As a consequence it became impossible for bishops to disregard the Thomas Report by adopting a different curriculum or by establishing separate examinations for their schools. Instead, as O’Reilly argues:

They were compelled to take issue with it and through negotiation seek either, as in the case of “sex instruction”, to have the curriculum changed, or in other matters, to ensure that the Department’s Regulations were phrased in such a way that they could give effect to exemptions obtained for their schools.⁵¹⁴

Ironically, by seeking to satisfy the different expectations of the Department of Education and the increased expectations of Catholic parents and of employers, the bishops eventually found that it was practically impossible to diverge widely from Departmental standards and they had to accept in practice a reduction of the theoretical freedoms for which they had advocated so vehemently. An added

⁵¹² Loughnan, "A criticism of the report on post-primary education."

⁵¹³ O'Reilly, "Roman Catholic reactions to the Thomas Committee Report."

⁵¹⁴ Ibid.: ,127.

complication resulted from the Catholic requests for practical exemptions from aspects of core and optional subjects. While the Thomas Report emphasised the freedom of the individual teacher from unnecessary restrictions, Gascoigne's request to Beeby for the "guarantee of a regulation giving us that liberty spoken of time and time again in the Report"⁵¹⁵ in effect asked the Department to *restrict* the freedom recommended by the Thomas Committee in order that Catholic schools should continue with their usual educational practice. Beeby noted the irony involved:

Can you see my dilemma? It is repugnant to me that I should debar you from so doing, and yet he who is asked to give you the right to do it (and I am being so asked) must by implication have assigned to him by the petitioners (yourselves) the power NOT to give it to you! Do you see that in reality I am wanting to give you greater freedom of action than even you want.⁵¹⁶

A matter of politics

In his role as liaison person between the Catholic hierarchy and the Department of Education, Gascoigne was subject to the authority and counsel of the bishops. He had a close relationship with Lyons (as the correspondence reveals) and on more than one occasion called on him directly for advice on how to proceed. In his letters, he reported back to the bishops on the progress of the discussions regarding the proposed curriculum reforms. At the same time he found himself having to represent the views of the Department of Education back to the

⁵¹⁵ Gascoigne to Bishops, 5 May 1945, 5. Education Box 3, CCDA.

⁵¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 6.

hierarchy and justify actions that he had taken and accommodations he found necessary to make in the context of the negotiations.

Despite Beeby's reassurances that there were no threats to Catholic educational values and the autonomy of Catholic schools, the bishops were determined to ensure that references to liberty were included in the Education Regulations giving legal force to the Thomas recommendations and when no such inclusion seemed to be forthcoming asked Gascoigne to meet with Beeby in early August 1945 to gain his reassurance on the matter. Gascoigne found himself in a difficult position. On the one hand he had the bishops' reminder to him that their meeting with Fraser in September 1944 had guaranteed them "freedom" for their schools (a meeting to which Beeby was not invited). On the other hand it was clear (as a result of the informal nature of the May 1945 discussion held between Beeby and Gascoigne on this subject) that there were no minutes of the decision⁵¹⁷, and Beeby seemed to have forgotten his agreement to include a reference to freedom in the Regulations. So Gascoigne found himself explaining the Catholic position to Beeby all over again and encountering the same response that "under no circumstances would he ever stand for the forcing of an anti-Catholic philosophy in our schools".⁵¹⁸ It was a delicate position as he explained to the bishops later:

I did mention in my first negotiations the fact
that this had been discussed by the [Catholic]

⁵¹⁷ Beeby commented later that he "had complete trust in (Gascoigne's) integrity" and that "we often did not bother to confirm in writing some of the less vital agreements". Beeby to O'Reilly, 28 March 1975. Education Box 3, CCDA.

⁵¹⁸ Gascoigne to Liston, 11 July 1945, I. Education Box 3, CCDA.

Hierarchy and that the Ministers had seen its reasonableness... but I went no further ... for two reasons, one a technical point the other a psychological point... The Technical point - I have consulted your Lordship's memo... and I find these words 'Freedom - Here again the P.M. and Minister of Ed cordially agreed to our request' but there is no mention of a regulation to that effect... The psychological point:... the Director was not present at the meeting... your Lordship will recall that it was the express wish of the Hierarchy that Dr Beeby should NOT be at that meeting... for that reason I used great caution in saying what Ministers had granted straight out without consulting him as evidently by custom amounts to his right. I do not, unless I am forced, want to antagonise the Director.⁵¹⁹

The letter is a masterpiece of tact, with Gascoigne justifying his decision not to insist on the “freedom” guaranteed in the 1944 meeting between the hierarchy and Fraser by reminding the Bishops of the tenuousness of the agreement, the absence of Beeby from that meeting (*at their request*) despite his right to be consulted in negotiations regarding education, and the importance of maintaining good relations with the Department. This careful handling of the sensitive relationship between the Department and the Catholic hierarchy was a hallmark of Gascoigne's style. It facilitated an improved working relationship between the Department of Education and the Catholic education authorities, a relationship characterised previously by mutual suspicion. Nevertheless Gascoigne was greatly relieved to receive an advance copy of the Prescriptions and to be able to report to the bishops that in “no fewer than three places mention is made of liberty of treatment and method”.⁵²⁰

⁵¹⁹ Ibid., 3-4.

⁵²⁰ Gascoigne to Bishops, 2 November, 1945 1, Education Box 3, CCDA.

Conclusion

Catholic opposition to the Thomas reforms reflected a long-held antipathy to any suggestions of state surveillance and control over Catholic schooling, opposition to the incursion of secular values into the curriculum, a resistance to state hegemony in educational policymaking, and a desire to protect the integrity of the Catholic educational mission. This chapter has utilised a variety of documentary and selected oral sources to consider the Catholic reaction to the Thomas Report, a reaction that was led by the hierarchy and nominated representatives of teaching religious orders and centred on opposition to the values of “new education”, fears about the impact of state control and over the lowering of academic standards.

The first part of the chapter challenged the premise that the Catholic response to the 1944 Thomas reforms can be dismissed as “conservative” by outlining the diversity of views held by Catholic educators and demonstrating that the Catholic position developed as a result of extensive discussions within the Catholic educational community and in the light of negotiations with the State. The protracted discussions over the proposed education reforms and the solutions that were negotiated illuminate the workings of educational politics and the ongoing complexities inherent in relations between the state and the Catholic education authorities. Negotiations between the Director of Catholic Education (Wellington) and the Director of the Department of Education moved from confrontation to accommodation as each revealed a willingness to compromise. That Gascoigne and Beeby reached such an accommodation is in no small part due to their ability to walk through the minefield of Catholic sensitivities to a resolution acceptable to both state and church authorities. Had this solution not

been achieved then the alternative may have been a separate curriculum for Catholic secondary schools.

It may be argued that the Catholic education authorities took “the hard road” in their response to the curriculum reforms proposed by the Thomas Committee. Certainly they were not “content with minor adjustments” to “the standards and objectives, and the curricula and methods largely imposed from without”.⁵²¹ Instead they re-examined aspects of their “whole theory and practice”,⁵²² challenging the ideological basis on which the reforms were premised and at the same time they negotiated successfully changes to specific curriculum specifications.⁵²³ By doing so, however, they had to modify the very freedoms they cherished in order to ensure the success of the Catholic educational mission for the increasing numbers of working-class pupils entering Catholic secondary schools. These developments were to have serious implications for the work of teachers as the following chapter will illustrate.

⁵²¹ See “The Thomas Report,” 4.

⁵²² See *Ibid.*, 3-4.

⁵²³ *Ibid.*



Photo 9.1: A Marist Brother teaches class at Xavier College Christchurch c. 1950s. Located next to the railway workshops in Christchurch, Xavier College was registered as a secondary school in 1945. Like Marist secondary schools in Lower Hutt and Invercargill it catered for a largely working-class population of Catholics
*F.E. McGregor Collection
Canterbury Museum*



Photo 9.2: Religious of the Sacred Heart had an educational mission that focussed on the transmission of elite cultural and intellectual values. The Sister in the photo (c. 1950s) is taking a senior class for Art Appreciation. *F.E. McGregor Collection
Canterbury Museum*

Chapter Nine

The impact of the educational reforms on the work of Catholic teachers

Some of the other brothers who didn't teach the A classes all the time, who taught the slower classes (because they were all streamed), they could see the value of it. (FP12)

Introduction

In the years after the release of the Thomas Report the Catholic educational mission came under pressure. Catholic educators faced difficulties implementing the new reforms, largely without guidance, and in an expanding secondary system characterised by burgeoning rolls and shortages of plant and resources. The oral accounts that form the basis of this chapter offer unique insights into the difficulties faced by teachers as they tried to implement the Thomas curriculum, insights not available to researchers relying on documentary evidence alone. By considering teachers' views of the reforms, the chapter highlights the challenges facing the Catholic educational mission in the years after 1945. Teachers speak of tensions between preserving "academic" standards and meeting the educational needs of the non-academic student for "a generous and well-balanced" general education and contestations between secular and Catholic values. The desire to preserve Catholic autonomy sits uneasily alongside the need to protect educational standards and ensure pupils' access to the state-mandated examination system.

Teachers' accounts illustrate the tensions between teachers of academic classes who wished to preserve the values of a liberal education and teachers of general classes who saw advantages in the new common core curriculum. Fears of loss of Catholic autonomy to state control identified in the previous chapter surface here in the context of a state-controlled curriculum based on secular values. Yet many teachers saw the advantages of a public examination system and benefits in gaining access to the expertise of the inspectorate. They also found ways to modify the curriculum to suit their existing pedagogical practice.

The chapter then moves to a consideration of ways in which the focus of the Catholic educational mission shifted to the provision of a secondary education "for the common good" of all Catholic pupils. It examines the increasing dominance of the School Certificate examination arguing that it came to be seen by Catholic teachers as a way for their pupils to gain access to a good job and to further qualifications. In this way teachers worked to facilitate the integration of working-class Catholics into New Zealand society and promote their educational advancement, social mobility and economic success.

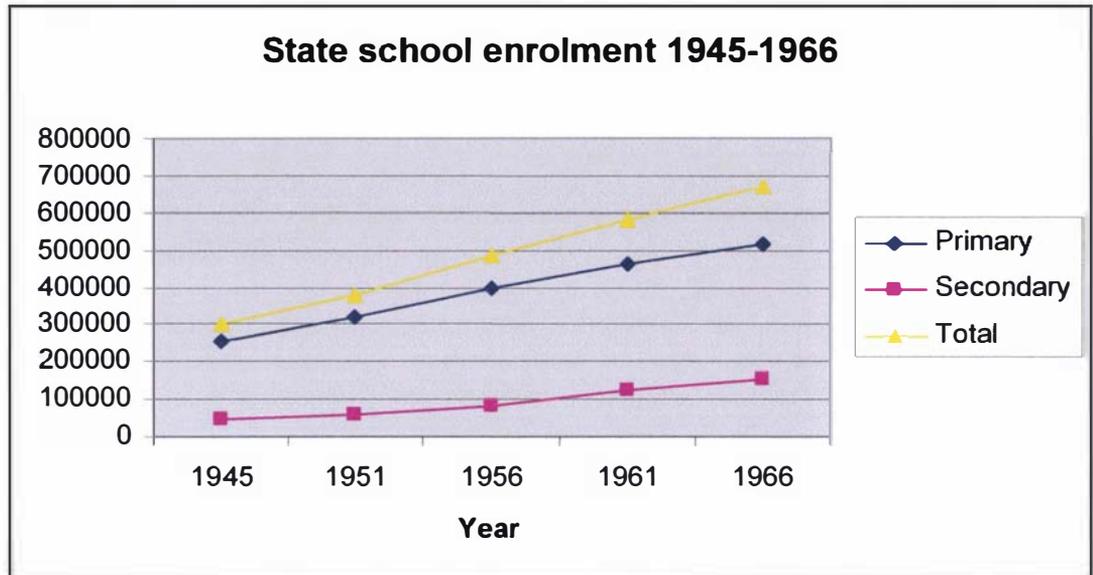
Catholic teachers and the reform of secondary education

Teachers under pressure: The impact of the reforms

Whitehead has argued that the successful introduction of the Thomas Report depended on an adequate supply of well-educated and trained teachers who were both sympathetic and understanding towards its general aims and keen to implement them. Nevertheless the Department of Education seems to have had no coherent plan for implementing the new curriculum in state or Catholic

schools.⁵²⁴ This may have been a result of the ongoing difficulties of catering for a total state school population which grew from 302,274 in 1945 to 666,789 in 1966 and a secondary population which burgeoned from 47,872 in 1945 to 154,086 in 1966 (see figure 9.1)

Figure 9.1: State school enrolment 1945-1966



Source: Derived from Table B.5 (Spenser, 1972) based on demographic data and enrolment statistics.⁵²⁵

Or the problem may have arisen because of the Department's reluctance to interfere with schools freedom to work out their own curriculum solutions. In addition, as Whitehead points out, many teachers never set eyes on a copy of the Report. They were almost impossible to obtain until 1959 when the Report was reprinted. Whatever the case, there was minimal support for state or Catholic

⁵²⁴ Whitehead, "The Thomas Report."

⁵²⁵ Spenser, "Interim Report," 462.

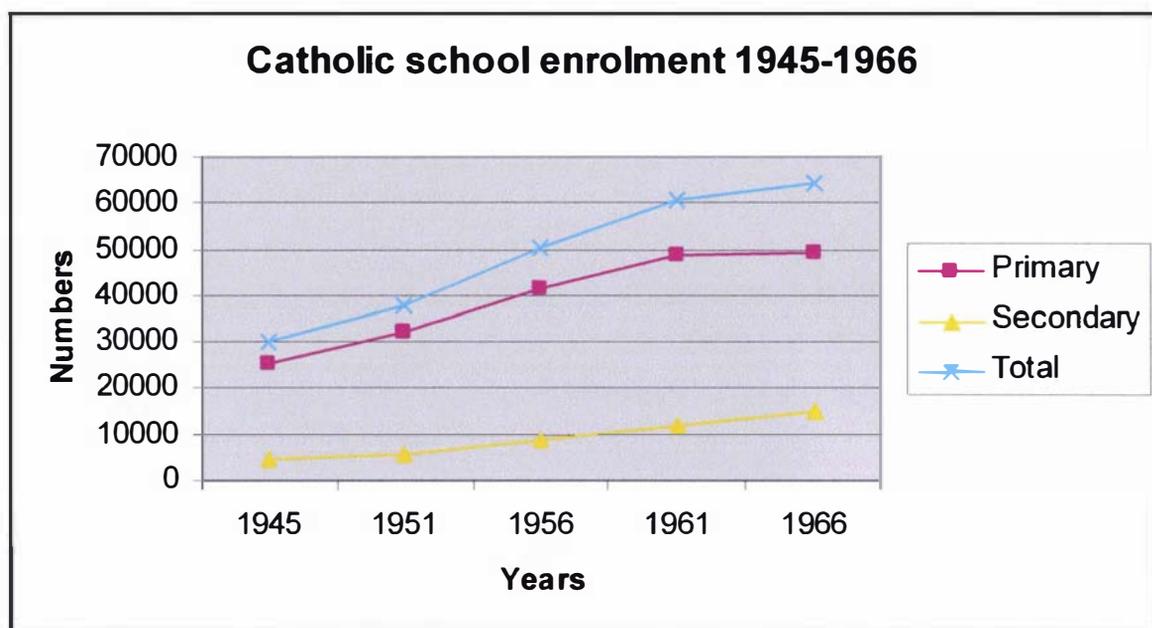
teachers trying to implement the reforms in their own teaching practice as the following story illustrates:

I can remember when the Common Core came in, I rearranged the teaching programme and I think I put in several extra hours in the week, thinking that I had to do this, to do the Common Core, but instead of taking options, I was taking everything, For example in music, art and things like that, crafts and art. It should have been art *or* craft, or things like that. But you were doing all this on the run. You were not given a year off to sort it out. Things were too desperate for anyone to have a year off. You had to do it on the run. (FP21)

In this situation the teacher felt overwhelmed by the responsibility for implementing the common core curriculum. There appears to have been no guidance from the Department or from colleagues regarding the setting up of an option system that would enable students to take art *or* craft. Initially the teacher tries to fit it all in although that adds hours each week to the school programme. The phrase “things were too desperate” also points to the staffing crisis that plagued both Catholic and state schools in the years after the Second World War. Various factors contributed to the lack of availability of experienced teachers in the state system including low salaries, poor working conditions, and a rapidly expanding demand for qualified staff in the economy as a whole. During the late 1950s and beyond, the shortage of buildings and teachers had become critical and as Whitehead argues, it was hardly surprising that the Department of Education tended to be preoccupied with the quantitative rather than the qualitative aspects of secondary education.⁵²⁶ In the Catholic system the situation was even worse. The increases in the teacher force in Catholic schools did not match the huge increases in the enrolments in Catholic schools (see Figure 9.2).

⁵²⁶ Whitehead, "The Thomas Report."

Figure 9.2: Catholic school enrolment 1945-1966



Source: Derived from Table B.5 (Spenser, 1972) based on demographic data and enrolment statistics.⁵²⁷

To illustrate: in 1951 a total of 37, 821 Catholic pupils were taught by 1084 teachers. A primary population of 32,194 were served by 837 teachers while a secondary population of 5627 was served by 247 secondary teachers (see table 9.1). Although the summarised population figures give only a general idea of the problem, increases in the pupil-teacher ratio are indicative of some of the pressure teachers were under. From 1945 to 1961 the ratio for Catholic secondary schools had increased from 21.3 to 26.3 pupils per teacher while the state ratio remained relatively steady at 20.1. The situation was even more

⁵²⁷ Spenser, "Interim Report," 462.

serious in the Catholic primary schools with the pupil-teacher ratio reaching 40.5 by 1961.⁵²⁸

Table 9.1: Teacher numbers in New Zealand Catholic primary and secondary schools, 1941-1969

Teacher numbers in New Zealand Catholic primary and secondary schools 1941-1969			
Year	Primary	Secondary	Total
1941	755	168	923
1942	745		
1943	747		
1944	746		
1945	750	210	960
1946	763		
1947	774		
1948	792		
1949	803		
1950	818		
1951	837	247	1084
1952	853		
1953	879		
1954	910		
1955	948		
1956	977	348	1325
1957	1056		
1958	1056		
1959	1114		
1960	1138	426	1564
1961	1201	453	1654
1962	1231		
1963	1264	513	1777
1964	1289	526	1815
1965	1347	541	1888
1966	1331	564	1895
1967	1308		
1968	1314		
1969	1306		

Source: AJHR E-1, E-2 1941-1961⁵²⁹

⁵²⁸ See Ibid., 468. Table C:12.

⁵²⁹ Not all data for secondary teachers was available. See Ibid., 465.

Noeline Alcorn suggests that the Department of Education failed to appreciate fully the difficulties faced by “conservative and uncertain school principals and senior secondary staff thrust into providing new subjects and developing new methods to meet the needs of non-traditional pupils of varying levels of ability” .⁵³⁰ The problem of implementing the new Social Studies curriculum in Catholic schools without much Departmental guidance prompted one Mercy Sister to involve her class in the design of their own curriculum. On the basis that “nobody knew how to interpret it” (MP), she worked with her class to research the nature of the new Social Studies programme. They subsequently presented their project to a visiting inspector who told them that as a result of their efforts he understood the new syllabus much better.⁵³¹ A Marist Brother, new to secondary teaching and busy with the day to day requirements of a full teaching programme, did not have time to worry about the details of state requirements:

I was only teaching third and fourth form in those days. I don't think we were too much aware of having to keep to a curriculum. We did teach the core curriculum but I wouldn't say that we were very aware (of state requirements). (FT6)

Many of the teachers in the Catholic secondary sector had trained as primary teachers before moving into teaching at the secondary level. With limited experience of the educational requirements of the common core curriculum they usually relied on a senior teacher to make sure they were “doing things properly”, as a Religious of the Sacred Heart recalls:

⁵³⁰ Alcorn, *To the fullest extent of his powers*. 131.

⁵³¹ Mercy Sister (MP) (Personal communication, 27 February 2003).

I know that the Mistress General or the Principal and the Mistress of Studies kept up with the changes in the New Zealand education scene... to ensure that we were doing things properly... so that we were presenting the programmes that were relative to the state requirement, or fitting our tradition such as Ancient History into Social Studies. There was a certain amount of flexibility... We certainly got any literature that came from the Education Department and we had to read it. (SA 13)

While Catholic teachers were expected to meet state requirements they were also encouraged to shape the curriculum in order to ensure a continuance of the existing pedagogical and cultural traditions. In this case a Religious of the Sacred Heart uses the “certain amount of flexibility” to maintain the order’s traditional “academic” emphasis on the study of subjects such as History and Literature “fitting our tradition such as Ancient History into Social Studies”. Thus subjects such as Social Studies which were part of the common core curriculum were modified to suit the distinctive educational values of the Religious of the Sacred Heart. The practice of integrating Catholic values into state “secular” subjects is one way that teachers worked to inculcate the values of the Catholic faith into the secular curriculum and to maintain the distinctiveness their own pedagogical values. It is an issue that I will consider in more detail in chapter twelve in relation to its significance for ensuring the success of the Catholic educational mission in the period of this study.

An academic versus a general education

An “academic” curriculum based on a study of the humanities had been seen historically as a pathway to the attainment of educational and social status, paving the way for social position, access to the professions and Catholic

leadership in society.⁵³² A number of Catholic teachers, as we have already seen in chapter eight, feared that the new curriculum would lead to a fall off in standards for academic pupils. One of the participants, a Marist Brother, remembered William Thomas, the chairman of the Thomas Committee when he was headmaster of Timaru Boys' High School. He recalled the reservations that senior Marist Brothers who taught the "academic" classes at Sacred Heart College in Auckland had about the common core curriculum:

He was the Headmaster of Timaru Boys High. We knew about him when we grew up. I did being from Timaru, or Kerrytown. The Common Core. Some of the outstanding teachers at Sacred Heart, like Brother Stephen, who was a very good English teacher and Leonard, who was Maths, and Borgia, who was a great Classics man and taught Latin and French – they would have reservations about these new fangled ideas.(FP11)

The reservations that some of the "outstanding teachers" (of academic classes) harboured about "these new fangled ideas" included anxiety about the loss of the values of a "liberal education" and the fear of lowering standards. These concerns were at the centre of the following recollection of a Marist Priest who remembered debating the Thomas Report when he was in the seminary in 1944:

I was not involved directly with the Thomas Report, but I was in the seminary at the time, and a group of us were involved in looking at the Thomas Report and debating it, and if we were typical, we saw it as a very backward step in education, lowering of standards, taking away liberal education and making it practical. I think that the common attitude among a certain group of educationalists, they would have included Catholic people, was that education was for the elite and those that couldn't hack it should go into a trade somewhere. Now that's an overstatement... (SJ14-15)

The "certain group of educationalists" who believed that secondary education "was for the elite" and that those "who couldn't hack" an academic education

⁵³² Bryk, Lee, and Holland, *Catholic schools and the common good*.

should “go into a trade somewhere” were part of an interest group of Catholic teachers who defended the values of a “liberal” education for promoting the development of future intellectual and religious leaders in the Catholic community against the incursions of the common core curriculum and the values of a general education. This conservative educational philosophy was supported by the 1929 papal encyclical by Pius XI, *Divini Illius Magistri* (On the Christian Education of Youth) which encouraged the conservation of humanity’s cultural heritage and cautioned against the errors of pragmatism in the curriculum.⁵³³ The story provides further evidence of the ongoing tensions within Catholic educational circles regarding the validity of the new reforms for the Catholic educational mission in the post-war years. Those participants who expressed these views belonged to orders running “academic” courses for the small number of elite within the Catholic community.⁵³⁴ Individuals from these orders, as we have seen in chapter eight, were prominent in the contemporary public debates

⁵³³ Pope Pius XI, *Divini illius magistri* (1929 [cited 4 June 2005]); available from http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xi/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_31121929_divini-illius-magistri_en.html.

⁵³⁴ The more “elite” Catholic secondary schools were boarding schools (who also took day pupils). These included St Patrick’s College, Wellington, and St Bede’s College, Christchurch (Society of Mary), and Baradene College, Auckland and Erskine College, Wellington (Society of the Sacred Heart). Other Catholic colleges, such as Sacred Heart College, Auckland (Marist Brothers), St Kevin’s College, Oamaru (Christian Brothers), Teschemakers College, Oamaru, St Dominic’s College, Dunedin, and St Catherine’s College, Invercargill (Dominican Sisters), also offered “academic” programmes.

about the reforms.⁵³⁵ Like the documentary evidence in chapter eight, the narrative foregrounds the concerns of an articulate group of teachers concerned at the prospect of “change” and who saw the Thomas curriculum as essentially a “backward step”.

However a significantly different view is expressed by Catholic teachers who taught the increasing numbers of non academic students coming into the secondary schools. Many of them, in marked contrast to the teachers of elite academic classes, saw value in the Thomas curriculum’s “generous and well balanced education” for their students, as is evidenced in the following story told by a Marist Brother:⁵³⁶

Some of the other brothers who didn’t teach the A classes all the time, who taught the slower classes (because they were all streamed), they could see the value of it. There was quite a bit of discussion between the older gun teachers, if you like, and the younger ones coming up. (FP12)

Differences about the nature and purpose of secondary education in this story occur between older “gun” teachers who have opportunities to express their views about education in a public forum and the younger religious teaching the “slower classes” who could see value in the new developments. There were also those such as Brother Venantius who were enthusiastic about the values and the opportunities offered by the “new education”, as the following story reveals:

And they were quite exciting times for teaching. Brother Venantius, who was our Master of Scholasticates, was a little man, but highly educated. He had a Masters’ degree and specialised in reading, and he was an enthusiast

⁵³⁵ These included Sister Dorothea Loughnan RSCJ, Father Cyril Callaghan SM, and Brother Borgia Coughlan FMS.

⁵³⁶ “The Thomas Report,” 5.

with this new education, so that whole spirit was into our Scholasticate.
We got into it. (FP6)

As Master of Scholasticates in the early 1940s, Brother Venantius was responsible for the teacher training of Marist brothers at the Scholasticate in Ponsonby, Auckland. His enthusiasm for the “new education” as recalled in this story suggests that the “whole spirit” of the education reforms underpinned the teacher training of these new recruits and that the Marist Brothers that he trained adopted them with enthusiasm in their own teaching practice. During this period the Marist Brothers were moving from an emphasis on the provision of a “basic” primary education into post-primary education. Between 1945 and 1947, Marist Brothers established four secondary schools.⁵³⁷ In 1945, for example, Xavier College, located next to the railway workshops in Christchurch was registered as a secondary school (see photo 9.1).⁵³⁸ Like Marist secondary schools in Lower Hutt, and Invercargill it catered for a largely working-class population of Catholics.⁵³⁹ Thus Catholic teachers working in secondary schools catering for working-class students began to challenge the relevance of an educational mission that catered only for the educational advancement of the Catholic “elite”. These stories, demonstrating as they do the diversity of Catholic opinion on the nature and purpose of a secondary education, illustrate the importance of

⁵³⁷ Kane, "The Marist Brothers in New Zealand education, 1917 to 1967".

⁵³⁸ Lyons to Gascoigne 28 March 1945, Education Box 3c, CCDA.

⁵³⁹ See Kane, "The Marist Brothers in New Zealand education, 1917 to 1967"; Watt, *Invercargill Marist 75th Jubilee, 1897-1972*.

including in historical accounts the life histories of the “ordinary teacher” whose views of the impact of education reforms have so far not been documented.

Resisting the encroachment of secular values

Suspicion of the secular values of the new secondary curriculum has already been identified as a key difficulty for the Catholic education authorities. A Catholic philosophy of education identified the ultimate aim of education to be “the same as the ultimate aim of life, namely eternal happiness with God in heaven... it must be formulated in terms of eternal values which, of necessity, are unchanging and unchanged”.⁵⁴⁰ As we have already seen the Catholic educational authorities believed that the new Thomas curriculum embodied the values of naturalism – “reducing all human experiences to a purely natural basis, exclusive of all spiritual factors”, – and experimentalism, which utilised “the constant reconstruction of experiences to make adjustments to what is held to be a constantly changing social order with emphasis on social efficiency and utility”.⁵⁴¹ In the Church’s view the consequences of these “false views” meant “the pursuit of mere worldly values” and the “failure to encourage the pursuit of those higher values which prompt self-sacrifice, discipline, co-operation, and the subordination of individual desires to more worthy spiritual ideals”.⁵⁴² The following story outlines the nature of these concerns for a Religious of the Sacred Heart:

⁵⁴⁰ Redden and Ryan, *A Catholic philosophy of education*. 99.

⁵⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 131.

⁵⁴² *Ibid.*, 133.

We were rather suspicious – and I am not using this in a bad sense – of the values of the State education, which did not stress, naturally, the spiritual values that we were looking for, and cultural values... (SP20)

The educational views of the Catholic Church, as explained here, were at variance with many of the contemporary educational philosophies. The Church objected to the pedagogy of naturalism (deriving from Rousseau and Spenser), because it was opposed to authority and especially to the Church's teaching regarding the origin, nature and destiny of humanity. It challenged, as I will detail with further in chapter twelve, Dewey and the Progressives' valuing of experience and on determining all truths experimentally, maintaining that fundamental beliefs and values were already established. It is also significant that the Sister, a Religious of the Sacred Heart, (an order founded to educate the daughters of the aristocracy and upper middle class), feared for the loss of "cultural values" in the new curriculum (see photo 9.2).

Suspicion of a state-controlled curriculum and examinations had a long history for religious orders such as the Religious of the Sacred Heart. Founded in France in the nineteenth century, they, along with other teaching congregations such as the Marist Brothers and the Society of Mary, were expelled in 1905 after a long struggle to maintain a separate Catholic education system:

At first with our French tradition, and the nuns' suspicion of what had happened in France, you know we did not welcome sitting exterior exams, the State exams. Then we realised the necessity of these for the school to get its proper registration. We needed to be able to do these things, and therefore we ourselves went in for university, New Zealand University or Australian University Certificates, the Higher Leaving... all those things that we would normally have not bothered about in the old days. (SP21)

Orders such as the Religious of the Sacred Heart had an educational mission that focussed on the transmission of elite cultural and intellectual values. Initially

they “did not welcome sitting exterior exams” seeing them as an interference in the education of girls who were being trained to exercise influence in elite society (see chapter four). Nevertheless the public examination system came to be seen as having advantages even for these elite Catholic schools. As Fogarty puts it “it facilitated the registration of schools by providing a recognised test of the efficiency of the school, raising it considerably in public estimation”.⁵⁴³

However, as Sister Dorothea Loughnan’s published views of the Thomas reforms indicated in the previous chapter, orders such as the Religious of the Sacred Heart continued to be influenced by both pre- and post-revolutionary educational traditions that emphasised intellectual development and the value of a “liberal education” for developing intellectual and religious leadership. As Christine Trimmingham Jack points out, the Religious of the Sacred Heart utilised their own plans of study first drawn up in 1805 in response to the suppression of religious congregations and associated schools.⁵⁴⁴ They were reluctant to utilise either state curricula or the examination system as the following story, which comes from the late 1930s and early 1940s, demonstrates:

We were not keen on exams in my early days- when I was a school girl, say in the sixth or seventh form, and as a young nun – we were not keen on knuckling down to State exams but we realised it was essential, because the girls would – many of them did have an interest in university education, or developing fields that were connected with the State system, and we had to acknowledge that and accept it. (SP11-12)

However, after 1945, state examinations came to be seen as “essential” for girls who had “an interest in university education”. Thus “educational advancement”

⁵⁴³ Fogarty, *Catholic education in Australia*. 373.

⁵⁴⁴ Trimmingham Jack, *Growing good Catholic girls*. 21.

became part of the mission of elite schools that had in the past focussed on personal development and cultural pursuits. In this way the state-mandated post-primary curriculum was utilised for the credentialing of Catholic girls at the upper end of the social spectrum.

While Catholic teachers were suspicious of the loss of autonomy and concerned to protect their pupils against the secular values implicit in the new curriculum, it is clear that some also saw benefits in gaining access to the expertise and advice of the Department of Education, particularly the inspectorate, as is evidenced in the following story:

So in surrendering a small amount of independence there, we were gaining a wider curriculum, and the opportunity of some other very fine minds that we could come in contact with, and I'm speaking more here of inspectors. We had some very good people who became friends rather than inspectors to us later on. (SP12)

Links with the Department of Education and the fostering of good relationships with Departmental inspectorate were seen as important ways of ensuring the quality of teaching standards in Catholic schools. They also enabled Catholic educators to compete for equivalence with state secondary schools. It was a dynamic relationship that involved positive benefits for Catholic teachers and for the visiting inspectors, as I will illustrate further in chapter twelve. As the following story demonstrates, Catholic teachers acknowledged the practical necessity of dealing with the requirements of the new curriculum while working to maintain the distinctive characteristics of Catholic culture and religious values:

Our cultural tradition was independence from the State, in the right sense of the word. We accepted the government and regulations for exams etc. (SP9)

The post-war challenge to the Catholic educational mission

A secondary education for all Catholic pupils

The initial expansion into post-primary education had been justified, as we have seen in chapter four, on the basis that the increasing numbers of Catholic pupils attending secondary school needed to be protected from the secular values implicit in a state secondary education. In the years after the Thomas Report an important shift occurred. Faced with the rapidly expanding population of non-academic pupils now filling secondary schools, the Catholic educational mission, which had historically worked for the social and educational advancement of the select few going on to secondary school, now focussed on providing a place in a Catholic secondary school for all Catholic pupils. The issue that faced Catholic teachers in the years after 1945 was similar to that faced by state teachers: how could they provide an education that was appropriate not only for the academic elite but also for the bulk of the school population whose destiny was the world of work?⁵⁴⁵ Catholic teachers faced an additional problem. How could they provide a standard of education to working-class Catholics that would enable their successful integration into New Zealand society through social, economic and educational advancement *while protecting Catholic values*? Historically Catholic schools had utilised examinations such as the Public Service Entrance and Matriculation examination as a means of providing “equality of opportunity” for social mobility for those few who were able to gain the credentials. However

⁵⁴⁵ Howard F. Lee, "The credentialled society: A history of New Zealand public school examinations 1871-1990" (PhD diss., University of Otago, 1991).

Catholic teachers now faced the challenge of providing the expanding adolescent population in their schools with examination credentials that would meet changing labour market demands. The difficulties are illustrated in the changing profiles of the Proficiency Examination (1899-1937), the Junior Civil Service Examination (1888-1912), and the “new” post-1945 School Certificate Examination. Each began life as a terminal school-leaving qualification, yet, as Openshaw, Lee, & Lee suggest, each retained its value as a relatively scarce credential only as long as the majority of pupils left school before attempting the examination.⁵⁴⁶ As we have seen, Catholic schools saw success in state examinations as a key indicator of their effectiveness. Yet as the following story illustrates, as each examination lost its selectivity the consequent “qualification inflation” caused a higher level credential to drive out the lower:

Of course, the only examination in the primary school, the Proficiency Exam had been abolished in 1936, I think at the end of '36, so there was no Proficiency. Prior to that, our own schools had made a big thing of getting kids through their Proficiency you see... some never went past Form two, my father never got beyond Standard Six, and he was quite a bright person, but he went off to work... So we did exactly the same as the State, and the inspectors gave us the same tests, questions and all that, but there was no external examination to work on until you came to secondary when there was School Certificate. Now when I was at school there was a School Certificate but no-one took any notice of it... In Form Five, you did U.E [Matriculation] and on the U.E. exam you got your School Certificate. It was exactly the same... if you passed U.E. you got a certificate saying you'd passed U.E., then you also got a certificate showing how well you did on School Certificate, and the marks were done on a different basis... but it was exactly the same paper... When that U.E. was abolished, in a sense it was put into the Sixth Form, the next year. Prior to that it was the entrance to university and it was in the Fifth Form. We had a number of characters who went to university straight from Fifth Form and did very well. (FT14)

⁵⁴⁶ Openshaw, Lee, and Lee, *Challenging the myths*.

Up until its demise in 1937, Catholic primary schools such as those run by the Marist Brothers and the Mercy Sisters “made a big thing of getting kids through their Proficiency. Even so the speaker’s father (“quite a bright person”) is one of the many who left school without going onto secondary. As the phrase “we did exactly the same as the state” suggests, the Catholic secondary schools competed with the state system for the same pool of scarce credentials. While the majority of pupils completed their education in primary school, the few who passed the Proficiency examination could go on to secondary education where they might sit the Public Service examination that would give them access to government employment. For those few pupils who went on to fifth form there was the first School Certificate, introduced by the Department of Education in 1934. However this was regarded by the public as a “poor relation” to Matriculation and, as the speaker wryly notes, “no-one took any notice of it”. Most entered for the matriculation examination as candidates for the “conjoint” examination. Thus the focus of Catholic pupils wanting academic qualifications in secondary schools in the years before 1945 was on Matriculation, an entrance examination controlled by the University of New Zealand. Success in this examination meant that academically able Catholic pupils were able to go directly to university after sitting it. However this system did not provide for the large numbers of pupils now entering the secondary system who were unlikely to go on to university.

The increasing dominance of the School Certificate Examination

The Thomas Committee believed the new School Certificate (introduced in 1946) to be suitable for both the general pupil and for the academic pupil who would then follow a course leading to the Form Six University Entrance qualification. It was anticipated that the School Certificate would mark the end of

a secondary education for the majority of pupils who would sit the examination in their fourth year before entering the labour force. However, in Catholic secondary schools, as in state schools, the new School Certificate quickly assumed dominance over the curriculum with most pupils sitting it in their third year at secondary school rather than their fourth year as the following story illustrates:

I think any teacher of the period would tell you we taught to the examination syllabus. That was the overriding consideration in Form Five. Some girls in Form Four were able to sit what they called the Civil Service exam but that soon went out. But the majority of the thrust in the lower schools would be, well this will be coming up in School Certificate and that was the big hurdle. All the term exams and everything else you had during the previous years would be used as an indication of how well you could cope. The situation was in the first years that you were able to take the very good pupils through School C in three years. But the majority were supposed to take four. And I think that was the understanding when School Certificate was introduced, that it was a four year course but parent pressure in most cases made it a three year (one) whether they were ready or not. (MM11)

After its introduction School Certificate quickly became the examination of choice in Catholic schools. As the speaker notes, the majority of Catholic secondary pupils sat it in the minimum three rather than the recommended four years. It enjoyed acceptance among employers and by the mid-1950s it was regarded by the wider New Zealand community as marking the successful completion of a post-primary education.⁵⁴⁷ As the teacher explains, “the majority of the thrust in the lower schools would be, well this [question or topic] is coming up in School Certificate”. Thus Catholic teachers focussed their efforts on “the big hurdle” as a way to further a pupil’s academic credentials or to

⁵⁴⁷ By the mid-1960s nearly 90 percent of all fifth formers were sitting the examination. Openshaw, *Unresolved struggle*. 61.

enhance his or her chances of getting a good job. This was a function that was radically different from the Thomas Committee's original conception of School Certificate as only one part of a post-primary education that aimed to give adolescents "a richer and better balanced education than they have had in the past".⁵⁴⁸ However it was more in tune with the expanded mission of Catholic post-primary education that emphasised examination success for the social, economic and educational advancement of the Catholic working-class and their successful integration into New Zealand society.

The historic focus on "academic" programmes in Catholic secondary schools meant that in the early years of the new curriculum many were ill-prepared for the large numbers of pupils wanting non-academic options. However, with the raising of the leaving age to fifteen, Catholic schools such as those run by the Mercy Sisters began to provide programmes for the majority of students who had no intention of going on to University. A Mercy Sister recalled her own secondary schooling:

You see when I started there weren't many options for a non-academic (student). There was a commercial class, shorthand, book-keeping, typing, English of course, and they usually had to do a School Certificate subject like geography or biology or something like that as well. And many of them did extremely well, got very high exams because there were good exams in that area too. Later on... there was a home economics clothing introduced and of course a lot depended on what teachers you had. (MK12)

Howard Lee notes that the rising retention rate at secondary school had a profound effect upon the number of post-primary pupils able to enrol for the School Certificate Examination. Gaining School Certificate in subjects such as "short-hand, book-keeping, typing" and of course English "carried weight in the

⁵⁴⁸ "The Thomas Report," 6.

world of work” and was seen as a marketable school leaving credential.⁵⁴⁹ A pass in School Certificate also implied a “general education in other (core) subjects”.⁵⁵⁰

An education “for the common good”

In 1945 Catholics formed approximately thirteen percent⁵⁵¹ of a New Zealand population concerned with what Openshaw et al. called the “refurbishing of the material Utopia, which had shattered during the Great Depression, and the creation of a prosperity consensus”.⁵⁵² Class relationships were to be an important factor in determining the shape of post-primary education in the early post-war years. While the old middle-class was shrinking, Catholic increasingly formed part of a new middle-class that rose steeply to reach 38.9 percent of the total population.⁵⁵³ There was also significant growth in the new professions and in clerical positions. This growth was also reflected in the expansion of both state and private sector bureaucracies to incorporate some two-fifths of the workforce.⁵⁵⁴ These expanding bureaucracies had important implications for post-primary education. They required school leavers with specialised skills,

⁵⁴⁹ Beeby, 1986, cited in Lee, "The credentialled society". 294.

⁵⁵⁰ Ibid.,297.

⁵⁵¹ Source: New Zealand Census, 1945, Vol. VI, I, cited in van der Krogt, "More a part than apart". 537.

⁵⁵² Openshaw, *Unresolved struggle*. 76.

⁵⁵³ As measured by Census data. See van der Krogt, "More a part than apart".

⁵⁵⁴ G Dunstall, "The social pattern," in *The Oxford history of New Zealand*, ed. G.W. Rice (Auckland, 1992), 465.

employees who could work efficiently within an established hierarchy, subject to rules and regulations. However, as the following story illustrates, there was a divergence between the views of Catholic teachers who saw the value of school credentials such as School Certificate for social, economic and educational advancement in the longer term and the attitudes of some working-class Catholic parents who wanted their sons and daughters to leave school and get a job:

In the 1940s and early '50s it was really common for young boys from Petone and other working-class areas to leave (secondary) school after two years. What's the use when you can get a job in the freezing works?... And it was possible for a person to start as an apprentice in the railway workshops and end up as a very successful fitter and turner... I know Father Morrie Bourke was Rector of Saint Pat's when I was resident there, and worked very hard to get these kids from Petone to stay on another year, against the wishes of their parents. (SJ 15/16)

In the years of full employment in the early 1950s when this story took place, many parents, who had themselves been through the Depression years, saw more value in their sons and daughters getting into a "good job" than in keeping them on at school to gain a credential like School Certificate or University Entrance. While working-class parents could see opportunities for their sons to "end up as a very successful fitter and turner" by training in government industries such as the railway workshops they were less able to see the advantages of further education.

Nevertheless, as more members of the Catholic community entered the middle class, increased numbers of Catholic pupils began to stay on at secondary school and seek success via higher examinations like University Entrance and later Bursary as a Marist Brother explains in the following story:

I think the idea was to keep people at school longer. UE became accredited, you got accredited by the schools or you sat the exam and there were a lot of headaches and heartaches about that certainly in the fifties

and into the early sixties... bursary didn't come into effect until later, but there was always a Scholarship exam. (FT15)

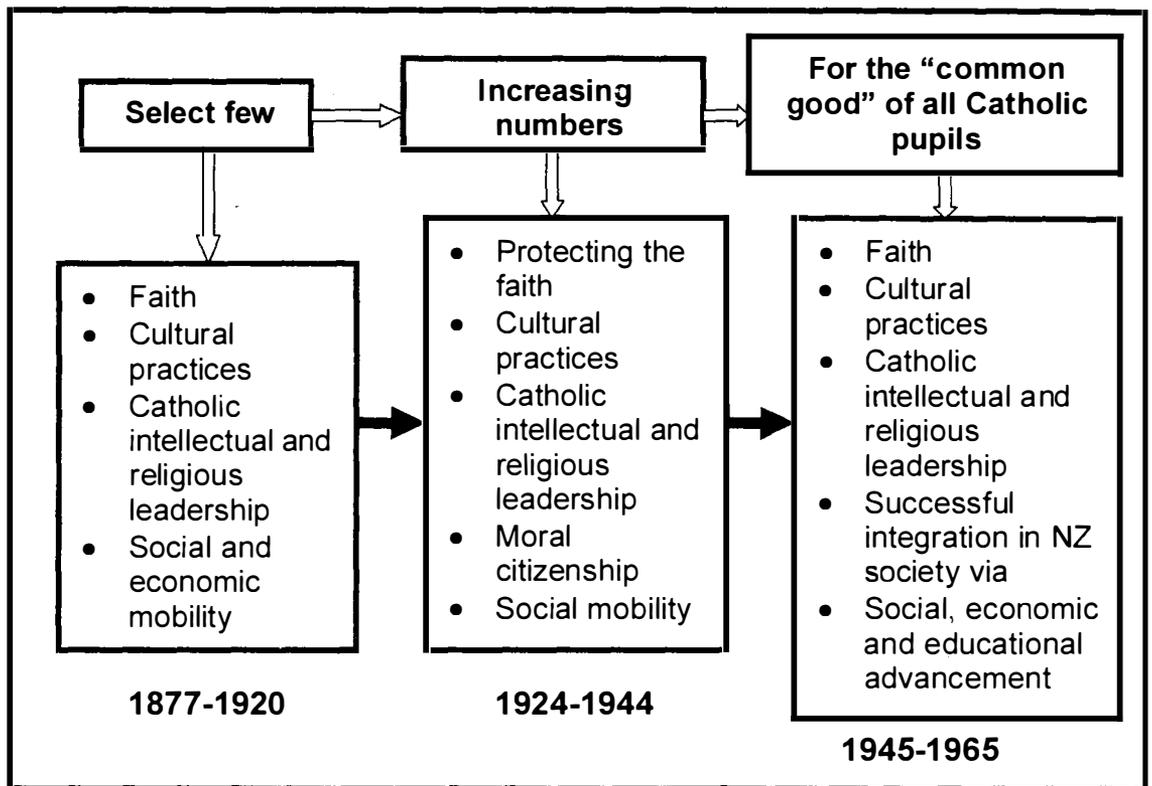
An increased desire for credentialing went hand in hand with aspirations for the successful integration of Catholic pupils into New Zealand society. Catholic educators worked to ensure that their pupils gained "good scores" and access to the "good life" via educational and social advancement (see diagram 9.1). In the following story a teacher explains that his main job in the 1950s was to prepare their pupils "for life":

The best thing we can do for kids is to prepare them for life. You know, preparing them for life in those days meant getting a job... so I took a big pride and I think most of our people did take a big pride in getting the kids good scores in their examinations... I'm pretty sure that many state teachers were exactly the same in their attitudes. Schools were pretty well dedicated to getting good results for their kids. (FT 15)

As we have seen Catholic teachers were concerned to ensure the transmission of Catholic faith and culture and to promote the educational advancement of their pupils. Nevertheless they were aware that for most pupils that preparation for life meant getting a job. Thus Catholic teachers took the lead in encouraging secondary pupils to acquire the credentials that would give them access to better jobs, economic and social mobility and opportunities for higher education during a period in New Zealand that Pearson and Thorns characterise as a transition from a small town, capitalist, rural-based social structure, to one where the foundations of an urban based service economy were laid.⁵⁵⁵

⁵⁵⁵ D.C. Pearson and D.C. Thorns, *Eclipse of equality* (Sydney, 1983). 53.

Diagram 9.1: The expansion of the Catholic secondary educational mission 1877-1965



Conclusion

Teachers’ accounts of the pressures they faced in the years following the implementation of the Thomas reforms offer unique insights into changes in the Catholic educational mission, insights not available to researchers relying on documentary evidence alone. Catholic teachers encountered difficulties implementing a new curriculum without much support from the Department of Education. In the face of burgeoning rolls they worked to meet state requirements while maintaining existing pedagogical traditions and the integrity of Catholic values. There were tensions between teachers who espoused an “academic” education for the selected few and those who saw that the new curriculum offered advantages for pupils with a wider range of abilities. Fears about the loss of Catholic autonomy to state control were expressed in the

context of a state-controlled curriculum based on secular values. Yet teachers saw the advantages of a public examination system and benefits in gaining access to the expertise of the inspectorate. They also found ways to modify the curriculum to suit their existing pedagogical practice.

A consideration of ways in which the focus of the Catholic educational mission shifted to the provision of a post-primary education for the “common good” of all pupils formed the basis of the second part of the chapter. The newly revised School Certificate examination came to be seen by Catholic teachers as a way of ensuring the success of the Catholic educational mission to all pupils: to access a good job and to further their qualifications. In the final section of the chapter Catholic teachers explained how they worked to encourage working-class pupils to stay on at secondary school and to seek further educational credentials. In this way the Catholic educational mission in secondary schools in the years after 1945 expanded to promote the educational advancement, social mobility and economic success of all Catholic pupils and to facilitate their integration into the secular New Zealand society.

Part Four

Tensions and transitions in the Catholic educational mission in the post-war years

Introduction to chapters ten, eleven and twelve

In the period after 1945 the Catholic educational mission expanded to include the secondary schooling of all Catholic pupils focussing on two goals: the transmission of Catholic faith and cultural practices and their social, economic and educational advancement for successful integration into New Zealand society. Part four of this thesis will highlight ways in which Catholic educators worked to resolve tensions between the religious, cultural and secular goals of the Catholic educational mission in the post-war years. It will detail the fundamental processes that operated to maintain the distinctive values of Catholic schools and the viability of the Catholic educational mission in the period of transition leading up to the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), after which Catholic education changed forever. In chapter ten I will consider how the apprenticeship system of Catholic teacher training within religious orders worked to ensure that trainee Catholic teachers learned correct Catholic values and the distinctive traditions of the religious order to which they owed their allegiance. Moves to incorporate state expertise via state primary certification and the establishment of a “national” system of Catholic teacher training at Loreto Hall were designed to improve the educational standards of Catholic schools while

protecting the distinctive outlook of Catholic teachers. By the 1960s Catholic teachers had become part of a state run system of professional development as a way of renewing their professional skills and ensuring the long term viability of the Catholic educational mission.

In the years covered by this study the Catholic school had become the most important mechanism for transmitting the faith and maintaining a distinctive Catholic identity. Catholic schools, justified on the basis that education must be infused with a religious atmosphere, provided the most formal and organised means by which Catholic values and cultural practices were transmitted to the young. Chapter eleven considers the essentially dynamic nature of the Catholic educational mission, detailing how the teaching of Catholic faith incorporated selected pedagogical developments and progressive ideas within the prevailing framework of the Catholic educational mission and incorporated them within existing practice. The second part of the chapter demonstrates how Catholic cultural practices were passed on in the schools and describes the way Catholic traditions of faith and culture were premised on deference to authority, the promotion of religious life, the enculturation of manners and discipline practices.

Chapter twelve explores how Catholic educators resolved some of the tensions implicit in an educational mission based on the maintenance of religious values and the desire to promote the social, economic and educational advancement of Catholic pupils and their successful integration into New Zealand society. Catholic educators worked to protect their pupils from secular values by bringing a distinctively Catholic approach to the teaching of the state secular curriculum. They infused subjects such as History with religious values

and promoted a Catholic worldview, while incorporating pedagogical and curriculum advances in order to compete successfully with state schools and provide their pupils with access to and success in the state-mandated examination system. They also utilised state surveillance in the form of school inspections in order to improve the educational standards of Catholic schools and the long-term viability of the Catholic education system.



Photo 10.1: From the 1950s onwards many religious completed university qualifications as part of their training to teach specialist subjects such as Maths and Science at senior secondary level. There was often little choice about either going on to university or the subject studied. In this 1960s photo the Sister wears a habit and veil, while the male religious wear black suits and white collars. *F. E. McGregor Collection Canterbury Museum*

Chapter Ten

From apprentice to professional: The training of Catholic teachers

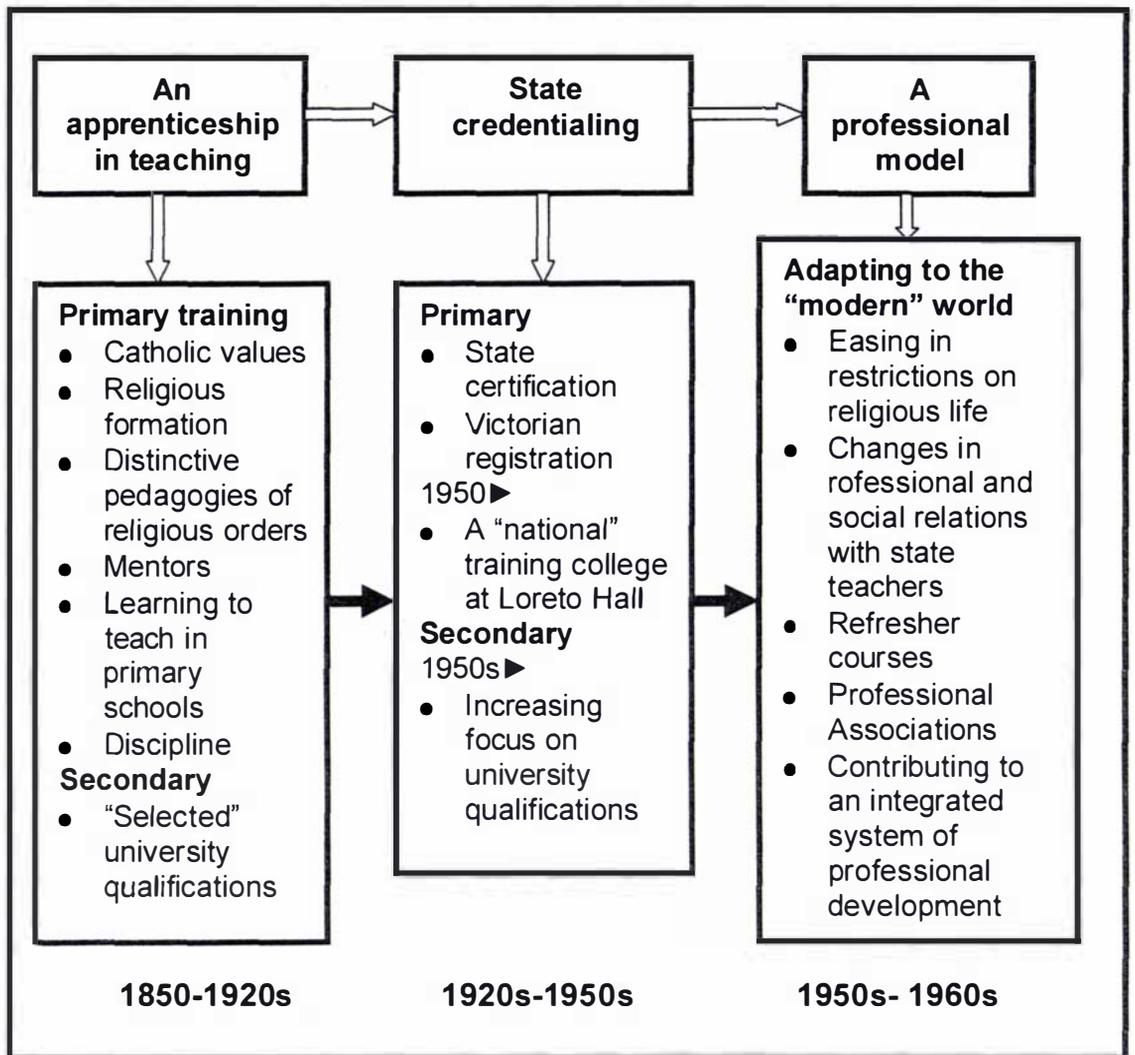
The Sisters and the Brothers, the religious used to turn up to the national refresher courses.. we were well accepted... Sister_____, she was one of the leaders who gave lectures. (SJ10)

Introduction

In the years covered by this study Catholic teachers undertook a process of religious formation and professional training that prepared them to transmit the faith, to reproduce Catholic cultural practice,s and to promote the social, economic and educational advancement of their pupils. As I have detailed in chapter five, new members of religious orders received specialized theological and spiritual training within highly regulated communities and were socialized into practices of work and prayer designed to reproduce these values in the next generation of Catholics. Although the spiritual formation of Catholic teachers worked to maintain distinctive religious values in Catholic schools, this chapter will detail how, in the years from 1945 to 1965, New Zealand Catholic educators increasingly adopted state models of teacher training and professional development as a way of protecting the educational standards in Catholic schools and the viability of the Catholic educational mission. The chapter begins by outlining the pressures on Catholic schools that resulted from the post-war expansion into secondary schooling. I will demonstrate how, partly as a result of

these pressures and partly out of a desire to align the qualifications of teachers with state requirements, discourses of Catholic teacher training moved incrementally from an “apprenticeship” model based on religious formation and teacher training within religious orders and state certification to a “professional” system that incorporated state “expertise” within a “national” system of Catholic teacher training. From the late 1950s the development of professional and social relations between teachers in Catholic and state schools resulted in a significant improvement in relationships between Catholic educators and their state colleagues and participation in state-run professional development. Diagram 10.1 presents a model of this process and the framework for what follows.

Diagram 10.1: A dynamic model of the training of Catholic teachers 1850-1965



These changes were intended, like the compromises made by Catholic negotiators following the Thomas Report, to maintain the viability of the Catholic educational mission.

Pressures on the New Zealand Catholic system

The increased demand for secondary schooling that took place in New Zealand from the 1920s, as I have detailed in chapter four, had important consequences for the Catholic educational mission. No longer was it sufficient to provide a

comprehensive elementary system of education that transmitted a “simple faith to a simple people”, and a post-primary education for the social and educational advancement of the select few (see chapter four).⁵⁵⁶ In an environment of improving relations between Catholics and the rest of New Zealand society,⁵⁵⁷ increasing numbers of Catholic parents, ambitious for their children’s social and educational success in the world, sent their sons and daughters to Catholic secondary schools to receive an education in the faith and to acquire examination credentials. While growing rolls and the expansion of the post-primary system in the 1940s and 1950s seemed to indicate that the Catholic education system was flourishing, there were concerns about the sustainability of the expansion and escalating costs.⁵⁵⁸ Crucially, for the purposes of this chapter, there were significant issues relating to the credentialing of teachers and the staffing of Catholic primary and secondary schools. In the face of a doubling of the Catholic school population between 1941 and 1961, there was only a thirty percent increase in the number of teaching religious.⁵⁵⁹ Not only were there insufficient religious, but by the 1950s the need for better teaching qualifications and a desire

⁵⁵⁶ See also Collins, "Schooling for faith, citizenship and social mobility."

⁵⁵⁷ See Brosnahan, "Shaming the Shoneens: The Green Ray and The Maoriland Irish Society in Dunedin, 1916-22."; Spenser, "Interim Report."

⁵⁵⁸ Spenser, "Interim Report."

⁵⁵⁹ The number of children enrolled in Catholic schools grew from 27,095 in 1941 to 60,594 in 1961. At the same time the number of Catholic teachers rose from 923 (755 primary, 168 secondary) to 1,654 (1,201 primary, 453 secondary), an increase of only 60% against a more than doubling of the school population. See figure 9.2, table 9.1 and *Ibid.*, 458-65.

for an increasingly “professional” Catholic teaching force led, as I will demonstrate, to a staffing crisis for diocesan education systems.⁵⁶⁰

At the same time there was a tension between the religious and social goals of Catholic secondary schools. In the context of the 1944 Thomas Report and its proposal for a new “common core” curriculum, as I have detailed in chapter eight, the Catholic hierarchy were determined to protect Catholic schools from the influence of “progressive” educational values that emphasized human “experience” and notions of citizenship based on “social efficiency and utility” rather than “more worthy spiritual ideals”.⁵⁶¹ Yet, as became clear in the protracted negotiations between the Catholic bishops and state educational officials, Catholic educators also wished to ensure the equivalence “at least” of Catholic educational standards with state schools⁵⁶² and to satisfy parental aspirations for their children’s social and educational success.⁵⁶³ The requirements of a new curriculum, an expanding post-primary system and a shortage of credentialed teachers placed pressures on a Catholic educational mission that now aimed to provide a post-primary education for the good of all Catholic pupils (see chapter eight). Once again Catholic educational authorities found themselves confronting the question that had faced them in the context of

⁵⁶⁰ Key issues raised in this chapter are discussed in Collins, "Apprentice to professional."

⁵⁶¹ See Redden and Ryan, *A Catholic philosophy of education*. 131-33.

⁵⁶² Dr Noel Gascoigne (Wellington Director of Catholic Education) to Bishop James Liston, 10 July 1944, 3, Christchurch Catholic Diocesan Archives (CCDA).

⁵⁶³ For a detailed discussion of the accommodations made on both sides see Collins, "Ideology and accommodation," 9-25.

the 1877 Education Act: how they might organize and maintain the viability of a system that was qualitatively different from the “secular” state system while ensuring equivalent educational standards. In this instance, the issue came down to how Catholic educators might utilize state expertise for the training and professional development of Catholic teachers whilst protecting distinctively Catholic religious and cultural values. In what follows I examine some of the complex factors at work in a Catholic educational system determined to retain the integrity of religious and cultural values and its autonomy from state control, while improving the professional standards of teachers.

An apprenticeship in teaching: Maintaining the continuity of Catholic values

The apprenticeship model utilized in the training of Catholic teachers by the New Zealand and Australian-based teaching orders in this study was designed to hand on the skills of teaching and to ensure continuity in Catholic religious, cultural and pedagogical values from one generation of Catholic teachers to the next. In female orders such as the Dominicans, the Mission Sisters, the Sisters of St Joseph and the Sisters of Mercy, religious usually began teaching in their own convents under the supervision of a Mistress of Method or Mistress of Studies, as a Sister of Mercy recalled:

We had very good Sisters to train us... the Mistress of Method in this case was a Sister Theresa Mary who was a trained state teacher. She would supervise the young Sisters, not only in Vermont St but in other schools around Auckland... she would teach a bit herself but also have a separate advisory role. (MM9)

Some orders utilized a “Juniorate” as a way of providing intensive teacher training at a time when Catholic teachers were unable to attend state training

institutions. The Australasian-based Religious of the Sacred Heart undertook their religious formation and teacher training at the congregational motherhouse in Sydney. In addition, as the following story illustrates, some Sisters were sent to train at the state training college in Sydney:

We had our spiritual training in the Novitiate for the first year. For the second year we had classes as such in different subjects; subjects that we knew already but to keep up our understanding of them, for most of us. Then we had what is called a Juniorate, and that was preparing us for the future training... we were put into helping in the school... After the novitiate I went to training college in Sydney and did my teacher training there... we were the first ones ... to go to the Sydney Training College. (SW4)

According to the evidence of a number of the female participants in this study, the practice of sending individuals to “work through” the state system of training was relatively widespread among orders such as the Religious of the Sacred Heart, the Sisters of Mercy and the Dominican Sisters. In this way teaching orders were able to incorporate selected aspects of state training methods and pedagogy into their own teacher training.

The process of teacher training in the male orders took various forms. The Marist and Christian Brothers had their own teacher training institutions, while the Society of Mary had “no formal teacher training at all” (SG2). Christian Brothers undertook their teacher training at the Christian Brothers Teachers’ College in Strathfield, Sydney, going out to “various schools... for practice teaching for a week at a time” (CB1). In a practice similar to that of the female teaching orders, a Marist Brother, who later ran the teacher training programme at the Auckland Scholasticate, “was sent to Teachers’ College to see what was done there” (FT10) and to incorporate what he had learned into the Marist Brothers’ teacher training programme.

From 1850 until the early part of the twentieth century, the educational mission of Catholic schools had focussed on the transmission of faith and Catholic cultural practices to the majority of working-class Irish children whose education seldom went beyond primary school. Learning to teach in Catholic primary schools enabled teachers to establish good disciplinary practices – in line with Catholic educational values that emphasised the learning of compliance with authority – as the following extract illustrates:

One Sister, the old Sister Elizabeth, taught at one end of the room and we taught at the top end...In our day, anybody who entered taught first in primary school. You had to do that. It was part of your training so that you would know how to get discipline as you gradually went up the various classes. (OM6)

Mentors played a crucial role in passing on the educational mission of a religious order, “good teaching practice”, and correct Catholic values. They also coached junior teachers in specialist subjects such as mathematics or science. A senior member of a religious order might observe the teacher at work, giving “demonstration lessons” and feedback: “I’d be given a going over afterwards” (CR9). Mentors played an important role in passing on the practices and values of the religious order to which a member owed allegiance. As a Dominican Sister explained it, they were “very concerned that we pass on the correct Dominican tradition” (OM8). Thus at the heart of teacher training in Catholic religious orders in New Zealand in the years of this study was the passing on of expertise, experience and the correct religious values.

Ensuring equivalence with state teachers: Teacher certification and Victorian Registration

The question of the role of congregations in the formation of their members as teachers is one with international implications that invites comparative studies. Whilst teaching orders worked to ensure a continuity of religious values via the apprenticeship system of teacher training, they were also concerned to ensure that the professional qualifications of their teachers were equivalent to those of the state system. From the 1920s onward the teacher training of the Catholic teachers was focused on state certification in New Zealand and Victorian registration in Australia. In an attempt to encourage the large number of unqualified teachers (Catholic and state) to work towards the Teachers' Certificate, the Department of Education set up a correspondence programme.⁵⁶⁴ The majority of Catholic teachers in this study sat their Teacher's C – whether or not they went on to teach in their order's primary or secondary schools. The exceptions to this rule were the Marist Priests who experienced no formal teacher training and two Dominican Sisters with university qualifications who went directly into secondary teaching. Teachers who did the correspondence course had to sit a "Teacher's C" examination "in the August holidays" after completing "a minimum of twelve papers" (FT10). The state certification of Catholic teachers enabled Catholic schools to achieve a basic standard of professional qualifications for their teachers and the equivalence of Catholic primary schools with those of the state system.

While teaching religious in New Zealand studied for New Zealand certification, in Australia only three states required the registration of teachers –

⁵⁶⁴ Harte, *The training of teachers in New Zealand from its origins until 1948*.

Tasmania, Victoria, and South Australia.⁵⁶⁵ The Registration of Teachers and Schools Acts in Victoria (1905) and Tasmania (1906) had prompted teaching orders such as the Religious of the Sacred Heart and the Christian Brothers to develop their own training centres. With the extension of the Victorian registration scheme into New South Wales, this registration became the main professional qualification for trainee teachers in the Religious of the Sacred Heart and the Christian Brothers who might later teach in New South Wales or Victoria, and for those who later returned to teach in New Zealand schools as a Religious of the Sacred Heart explained:

In order to teach in our Australian houses we had to be equipped to teach on either side of the Tasman and we had to have Victorian registration because Victoria with its high cultural values was not going to have teachers who hadn't been through its training. I was in Sydney so actually the inspectors had to come up... Once a year this took place and we were presented to them. We had an interview with them and then we had to teach. (SP7)

The process of certification, whether in New Zealand or Australia, was an arduous one as teachers studied after a full teaching day and over and above the requirements of religious life as a Dominican Sister recalled:

You just had to trust in God because you knew you didn't have time to do everything you wanted to do and to do it properly. There wasn't that time...and we even got our exams, you'd wonder how we did but we did. (OC7)

⁵⁶⁵ Fogarty, *Catholic education in Australia*.

From the late 1950s religious orders such as the Dominicans and the Sisters of St Joseph began to pool the expertise of their specialist teachers in the training and certification of their primary teachers as a Dominican Sister recalled:

The Josephite Sisters from Waimate used to come in, and our own Sisters (to) do their teachers' training in the convent. Inspectors would come to their classes. But they had to sit about nine subjects and I did the science with them... Sisters who were doing their Teacher's C and Teacher's D had to have sixty hours doing (science) practical work. I had to sign it for the Education Department before they could sit their exams. (OW21)

Thus the training of primary teachers in the Catholic education system was predicated on an apprenticeship model in which teachers were socialised into the values and practices of a particular order, values sustained in the early years of teaching by the mentoring of senior teachers. Catholic teachers learned to teach in the primary schools as they worked for their teacher's certification, a practice adopted by the teaching orders to protect professional standards in Catholic schools and the viability of the Catholic educational mission.

Improving the qualifications of secondary teachers

From the 1920s onwards, as I have detailed in chapter four, there was a redefinition of the original nineteenth-century educational mission of creating and maintaining a separate elementary Catholic school system in New Zealand.⁵⁶⁶ Catholic secondary schools, initially advocated as a way of protecting Catholic pupils from the "evil influence" of state secondary schools, were seen increasingly as a means of promoting Catholic citizenship and social and economic mobility, "now that higher education is no longer the privilege of

⁵⁶⁶ See also Spenser, "Interim Report."

the wealthy”.⁵⁶⁷ The Thomas Committee’s new “common core” curriculum with its provision for “a generous and well balanced education”⁵⁶⁸ for all adolescents had significant implications for Catholic secondary schools. In the post-war years, a rising Catholic birth rate and a diminishing pool of religious led to shortages of plant and resources and an increased pupil-teacher ratio in Catholic schools.⁵⁶⁹ At the same time Catholic authorities were intent on maintaining educational parity with state schools in order to ensure the continued success of the Catholic educational mission through access to and success in the state examination system.⁵⁷⁰

Faced with the rapidly-expanding secondary rolls in the years after World War Two, religious orders such as the Sisters of Mercy faced an urgent need for more qualified secondary teachers. As a Mercy Sister explained it: “the Sisters of Mercy decided it was a very wise idea to have the Sisters educated, to have a degree if you were in secondary” (MN5). From the 1950s onwards many religious completed university qualifications as part of their training to teach specialist subjects such as Mathematics and Science at senior secondary level

⁵⁶⁷ See *NZ Tablet*, 3 May 1923, 4.

⁵⁶⁸ "Letter and Memorandum," 5.

⁵⁶⁹ In 1941 pupil-teacher ratios in Catholic schools were 32.0 (primary) and 17.3 (secondary) compared with a state ratio of 30.6 and 18.9 respectively. By 1961 Catholic ratios had increased to 40.5 and 26.2, while state ratios were a more respectable 32.9 (primary) and 20.1 (secondary). Spenser, "Interim Report," 468.

⁵⁷⁰ Collins, "Ideology and accommodation."

(see photo 10.1).⁵⁷¹ There was often little choice about either going on to university or the subject studied, as a Christian Brother recalled:

Somebody calls out and says, “Brother Marlow wants you to go to University and you say, ‘That’s what he wants, I’ll go’”. There was a certain amount of direction as to what subjects were to be done too. There wasn’t a lot of freedom in this circumstance. We were still in black suits and black hats and things, walking around the campus and we would go back to our van at lunchtime and have our lunches together. (CJ8)

While Sisters and Brothers might be encouraged to attend university lectures as a way of preparing them to teach at the secondary level, religious orders were concerned to protect their members from unnecessary exposure to the outside world. As the previous extract illustrates, Christian Brothers continued to wear “black suits and black hats” and were restricted in their social contacts with other students. Nevertheless, from the 1950s onwards increased numbers of religious completed university qualifications. A Sister of the Sacred Heart recalled that: “a lot of our Sisters were... doing science... [and] arts degrees” (MK7) as part of their training to teach particular subjects at senior secondary school “I did Maths one while I was at Silverstream” (SJ4).

Despite the increasing numbers of religious undertaking university qualifications, the majority of Catholic secondary teachers learned to teach under supervision in their orders’ primary schools. A teacher who already had a university qualification recalled in the 1940s that her “work was inspected” and even when she was allowed to teach at secondary level it was, “in harness with another Sister” (MM10). This was justified on the basis that “you would know how to get discipline as you gradually went up the various classes” (OM6) and in

⁵⁷¹ A trend noted by the participants in the six orders represented in this study.

response to concerns that teachers should learn the correct “Catholic traditions” before teaching at secondary level. It was a practice that gradually changed in the 1960s when teachers who entered religious life with university and teaching qualifications went straight into secondary teaching.

Loreto Hall: Incorporating “state expertise” in a “national” system of Catholic teacher training

The establishment in 1950 of a Catholic training college at Loreto Hall, Auckland, was seen by the bishops as a “national” solution to the crisis facing the training of Catholic teachers. In a situation where Catholic religious were not admitted into state training colleges,⁵⁷² the hierarchy saw that there was an urgent need to establish a teacher training facility founded on Catholic “principles and aims” while promoting professional standards “within the framework of the State”, including the preparation of Catholic teachers for state primary certification.⁵⁷³ As a Religious of the Sacred Heart explained:

Loreto Hall started simply because Nuns and Brothers were not permitted to go to the state teachers’ college, so the Bishop [James Liston] asked our Order, because we were doing this in other countries, to run a primary school teachers’ college there. (SA8)

⁵⁷² State training institutions saw their primary purpose as the training of state teachers. Until the 1960s religious were prohibited from wearing habits to university or teacher training colleges. See discussion on p.344. See also Harte, *The training of teachers in New Zealand from its origins until 1948*.

⁵⁷³ “Meeting of principals and head teachers held at Loreto Hall on Saturday 20th February, 1960”, 2. Sisters of the Sacred Heart Archives (hereafter SSHA)

Loreto Hall, run by the Religious of the Sacred Heart, was modelled on Sacred Heart “training colleges throughout Europe, the British Isles, North and South America, the East, and Australia”.⁵⁷⁴ Drawing on their international educational connections, the Society invited two Scottish Sisters of the Sacred Heart, Josephine Welsh and Kathleen Adamson to establish the new venture. A New Zealand Sister, Patricia Mackle, undertook postgraduate training at Edinburgh University and Craiglockhart before taking up the role as principal.⁵⁷⁵

Four of the participants in this study attended Loreto Hall. While the religious education programme formed “the central pivotal point in their training”,⁵⁷⁶ students undertook a professional and curriculum studies programme and teaching practice in Catholic schools in preparation for the “dreaded (Teachers’) C exam” (SA8).⁵⁷⁷ Although their overall numbers tended to be relatively small, the students attending the training college came from a wide range of teaching orders.⁵⁷⁸ On completing the two year course, a graduate

⁵⁷⁴ See “Survey of Loreto Hall: Buildings, staff, organization, curriculum equipment, 1954”, 1, SSHA.

⁵⁷⁵ “Loreto Hall 1950-1985: Dream and reality and memory” n.d., SSHA.

⁵⁷⁶ The Dominican Fathers taught Moral and Dogmatic Theology and the History and Principles of Philosophy. From “Loreto Hall 1950-1985”, 3, SSHA.

⁵⁷⁷ Professional studies included history and theory of education, child development, psychology and the principles and practice of teaching. Curriculum studies included English Language and Literature, History, Geography (later part of Social Studies), Science, Music, Art and Craft and Physical Education. “Loreto Hall 1950-1985”, 1-3, SSHA.

⁵⁷⁸ In 1954 there were twenty-two trainees from eight different religious orders. ‘Survey: 1954’, SSHA.

was awarded a “Loreto Hall Training College Certificate” based on “a record of her teaching ability... in the internal term examinations and in the external state C Examination”.⁵⁷⁹ A Dominican Sister remembered the innovative “modern teaching methods” (OC8) she learned at Loreto Hall, methods she later practiced in the primary classroom:

I did everything I could, class management, the methods of teaching and everything... then I went to Helensville for one year as a class teacher... in a country place I had all the time and the enthusiasm and I worked hard. (OC8)

The College maintained a close relationship with state educational authorities. The Education Department functioned in an advisory capacity “referring us to effective resource material... coming as guest speakers and keeping us abreast of changing trends”.⁵⁸⁰ In this way Loreto Hall was able to incorporate state expertise into its programme and to work within the “state framework” while maintaining the continuity of Catholic values.

For the first ten years of its existence the students at Loreto Hall were female members of religious orders but by the early 1960s lay women were admitted⁵⁸¹. Loreto Hall was accredited as a training college in 1963. Until then students had to sit the state certification examination as if they were correspondence students. In the years of its operation (1950-85), Loreto Hall

⁵⁷⁹ “Survey: 1954”, 4, SSHA.

⁵⁸⁰ From “Loreto Hall 1950-1985”, 1-3, SSHA.

⁵⁸¹ In the 1950s the majority of Catholic teachers were women religious, lay teachers were few in number and male religious retained their own ‘national’ systems of training (see chapter ten).

trained 787 Catholic teachers; the majority (228 religious and 211 lay teachers) were trained for the Auckland diocese.⁵⁸² In the 1970s male students, first Marist Brothers, then lay men, were admitted to Loreto Hall. Nevertheless, some Catholic educators had reservations about the quality of teacher training, with one participant observing that “the state inspector didn’t have a very high opinion of it”. The cost of sending recruits was seen to be high. A former Director of Catholic education observed that “it became costly” (DT3-4) at Loreto Hall. Religious orders were sensitive too to the need to maintain the integrity of their own educational mission and their autonomy from the control of diocesan educational authorities. It is possible that they were reluctant to surrender their trainees to other influences during the crucial years of their formation. In a practice not unlike the sending of religious for training at state colleges, a number of religious orders sent individuals to be trained at Loreto Hall, after which they utilised their expertise to set up their own teacher training facilities. As one Dominican Sister later recalled: “I was to go to Dunedin, to Dominican Hall (to run) a mini training college”(OC8).⁵⁸³

Thus Loreto Hall was, at most, a partial solution to the teacher credentialing crisis facing Catholic schools. It provided a “national” system of Catholic teacher training that took advantage of state expertise in areas such as Departmental support and curriculum advice. It protected the integrity of Catholic religious values by incorporating state professional standards and

⁵⁸² Loreto Hall closed in 1985 after which Catholic teachers trained in state teachers’ colleges. “Loreto Hall 1950-1985”, SSHA.

⁵⁸³ See also Strevens, *In step with time*.

pedagogical advances into a Catholic model of teacher training, thus enabling trainees to gain their state certification while retaining a distinctive Catholic outlook. However at a time of demands for improved qualifications for secondary teachers, its focus remained on primary certification. In addition many religious orders, mindful of the costs and protective of their own autonomy, continued to train their own recruits.

Responding to a crisis in teacher training

In spite of the appointment around 1950 of several retired inspectors from the Department of Education as “inspectors”⁵⁸⁴ of Catholic schools, and attempts by religious orders to improve the qualifications of Catholic teachers, the continued rise in the number of children attending Catholic schools in the 1950s led to an increased pupil-teacher ratio, heavier workloads for Catholic teachers, a worsening pedagogic situation for pupils and eventually to threats of school deregistration by state inspectors.⁵⁸⁵ The long threatened crisis came to a head in Christchurch in the early 1960s, as a former Director of Education in the Christchurch diocese recalled:

So in the end an ultimatum was given by the District Senior Inspector of Schools that... “We may have to deregister some of your schools. You don’t have qualified people”... so we worked out eventually that we had to

⁵⁸⁴ Spenser, "Interim Report."

⁵⁸⁵ The total number of Catholic children aged 5-14 years grew from an estimated 41,400 in 1941 to 82,507 in 1961. See figures 4.1 and 9.2. In 1956, 7 out of 10 Catholic school children were enrolled in Catholic schools. Thereafter the indices of coverage fell despite the continued rise in numbers on the rolls. See Table B.5 Ibid., 463. Around 1950 three primary schools in the Diocese of Auckland were also listed for deregistration. See Spenser, "Interim Report," 208-10.

reduce classes and take out twenty nuns or brothers each year for five years [to do their Teachers' C]... we struck considerable opposition mainly from the religious who said we were destroying the system. (DT2)

Despite the “opposition” of some religious orders to the withdrawal of teachers from Catholic schools, the threat had the desired effect, and according to a Director of Catholic education: “the religious got the message that they had to have trained people in front of their classes” (DT3). By the mid-1960s the Christchurch diocese began cautiously to send nuns to the local state teachers’ college. This development, which enabled Catholic teachers to take part in teacher training at a state-run training college, was watched with interest by the Catholic educational authorities in other dioceses. As a former Director of Catholic education observed: “they were very watchful and concerned to see the results of what we were doing” (DT4). As he noted, there were a number of initial problems including an objection by college authorities to the wearing of habits in the college “its inhibiting for lecturers” (DT3). After some negotiation between the religious orders, the diocese and the college authorities, Sisters were permitted to change into civilian dress (at the college) before attending class. However, difficulties in finding a place to change eventually resulted in Sisters adopting “civilian dress” (DT3). The Christchurch experiment was to provide a model for other dioceses, but that story is beyond the scope of this chapter.

The independence of national and internationally-based orders caused considerable difficulties of planning and staffing for diocesan educational authorities as the following extract illustrates:⁵⁸⁶

⁵⁸⁶ During the period of this study the Religious of the Sacred Heart and the Christian Brothers were based in Australia while the Society of Mary, the Marist Brothers and the

One of the difficulties I found about the education and staffing was the orders that were national... such as the Marist Brothers and the Mission Nuns... they would pull teachers out for somewhere else... the Mercy nuns were confined to the diocese... it was much easier to ensure that staff who were good were held here and kept in the confines of Canterbury and Westland. (DT4)

Thus the crisis in the Catholic educational mission that resulted from the staffing of Catholic schools and the further credentialing of Catholic teachers was made worse by the conflicting priorities of teaching orders and diocesan educational authorities and their consequent failure to enact a coordinated response to the staffing and teacher credentialing issues facing Catholic schools.

Adopting an integrated model of professional development

The integration of Catholics into the mainstream of New Zealand society that took place in the 1950s⁵⁸⁷ occurred alongside challenges to religious to renew and adapt to the needs of the “modern world”. In 1952, Pope Pius XII called on religious to make “suitable adaptation to the present day situation”, a call which resulted in some modifications to religious dress and a loosening of restrictions on travel.⁵⁸⁸ Crucially for the ongoing viability of the Catholic educational mission there was a growing expectation not only for higher standards of teacher training among Catholic religious but also that ongoing professional

Dominican Sisters were “national” congregations. As “pontifical” orders they were not subject to the authority of the local bishop – unlike diocesan-based orders such as the Sisters of Mercy and the Sisters of St Joseph of Nazareth. See chapter four.

⁵⁸⁷ See Akenson, *Half the world from home*; van der Krogt, “More a part than apart”.

⁵⁸⁸ Pope Pius XII, “Address to the Superiors General of Religious Orders”, Castel Gandolfo, 15 September 1952, reported in the *Zealandia*, 25 September 1952, 4.

development should keep pace with developments in pedagogy and the increased specialisation taking place in secondary education.

The “thaw” in social relations between the Catholic educational authorities and the State that began in the context of the negotiations around the Thomas Report,⁵⁸⁹ was accelerated by the appointment of several laymen, ex-inspectors of the Department of Education, as Inspectors or Directors of Catholic schools. These appointments were instrumental in promoting the ongoing professional development of Catholic teachers and better relationships with state teachers, as A.E.C. W. Spenser noted:

At least one of these was very conscious of the professional and social isolation of the Catholic schools at that time, and did a great deal to encourage the Religious to enter into social and professional relations with teachers in State schools.⁵⁹⁰

By the late 1950s, as the restrictions on religious life eased,⁵⁹¹ Catholic teachers began to develop contacts with their peers in state schools. They began to take part in community activities. A Catholic inspector observed “there is full participation in the city’s ‘Education Week’: they even swap classes for the day”.⁵⁹² As he noted, teachers participated in state run refresher courses, “a course (on organisation and method) organised by one of the District Education Boards, was one of the first to be heavily attended by Sisters... the District

⁵⁸⁹ Collins, "Ideology and accommodation."

⁵⁹⁰ Spenser, "Interim Report," 257.

⁵⁹¹ From the late 1950s, in the years leading up to the Second Vatican Council religious were able to get permission to go outside the convent or monastery for approved purposes.

⁵⁹² Interview with Catholic inspector quoted in Spenser, "Interim Report," 257.

President of the NZEI (New Zealand Educational Institute)⁵⁹³ was most impressed".⁵⁹⁴ Catholic teachers also joined professional associations as a

Dominican Sister explained:

When I came to the Priory I was secretary to the Otago Maths Science Association in Dunedin which always included several members of the university staff and heads of science of various schools. One of the teachers would pick me up and take me along to the meeting. (OW 15-16)

As a consequence of their involvement in "national committees" and "refresher courses" Catholic teachers became increasingly "accepted" by their colleagues in the state system, as a Marist Priest recalled:

I got involved in the national committee [New Maths]. But I certainly was dragged in by the Catholics also. I spoke to Nuns and we had a course for some of the Brothers and so on. But the Sisters and the Brothers, the religious used to turn up to the national refresher courses... we were well accepted... Sister _____, she was one of the leaders who gave lectures. (SJ10)

Thus by the mid-1960s, in the context of the Second Vatican Council and a time when questions were beginning to be asked about the nature and purpose of religious life, Catholic religious were not only utilising state-run professional development but they were also contributing the expertise and the best practice of their own teachers in what increasingly became an integrated approach to the professional development of Catholic teachers. It was a two-way process that

⁵⁹³ Relations between Catholic educators and the NZEI (teachers' union) and later, the PPTA had historically been rather frosty over issues such as the state funding of Catholic schools.

⁵⁹⁴ Interview with Catholic inspector quoted in Spenser, "Interim Report," 257.

produced benefits for both Catholic and state educators – as the following account from a Marist Priest demonstrates:

In the work that I had done with a fairly large number of state teachers, I realised that they were not only highly professional people, but also very committed people, seeking what was best for their students. (SJ13)

This chapter has focussed on a consideration of shifts in Catholic discourses of teacher training and professional development, shifts made in response to a crisis of staffing and professional standards. Nevertheless, it is worth remembering, that the state system itself underwent considerable changes as concepts of teacher training moved from “amateur” to “professional”.⁵⁹⁵ As a Marist Priest explained it in the context of secondary education, state teachers were “amateur” in the same sense as Catholic teachers until the establishment of the first secondary teachers’ college.⁵⁹⁶

[Catholic education] was amateur rather than professional for a long time after state schools became professional... right up to... the first secondary teachers’ college, the 1940s, somewhere around then... You see up until then it was possible for anybody who had knowledge of a subject to be given the job as a secondary teacher. The Catholic schools remained that way much longer. (SJ11)

During the period covered by this study the concept of Catholic teacher training via an apprenticeship system was gradually replaced by the notion of a

⁵⁹⁵ See Harte, *The training of teachers in New Zealand from its origins until 1948*.

⁵⁹⁶ In 1936 the Auckland Training College appointed a “Lecturer in Secondary Method” and became the “sole institution” in the country catering especially for secondary training. See *Ibid.*, 54. A full secondary training facility was established at Auckland Secondary Training College in 1964.

professionally educated teacher. As this chapter has demonstrated, the training of Catholic religious as teachers was shaped by religious and secular influences; it constituted a unique professional education as both a religious and as an educator.⁵⁹⁷ Moves to “professionalize” Catholic teachers occurred at three levels: order, diocesan, and nationally. Although the results of these moves were somewhat uneven, by the 1960s Catholic teachers were taking part in professional development and refresher courses as a way of protecting the standards of teaching in Catholic schools and the ongoing viability of the Catholic educational mission. This development took place at a time when the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) was signalling a sea change in the Catholic Church: a time when all teaching religious began to reconsider their role and function.⁵⁹⁸ But the consequences of that momentous event are beyond the time period of this research.

Conclusion

During the years surveyed by this study Catholic teachers were the most important catalysts for the passing on of Catholic beliefs, attitudes and values to the next generation of Catholic pupils. This chapter has highlighted some of the complex processes at work in a training system that was determined to maintain its own autonomy while at the same time protecting the educational standards of Catholic schools. The consequences of the expansion of the Catholic educational mission into secondary schools included burgeoning rolls, staffing shortages, and

⁵⁹⁷ See also Smyth, "Much exertion of the voice," 97-113.

⁵⁹⁸ The Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) asked religious orders to re-examine their founding vision.

a crisis over teacher credentialing. I demonstrated how these pressures hastened shifts from an “apprenticeship model” of teacher training based within the different religious orders to a system of training that focused on primary teacher certification. The establishment of a Catholic training college at Loreto Hall in 1950, although only a partial solution to the teacher credentialing crisis, enabled Catholic teacher training to incorporate “state” professional standards and pedagogical advances into a “national” model of primary teacher training that retained its distinctive Catholic outlook.

From the 1950s onwards increasing numbers of religious completed university qualifications as part of their training to teach specialist subjects such as Mathematics and Science at secondary level, yet the majority continued to learn to teach via an apprenticeship system in their orders’ primary schools. Factors such as a lifting of some of the restrictions of religious life and the development of professional and social relations with state educators came together by the 1960s to enable Catholic teachers to take part in state-run professional development. By the mid-1960s, at a time when questions were beginning to be asked about the nature and purpose of religious life, teaching orders were not only utilising state models of professional development but were also contributing the expertise and the best practice of their own teachers in what increasingly became an integrated approach to the professional development of New Zealand educators.

Changes in the training and professional development of Catholic teachers in the years covered by this study were designed to protect the educational standards of Catholic schools and to maintain the viability of an

educational mission that aimed to transmit the Catholic faith and culture and to promote the social and educational advancement of Catholic pupils.

57. Q.—What did Jesus do for the Church by His death?

A.—Jesus, by His death, won life for His Church.

58. Q.—Why was Christ's death the new covenant?

A.—Christ's death was the new covenant because by it God made peace with men, and gave them all they need to live as God's sons.

For my life, Jesus died to win life for the Church. I will be loyal to its teachings.

Prayer: Holy Father, be merciful to us, whom You have redeemed in the Blood of Your only Son.

Scripture: Thou wast slain in sacrifice, out of every tribe, every language, every people, every nation, Thou hast ransomed us with Thy blood and given us to God. (Apocalypse 5. 9.)

Liturgy: Every Mass repeats Christ's act of covenant.

Activities:

1. Project, illustrated, on the making of the Old and New Covenants, to show:
(a) that the New is superior,
(b) that it is eternal.
2. Read the Epistles of the Christmas Masses and Matthew 26. 26-29; John 6. 55; Romans 6. 10-11; Hebrews 9. 13-14; 1 Peter 2. 10, and put down what they tell you of the New Covenant.

Reason:

1. For whom did Christ die?
2. When did God make His covenant with His people?
3. How was the New Covenant made?
4. For whom was the New Covenant made?
5. How long is the New Covenant to last?

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CHAPTER 41

THE VICTORIOUS CHRIST FOUNDED HIS CHURCH

(Read Acts 1. 3-8 and Luke 24. 35-39.)

On Easter night the Great Conqueror came with power to the frightened apostles: "I am sending you out in My turn", He said. (John 20. 21.) He had won forgiveness and all graces for His Church, and now, before He would go to His Father in triumph, He would give it His command and His authority. Before the Ascension He said.—

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Illustration 11.1: The Catholic Catechism (Book two, published in 1963) emphasised the centrality of Christ and "following" Christ through a guided reading of the bible, the sacraments and living gospel values. *Author's collection*



Photo 11.2: Boys learned to take part in the liturgical life of the Church, training as altar boys and learning to assist the priest at Mass. Altar boys in training c.1950s. *F E McGregor Collection Canterbury Museum*



St Mary's School First Communion

Photo 11.3: First Communion class at St Mary's School Ahuriri, Sisters of the Mission c.1960s. As well as "learning the faith" via the catechism, pupils were socialised into the sacramental life of the Church through formal ceremonies such as "First Communion".

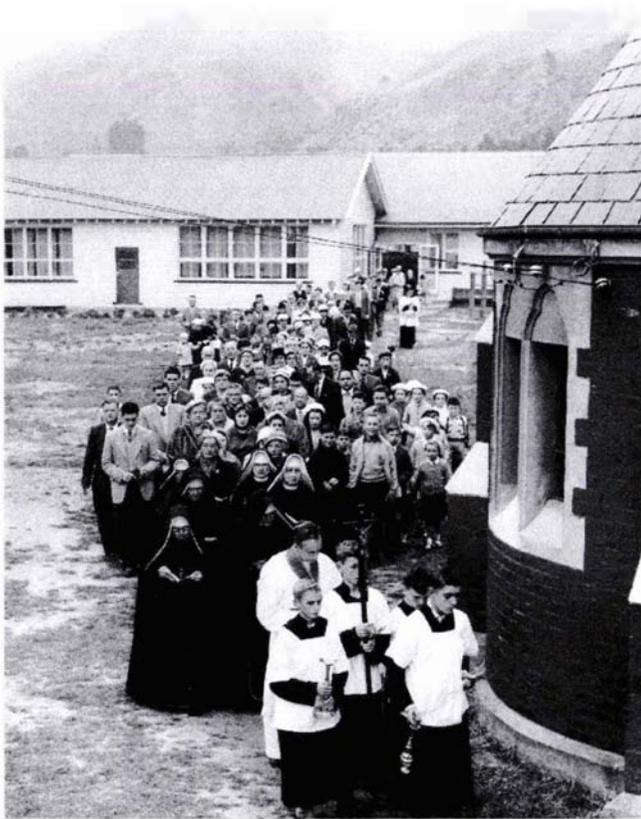


Photo 11.4: Procession to Church of Our Lady, Star of the Sea, Sumner, c.1950. Pupils took part in whole community rituals such as "Processions", Benedictions and paraliturgies. *F.E. McGregor Collection Canterbury Museum.*

Chapter Eleven

Transmitting the faith and maintaining a distinctive Catholic culture

If you are only preparing human beings for their mortality, then you may be jeopardising their immortality and which is more important, to gain the world or lose your own soul? That was the values. (DJ8)

Introduction

As previous chapters have detailed, Catholic educational authorities, while working to maintain the distinctive values of a separate Catholic education system, found it increasingly necessary to accommodate state requirements in the area of curriculum reform and teacher training. In the context of the Thomas reforms the negotiations between Catholic hierarchy and the Department of Education highlight the paradox of the Catholic position. Although their stated aim was to safeguard the pupils in Catholic schools from the threat of state-imposed secular values, the Catholic bishops also wanted (as did Catholic teachers), to protect the general standard of education in Catholic schools and the educational and economic advancement of their pupils. Ironically, in order to ensure the success of the Catholic educational mission the Catholic educational authorities found themselves accommodating the educational reforms of the Thomas curriculum but only after they had negotiated changes to the core curriculum that protected Catholic interests. The conflict between maintaining a

continuity of religious values and the desire to align the qualifications of Catholic teachers with state requirements was played out, as we have seen, in the context of teacher training of Catholic religious. On the one hand the highly regulated environment of the Novitiate worked to “form” religious who would reproduce distinctive Catholic values in schools, on the other, the training and professional development of Catholic teachers in the years between 1945 and 1965 increasingly incorporated aspects of the state model.

For Catholics, education was not insulated from deeper spiritual values and articles of faith. The education of Catholics was the manifestation of a religious worldview rather than a complement or adjunct to it. In this way Catholic schools, justified on the basis that education must be infused by a religious atmosphere, provided the most formal and organised means by which Catholic beliefs, attitudes and values were transmitted to the young. In the following account I will demonstrate how the Catholic educational mission to transmit the faith and Catholic cultural practices, while maintaining certain core values, was a dynamic model that responded to both internal and external influences. Catholic religious identity, marked in the 1920s and 1930s by a distrust of modern society, slowly changed during the period of this study as the result of a growing desire to respond to secular changes and to reach an accommodation with the modern world. Catholics had come to believe that every young person had a right to the education and training necessary to “the successful pursuit of his [or her] temporal vocation, and for taking his [or her] place as a worthy member of society”.⁵⁹⁹ Thus notions of a distinctively Catholic

⁵⁹⁹ Redden and Ryan, *A Catholic philosophy of education*. 134.

“moral citizenship” which had grown up in the 1930s (see chapter four) now included a desire to successfully integrate Catholics into the wider New Zealand society. In the years after 1945, Catholic pupils, in accordance with democratic principles, were encouraged to develop the “knowledges, skills, interests, habits, powers, and ideals requisite to the realisation of [their] full potential as a worthy member[s] of society, the Church, the home, the school”.⁶⁰⁰ Fundamental to the Catholic educational mission, however, was the belief that education for temporal purposes was subordinate to education for “man’s eternal destiny”.⁶⁰¹

This chapter will examine the teaching of the Catholic faith in Catholic schools that moved in the years covered by this study from a traditional model of catechesis to a kerygmatic catechesis which incorporated selected pedagogical developments and progressive ideas. I will demonstrate how in accepting new pedagogical models for the transmission of faith, Catholic teachers incorporated these within their existing practice as a way of ensuring the continuity of religious values while adapting the Catholic spiritual identity to changing times. The second part of the chapter will examine informal aspects of Catholic culture, the construction of a Catholic “atmosphere”, the intersection of culture and manners, the practice of discipline, and the tensions between conservative cultural values and new understandings of the Catholic educational mission. I will demonstrate how, the complex cultural practices that characterised the life of Catholic schools in the period of this study were grounded in Catholic faith traditions and premised on the acceptance of the authority of God and the

⁶⁰⁰ Ibid.,141.

⁶⁰¹ Ibid.,134.

Church. Deference to authority was manifested culturally in the emphasis on conformity, the promotion of the highly regulated religious life, enculturation of manners and discipline practices. The emphasis on Catholic cultural practices, as the following will demonstrate, was designed to maintain the distinctive identity of Catholic schools and the ongoing viability of the core values of the Catholic educational mission.

Catholic religious values and the educational mission

Maintaining a distinctive identity in a secular world

The religious values that underpinned the Catholic educational mission reflected (in the view of a former diocesan director of education) a faith that “prepared human beings for their immortality”.

What we were doing in the Catholic schools was... inculcating the fact that we had a faith that went far beyond in significance and particularly in relationship to human destiny. The stuff that in a sense the state schools were teaching... if you are only preparing human beings for their mortality, then you may be jeopardising their immortality and which is more important, to gain the world or lose your own soul? That was the values... It seems to me that we're still doing the same thing, [although] the struggle is a little harder because Protestants did at least believe in Christianity. This was a Protestant Christian Society. It was a real WASP [White Anglo-Saxon Protestant] society... right up until the 1940s. (DJ8)

This extract illuminates the disjuncture between the goals of a state education that prepared “human beings for their mortality” and a Catholic education that prepared pupils for their ultimate salvation. As we have seen in part two of this thesis, it was this disagreement about the ultimate goals of education that provided a rationale for Catholic education and underpinned the debates between Church and State educational authorities in the context of the Thomas reforms. In the first place, as the speaker says, Catholics saw themselves as a distinct group whose identity was based on rejection by and suspicion of the secular culture

within which they lived. Rejection of the values of the state curriculum, exemplified in Catholic objections to the Thomas reforms, detailed in chapter eight, was based *not* on the Thomas curriculum's aim to prepare adolescents "for an active place in our New Zealand society as worker, neighbour, homemaker and citizen".⁶⁰² Catholic social philosophy, as we have seen, increasingly called for the greater integration of Catholics in contemporary New Zealand society. Rather, Catholics objected to the assumption that a state-mandated curriculum based on secular values could provide "a generous and well balanced education... (aimed) "at the full development of the adolescent as a person".⁶⁰³ This objection, as the speaker explains, was based on its limited goals, which in the Catholic view jeopardised "their immortality". Nevertheless, as the speaker notes, Catholics shared a number of key values with the contemporary "WASP" (White Anglo-Saxon Protestant) society: "Protestants did at least believe in Christianity". In this way they could agree in principle on the necessity for the inclusion of religious education in schools, although as we have seen in the Bible in Schools debates (see chapter six) they continued to dispute the content and delivery of such a programme.

Transmitting the faith by traditional catechesis

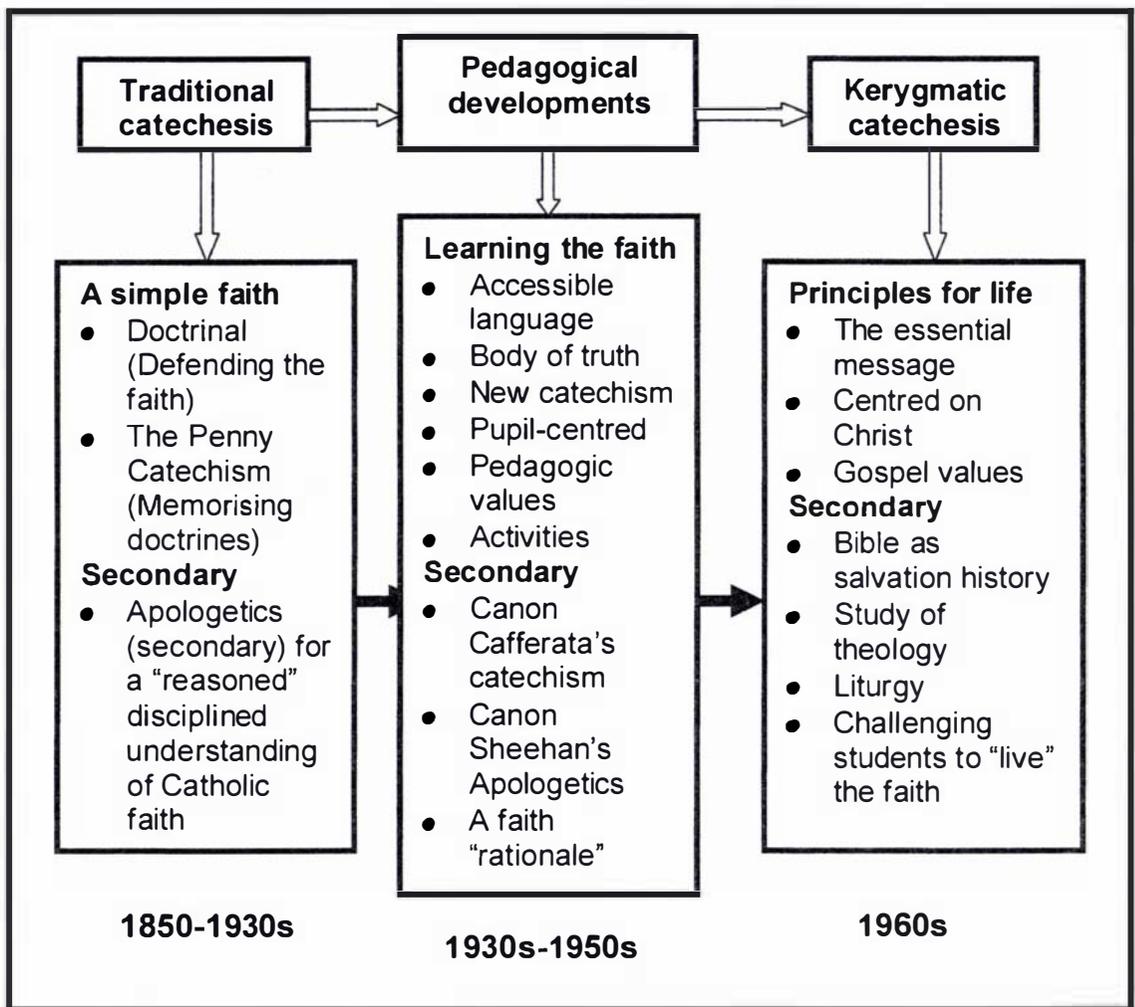
The fundamental premise of the Catholic educational mission was the transmission of the Catholic faith via the tenets of Christian doctrine to the next generation of Catholic pupils. Knowledge of Catholic faith and traditions enabled pupils to participate in the sacramental and liturgical life of the Church and in

⁶⁰² "The Thomas Report," 5.

⁶⁰³ Ibid.

practices that aimed at their personal sanctification, thus preparing them for their ultimate salvation. In the twentieth century the transmission of faith in Catholic schools was a process characterised by three stages that M. Flynn called “traditional catechesis”, “kerygmatic catechesis” and “experiential catechesis”⁶⁰⁴ (see diagram 11.1).

Diagram 11.1: A dynamic model of faith transmission in New Zealand Catholic schools 1850-1965



⁶⁰⁴ Catechesis is the process of introducing young people (or adult converts) to the main elements of the Christian Faith. The Experiential catechesis stage is not examined here as it falls after 1965, outside the period under consideration.

In “traditional catechesis”, which emerged about the time of the Council of Trent (1545-1563), the catechism was the prime source of Catholic teachings.⁶⁰⁵ The “penny catechism”, based on an earlier Irish version, appeared in New Zealand after the 1886 Australasian Plenary Council of Bishops, and became the basic, and in many cases the only text in religious knowledge.⁶⁰⁶ It was seen as a tool for defending the faith against the predominantly Protestant world into which school leavers would be released as the following observation by a former

Director of Education illustrates:

The Penny Catechism was very definitely an anti-Protestant book... You’ve got to bear in mind that the world that they were coming out into was a very Protestant world still. When I went to the seminary, someone said to me, “If you didn’t go to the seminary, what would you like to do?” I said, “I would like to go to University”. They said, “You can’t go there, that’s for Protestants”. (DJ5)

This extract illustrates Catholic perceptions, explored in chapter three, that the 1920s New Zealand society was “a very Protestant world”, a world from which they felt excluded. The recollection that Catholics couldn’t go to University — “you can’t go there it’s for Protestants” — is a reminder that access to higher education was seen to be beyond the reach of the predominantly working-class “Irish” Catholic population. It also suggests that the seminary provided one avenue for further education for able young Catholic men. Although the earlier “penny catechism” was replaced by a newer version in 1938, the religious

⁶⁰⁵ M Flynn, *The culture of Catholic schools* (Homebush NSW, 1993).

⁶⁰⁶ In 1937 the Fourth Plenary Council of Australian bishops had decreed that the same Catechism should be used in all New Zealand and Australian dioceses. “Idem Catechismus in omnibus diocesisibus Australiae et Novae Zealandiae tradatur”. *Conc. Plen.*, IV, 1937, decr. 616., cited in Fogarty, *Catholic education in Australia*. 391, 93.

education it taught continued to be “doctrinal and theological”, as a Dominican

Sister explained:

Religious education in those days wasn't quite the same as it is now. It was more doctrinal and theological. We had our brown “catechism” book, which you would know nothing about, and then a new one, which came out later, long before your [the interviewer's] time. It was question and answer but with everything thoroughly explained... It was the whole theology summarised, commandments, sacraments etc and it was done by question and answer. (OM11)

Some Catholic commentators argued that the catechism placed too much reliance on the memorising of doctrinal formulae and too little emphasis on “rendering the saving truths of religion functional in the minds and hearts of the pupils”.⁶⁰⁷

Nevertheless memorisation of Catholic doctrines remained a key part of a religious education that emphasised the handing on of the tenets of Catholic faith, a skill about which many were proud as the same Sister recalled:

If I were asked, “How do you know that the Catholic Church is the true Church?” Well I learnt, “The Catholic Church is the true Church because it has four marks. It is one, holy, Catholic and apostolic”. (OM17)

In order to ensure that pupils were trained “correctly” and by competent teachers, they were examined yearly by a diocesan examiner, “who was in every case to be a priest”.⁶⁰⁸ In the primary schools, an inspector asked “every child to recite a prayer” and “say a Bible story”. It could be a frightening experience for pupils as the following quotation from a former Director of Education illustrates:

You asked every child a catechism question, you asked every child to recite a prayer. There were a certain lot of prayers, Our Father, Hail Mary,

⁶⁰⁷ A.E. O'Brien, "The practical aim of religious teaching," *Australasian Catholic Record* April, 1926, 126., cited in Fogarty, *Catholic education in Australia*. 394.

⁶⁰⁸ *Conc. Plen.*, IV, 1937, decr. 639, cited in Fogarty, *Catholic education in Australia*. 390.

Hail Holy Queen, Act of Faith, Hope and Charity. You asked that from each child and elderly people still come to me occasionally and say, “I wasn’t able to say my prayers, I was scared stiff”. Also they had to say a Bible story. That was it basically. By and large, it went from primary school through to Form Six. (DJ6)

At junior secondary level, pupils utilised a form of catechism known as “Canon Caffarata’s Catechism”. As well as questions and answers, this contained “a little explanation” as the same Director explained:

At secondary school the Penny Catechism, I think for Forms Three and Four, was replaced by another catechism called Canon Caffarata’s Catechism...The (primary version) is just questions and answers, but the Canon Caffarata was ... a little explanation about each of the questions and answers, instead of just straight questions and answers... by the time you got to Form Five they had Canon Sheehan’s apologetics Volumes One and Two. I would question them on those and still ask them prayers and that was what was done. Then I would usually write up a report at the end of the year. (DJ4)

The only students encouraged to examine ethical issues and to discuss aspects of the Church’s teaching, as we have seen in chapter five, were the relatively few who progressed to the senior levels in secondary school and studied who apologetics as a Sister of Mercy explained:

In senior classes we had apologetics... It was a sort of primer of theology. We also did bible study. We did a different gospel each year. It was the best experience of religious teaching because I’d never read the bible. Like most Catholics we had one at home but had never opened it... Apologetics would be something like ethics. And every Friday we’d have a talk from a priest, or the bishop. Bishop Liston was very interested in the school. Usually about current affairs in the Church so to some extent we were kept up with what was happening overseas. (MM19)

The training in apologetics, as Bryk, Lee and Holland observe, was designed to help pupils to defend the Catholic faith and demonstrate the truth of “such beliefs as the existence of God, the divinity of Jesus, the Catholic Church as the one,

true church, and the infallibility of the Pope".⁶⁰⁹ Throughout this period the Church insisted on full instruction in dogma and revealed truth at all levels; it was a practice intended to ensure the continuity of core religious values and a distinctive Catholic spiritual identity.

The influence of pedagogical developments

Catholic educators were receptive to new educational ideas, particularly if they could be utilised to ensure the ongoing viability of the Catholic educational mission. From the 1930s onward the influence of new ideas can be seen in the encouragement to adopt new pedagogical developments, "already accepted and successfully exploited in Catholic schools for the teaching of the secular branches", for the teaching of religion.⁶¹⁰ One indication of the "desire to bring the teaching of religion into harmony with the accepted principles of modern pedagogy" was the number of new text-books on religion.⁶¹¹ Archbishop Michael Sheehan's widely used *The Child's Book of Religion*, first published in 1934, adopted a dialogue form in which the child asked the question and the

⁶⁰⁹ Bryk, Lee, and Holland, *Catholic schools and the common good*. 4.

⁶¹⁰ Brother M.B. Hanrahan, former Provincial of the Christian Brothers is basing these remarks on the 1923 'Motu Proprio' encyclical of Pius XI which advocated that "the knowledge of religion in all schools, from primary to university, as a matter of principle, keep pace with that of secular subjects". Pope Pius XI, On St Thomas Aquinas: *Studem ducem* (1923 [cited 4 June 2005]); available from <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Pius11/P11STUDI.HTM>. See also Fogarty, *Catholic education in Australia*. 395.

⁶¹¹ O'Brien, "The practical aim of religious teaching," 130. cited in Fogarty, *Catholic education in Australia*. 395.

teacher supplied the answer, thus creating for the child, as one contemporary reviewer commented, “the pedagogic moment”.⁶¹²

Other innovations included the introduction of Sister M. Anselm O’Brien’s “Catholic Evidence” method which was used widely in Dominican secondary schools and contemporary state schools. “Activity” methods included projects, for groups and individuals, dramatization, sketching and handwork.⁶¹³ The concept of “self-activity” in religious education seems to have borrowed directly from John Dewey’s concept of learning as an “activity” rather than the passive inculcation of “truth”.⁶¹⁴ For many Catholic educators, the emphasis on learning environment and the needs of the child represented a timely return to the traditional ideas of the Church that had its roots in the Church’s view (based on St Thomas Aquinas) that the primary focus of the learning was the internal activity of pupil rather than the activity of the teacher.⁶¹⁵ The concept of learning as a process that began with the experience of the child was seen by some as no

⁶¹² In this way, the reviewer notes, the “secular manner” is avoided. See Fogarty, *Catholic education in Australia*. 395.

⁶¹³ *Ibid.*, 397.

⁶¹⁴ See John Dewey, *The child and the curriculum* (Chicago, 1956), cited in Fogarty, *Catholic education in Australia*. 397.

⁶¹⁵ For example the Dominican Rule informs the teacher that she is “to stimulate the child’s God given intelligence, to aid her to acquire and assimilate knowledge; she is therefore a co-adjutor, and relatively subordinate to the pupil”. See Constitutions of the Congregation of New Zealand Dominican Sisters (1933), 33, NZDSA.

more than a restatement of the traditional Catholic view that education “was essentially a social and not a mere individual activity”.⁶¹⁶

Catholic debates about the appropriate pedagogy for teaching the faith were shaped by a catechetical movement that began in Europe in the early twentieth century, one that argued that the technical language and the complex theological ideas of contemporary religious education should be modified in order to make them meaningful to pupils.⁶¹⁷ Influenced by these debates, Catholic educators in New Zealand twice adapted the existing catechism to meet the new requirements. The following report by Father Leo Close, the Director of Religious Education for the Dunedin diocese, outlines the way the old catechism, based on “intellectual content and rote learning”, was modified in the 1950s by incorporating a “child centred” approach based on new understandings of “psychological growth”:

The catechetical situation in New Zealand was similar to that existing in most countries prior to the catechetical and kerygmatic renewal. The catechism in use throughout the diocese in Catholic schools was the blue or “penny” catechism, with its heavy emphasis on intellectual content and rote memory, ill adapted as it was to the psychological growth

⁶¹⁶ Pius XI, *Divini illius magistri* ((cited).; see also Fogarty, *Catholic education in Australia*. 398.

⁶¹⁷ Some educationalists advocated a “parable” style of teaching exemplified in the Gospels, teaching by “doing”, teaching methods based on returning at increasing levels of sophistication to a series of central concepts, and “reflective practice” in which teachers considered ways in which they might improve their practice. See O'Donoghue, *Upholding the faith*. 78. Some of these ideas were later conceptualized in Bruner's notion of a “spiral curriculum”. See Jerome Bruner, *The process of education* (Cambridge, MA, 1960).

of the child... In 1942 a new catechism "Catholic Faith" was adopted in the Wellington Diocese, and in 1944 in Dunedin... In 1954 Father T. Fahey compiled a new catechism for use in the schools, based on the new Irish Catechism. This became known throughout the country as the "Green Catechism".⁶¹⁸

However these developments, while they attempted to meet the need for more accessible materials, were still indicative of the "traditional approach" to the teaching of religion, being focussed on the transmission of faith as a set of specific doctrines in which pupils were required to learn a specific "body of truth".

Incorporating pedagogical ideas in a new model of Catholic faith: Kerygmatic catechesis

By taking part in debates about the kinds of pedagogy appropriate to the teaching of faith, Catholic educators engaged in a dynamic process that resulted in changes in understandings of Catholic epistemology. New ideas began to emerge in the 1930s with the work of a Jesuit theologian, Josef Yungman. He argued that the focus of religious teaching should be on the essential message of Christian teaching, the kerygma; hence the name "kerygmatic catechesis".⁶¹⁹ This method emphasised Christianity as a message; "the good news" shaped around the central figure of Christ and gospel values, rather than a system of truths or a code of rules (see illustration 11.1). By the 1950s the influence of this approach began to be felt in New Zealand, as a former Catholic director of education explained:

⁶¹⁸ Father Leo Close, Memo, 29 December 1966, cited in Spenser, "Interim Report," 332.

⁶¹⁹ See O'Donoghue, *Upholding the faith*.

I couldn't put a year on it, but somewhere between the time I started in the 1950s and the beginning of the Second Vatican Council, there was all that liturgical reform, catechetical reform, theological reform that was going on in Europe. Out of that came this realisation of the centrality of Christ. So one of the things I constantly said in terms of advising teachers, not so much primary, basically in secondary schools. By basic criticism was that the analysis that you are giving to the students... is a very accurate... analysis of the segments that go to make up the Catholic faith, but the problem is, it's like lumber in a lumber yard. You never put it together so that it becomes a living motivation, a principle for life. The only way in which you can do that is to make it more Christo-centric, that was the phrase that was very strong, Christo-centric. (DJ6)

The pedagogy of kerygmatic catechetics became more widely diffused in 1961 when the Catholic Education Council distributed copies of *The Catechetical Apostolate: Basic principles and practical directives* to all teaching congregations in 1961.⁶²⁰ A number of training programmes were established in 1963⁶²¹ and a new catechism was commissioned by the New Zealand bishops.⁶²² The appointment of an Irish priest, Father Leo Close, trained at the Lumen Vitae Centre Brussels as Director of Education in the Diocese of Dunedin enabled "seminars on catechetics (to be) held regularly in all four centres. In the Dunedin Diocese a diploma course in catechetics was initiated for the teachers in Catholic schools".⁶²³

⁶²⁰ Catholic Education Council, 1962, cited in Spenser, "Interim Report," 332.

⁶²¹ In the mid-1950s the American Religious of the Cenacle founded two retreat houses for women and girls, at Auckland and Lower Hutt and ran courses in catechetics for Sisters. In 1959 they started annual courses in practical catechetics for newly ordained priests at the seminary at Holy Cross College in Mosgiel. Ibid.

⁶²² Ibid., 332.

⁶²³ Ibid. The author remembers attending the diploma course in 1970.

Thus by the early 1960s Catholic teachers were moving from a pedagogical model that focussed on “learning the faith” to one which incorporated ideas of faith as “a living motivation, a principle for life”. The shift from a knowledge-based pedagogical model to one which incorporated an “active” model of faith that incorporated “new understandings and insights that reduced or eliminated memory work and encouraged investigation and discussion”⁶²⁴ was a gradual one. Teachers of religion throughout New Zealand began meeting regularly to share ideas and develop a new basis for religious education, a development that later led to what Flynn has called “experiential catechesis”, also known as the “life-centred” or “anthropological” approach.⁶²⁵ (However a consideration of this development is beyond the scope of this thesis.) The move from a traditional catechesis to a kerygmatic model meant that Catholic educators increasingly emphasised the importance of Catholics’ “active” role in the world for “the spread of the kingdom of God”, as a Christian Brother explained:

I think that we also were in this for the spread of the Kingdom of God. I think there was that sort of motivation that was there whatever else you did... You were trying to make people aware of the fact that God was part of this deal and we were to do our bit and God would do the rest and that’s how we worked. We actually believed in that. I hope people still believe in it. That was the difference. (CN27)

Thus developments in catechetical pedagogy during the period covered by this study incorporated historic understandings of Catholic faith in a more “active” model of catechesis designed to cater to the needs of a changing world and ensure the ongoing viability of the Catholic educational mission.

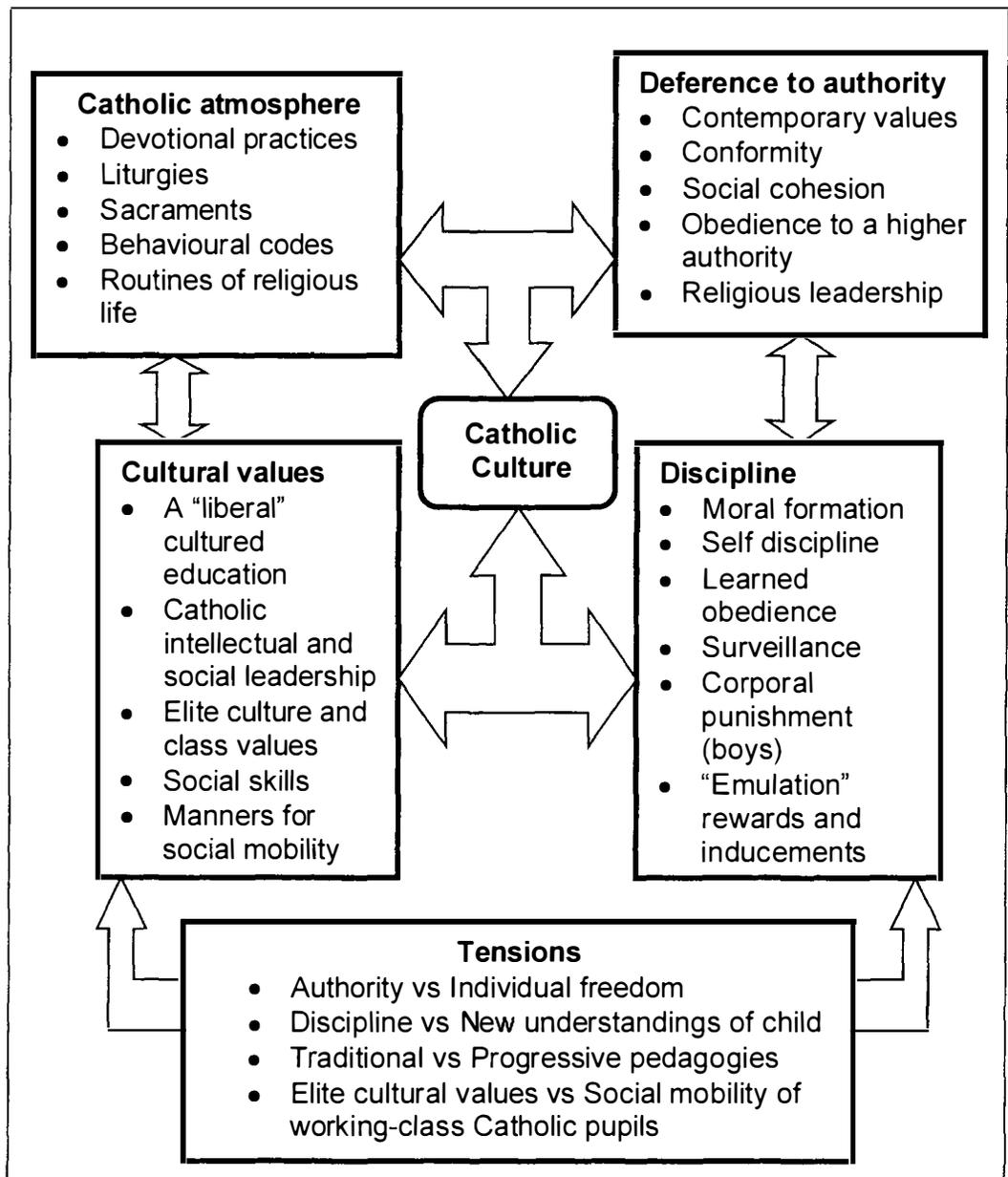
⁶²⁴ O’Donoghue, *Upholding the faith*. 80.

⁶²⁵ Flynn, *The culture of Catholic schools*.

Maintaining a distinctive Catholic culture

In the following section I will argue that the success of the Catholic educational mission depended not only on the formal transmission of the Catholic faith but also on the inculcation of a set of formal and informal practices that together constituted a distinctive Catholic culture. The following will consider four aspects of Catholic culture that characterised Catholic schools in the years covered by this study: a pervasive Catholic atmosphere, the intersection of culture and manners, the practice of discipline and deference to authority as well as tensions between conservative Catholic practices and pressures for change. These practices were designed to maintain the distinctive identity of Catholics and the continuity of cultural values and for the next generation of Catholic pupils. The model of cultural practices that forms the framework of the second part of this chapter is presented in diagram 11.2.

Diagram 11.2: A dynamic model of Catholic cultural practices, 1850-1965



A pervasive Catholic atmosphere

In the following section I will argue that “Catholic atmosphere” involved a complex interweaving of highly-structured social and religious activities within the wider Catholic culture of the school. I will explore the elements that went into the construction of a distinctive Catholic atmosphere, including pupils’ regular attendance at Mass and the sacraments, the learning of particular

behavioural codes, an expectation that boarders would take part in the devotional and liturgical routines of the convent, regular retreats, rosaries, routines of daily prayer and an environment infused with Catholic artefacts. The following extract illustrates a number of key aspects of Catholic “atmosphere”. While the formal teaching of religion was given priority, “Religion was first thing in the morning”, it was the informal practices, “the whole cultural field” that was “impregnated with religious values”. As a Sister of the Sacred Heart explained:

Religion was first thing in the morning... and the whole cultural field, as I look back, it was impregnated with religious values. God came into it in many ways without being strictly mentioned as such, but it was there... The Mass, the Sacraments were all given high value, particularly because many of the country children had been so deprived of it through no fault of their own... Such simple things to us, a genuflection, for if you’ve been out in the country and you’ve never seen anyone genuflect... I mean to us Catholics it’s just natural. (SP19)

Religious values were expressed liturgically, “the Mass, the Sacraments were given high value” – and informally: “God came into it in many ways without being strictly mentioned as such”. As well as “learning the faith” via the catechism (see illustration 11.1) pupils were socialised into the sacramental life of the Church through formal ceremonies such as “First communion” (see photo 11.3). Boys, in particular, learned to take part in the liturgical life of the Church, training as altar boys and learning to assist the priest (see photo 11.2 and 11.4). Catholic pupils learned the specialised cultural and behavioural codes of Catholic life. As the same Sister observed, “such simple things to us, a genuflection... I mean to us Catholics it’s just natural”. As the following illustrates, boarders in particular were “absolutely saturated” with opportunities for devotional practice. According to a Mercy Sister:

Devotions... the boarders were absolutely saturated with it. No-one insisted that they go to Mass every morning but it was made quite clear

that it was available. One of us had to give up our own Mass to go and supervise the ones who hadn't gone to Mass. We had retreats as children every year, usually two or three days where we sat looking pious in the chapel and read novels under the cover. (laughter) (MM19)

In this story the Sister acknowledges that boarders were given every opportunity to attend Mass, and indeed hints at her own irritation when she “had to give up our own Mass” to supervise the ones who did not. Alongside this story is an account of an episode when as a pupil she had herself resisted the pressure to comply with religious requirements: “we sat looking pious in the chapel and read novels under the cover”. While it illustrates how pupils were encouraged to comply with cultural practices such as attendance at Mass, it also illustrates how individuals might resist such requirements. It raises interesting issues relating to authority, which I will examine later in the chapter. Nevertheless, pupils in Catholic schools were surrounded with opportunities to practice their faith as the following account from a Religious of the Sacred Heart illustrates:

Mother Winifred Maher... used to make every opportunity for them to come in by the front door so they could be near the chapel as they came through the school, and they would pay a little visit on the way, it was all thoughtfully provided...(SP20-21)

Catholic pupils were encouraged “to strive for” membership of “congregations” and rewarded for good behaviour by being accepted into sodalities such as the Children of Mary. To this end another Religious of the Sacred Heart recalls:

There were three congregations in the school... the Angels, the Aloysians for the younger ones, the Angels and the Children of Mary and to be a member of those congregations was something to strive for. It wasn't necessarily about good behaviour... For instance to be a Child of Mary, you really had to be a person of good character, a fairly strong character. But I remember one girl, she was due to be received into the Children of Mary, but she had the previous weekend played tennis in her swimsuit when she wasn't at school... in those days it was just not done, and

although it wasn't at school where it happened, she didn't get her Child of Mary medal.(SW16)

This story demonstrates ways in which distinctive Catholic understandings of feminine morality (explored in part one of this thesis) maintained particular Catholic values regarding the behavioural codes expected of young women, particularly in regard to sexual purity. It also exemplifies the sanctions that could be utilised when a girl's behaviour did not meet the required standard. In this situation a girl has "played tennis in her swimsuit", a behaviour that breached contemporary codes of behaviour expected of a young lady. Even though the incident took place outside school, she is seen to have failed to live up to the high moral standards expected by a future Child of Mary so "she didn't get her Child of Mary medal".

In the schools run by religious orders a schedule of prayer that mirrored the patterns of religious life and the Church's calendar included regular school and class Masses, morning, midday and afternoon prayer and praying the rosary during Lent as well as a yearly retreat. As a Christian Brother recalled, "You would give them [the students] a lot of religious input" (CG14). Christian Brothers' schools had a tradition of veneration to "Our Lady of Perpetual Succour" and of stopping to pray on the hour, as the following illustrates:

One of the little traditions that I discovered later was directly attributable to the founder. We had a striking clock. They put these striking clocks in every classroom and we'd stopped and put our pencils down to say a Hail Mary every hour on the hour...The picture of Our Lady of Perpetual Help was something also, while I was at school, and it's continued right until now... it was just part of the air you breathe really. (CJ19-20)

Although all Catholics emphasised devotion to Mary, for the religious orders of Brothers it was particularly important. The Marist Brothers (also known as The

Little Brothers of Mary) had their own traditions that emphasised a family spirit and a “Marist spirit” that promoted living and working “in the manner of Mary”.

One Marist Brother stated:

There has to be family relationships and a family spirit. There has to be work. That’s always been a strong thing with Father Champagnat right from the start. He wasn’t too keen on talk, talk, talk. He’d go out and do it and I think that is part of the Marist spirit... Mary is very special. “In the manner of Mary” and the manner we see in Mary is courageous and faithful and sympathetic... (FP25)

The evidence of the participants in this study suggests that the cultural practices that underpinned “Catholic atmosphere” in Catholic schools worked to maintain a continuity of religious and cultural values and a distinctive Catholic identity.

Learning social skills and manners

A strong association between the middle- and upper-class culture and cultural and academic skills of a socially and culturally competent Catholic woman underpinned the distinctive educational mission of Dominican and Sacred Heart schools. As a Religious of the Sacred Heart explained, that culture included “Catholic culture, the spiritual side of life as well as the social side of life as a Catholic child” (SP1). This association is significant, given the tradition of Sacred Heart schools that emphasised the education of middle- and upper-class girls for “influence” (see chapter four). As the following extract reveals, girls who attended Sacred Heart schools in Australia and New Zealand frequently came from middle and upper class families:

We had them from the, what you might say the run-holder... upper crust in that sense, that they had money and the big runs and lovely big homes and then there would be the usual ones who were town dwellers...whose children were day scholars rather than boarders... they wanted a broad education ... In New Zealand (the girls came from) the general middle class. Some of the upper class. There were more prestigious places that some of them went to... Baradene had quite a good reputation but there

perhaps wasn't the same emphasis at Baradene. We were more middle of the road... chiefly doctors and members of the Government – their children. We would get professional families at Baradene. (SP16-17)

The emphasis on social, cultural and intellectual skills and the construction of socially confident young women was also characteristic of a Dominican education as the following quotation illustrates:

The emphasis was on being lady-like and well mannered, courteous – a great emphasis was put on manners in the school... Mother Patricia would instruct us on how to enter a room and another girl would open the door and the girl came in and as you came in the door you closed the door behind you but you still faced the person in the room. You practiced that... We were trained to take our place in society... (OW3)

To develop the skills needed to take her "place in society", a girl took part in a detailed training in the complexities of social etiquette as well as a cultural and academic education as the previous extract suggests. In contrast, the pupils attending schools such as the Sisters of Mercy came from a wider spectrum of society:

There was an assumption that our schools would be upper class and that wasn't so... we had all the problems that everyone else had. Really upper class girls were going to Sacré Coeur [Sacred Heart] or going to Marsden. (MN3-10-11)

Although the Sisters of Mercy emphasised lady-like behaviour and sound spiritual values, their emphasis was on the social and economic mobility of the working-class girls who came to their schools rather than on the passing on of "high cultural values".

Schools run by the Marist Fathers emphasised the values of a "liberal" academic education (see chapter four) that would prepare boys for future leadership roles in the Catholic community, for a career in the professions, the civil service, the forces and for a university education as well as for the

“multifarious occupations of a New Zealander”.⁶²⁶ In schools run by the Christian and Marist Brothers religious instruction frequently incorporated a session on manners and social skills. A Christian Brother recalled:

We spoke to them for five minutes a day on Christian Politeness and how to be a gentleman, how to show respect, to stand up in your seats, lift your cap to people, when you're passing the Church and little things like that, helping people on and off buses, saying please and thank you. When you go to the tuck shop, “I'll have this please”, and “thank you” and be considerate to your family, your mum and dad. All those practical things we put into the children. Also socks up, shoes clean, hair brushed, personal hygiene as well as the commonsense and manners. (CG13)

The day began with half an hour of religious instruction which included a talk on “Christian politeness”. There is a very specific link here between the passing on of religious values and the promotion of the behaviour expected of a Christian “gentleman”. This was apparent in a number of stories told by the male religious from the Society of Mary, the Christian Brothers and the Marist Brothers and is evident in the emphasis on values such as respect for family and the Church and personal hygiene as illustrated in the above extract. In this way Catholic pupils learned the elements of their faith and Catholic cultural practices at the same time as they learned social skills that would increase their chances of social mobility and successful integration in New Zealand society

Discipline and deference to authority

In chapter five I argued that discipline practices and the learning of compliance with authority underpinned the religious formation of Catholic teachers. In the following account I will demonstrate how, in order to maintain a continuity of

⁶²⁶ See Maher, ed., *St Patrick's College Silverstream, 1931-1956: The first twenty-five years*.

Catholic cultural values, the discipline in Catholic schools reproduced the distinctive practices of religious life, including deference to religious authorities and the Church. The discipline in Catholic schools also reflected a “very regulated” New Zealand society as a Christian Brother explained:

The whole of society was very regulated. Even though we had a National Government, we were still living [in the early 1950s] with the regulations of the Labour administration. People just accepted that kind of life. Now school was the same. The result was that people worked along a predictable line which involved a kind of hierarchy within the school. (CN7)

The speaker in the previous extract notes widespread acceptance of the need for conformity, what Michael King called a “widespread agreement about what was right and what was wrong, about what constituted appropriate and inappropriate behaviour”.⁶²⁷ As a Christian Brother explains physical punishment was the norm, particularly in boys’ schools:

It was the norm. I had many mates going to state schools and they got belted by the teacher, just as we had in our schools, but if you did it today, there would be a hue and cry, but times have changed. If you did wrong, you got the cuts, or you got the strap and then it was forgotten. You learnt from it of course... (CG14-15)

While the discipline practices in Catholic schools were influenced by attitudes to social cohesion that were prevalent in contemporary New Zealand society, the prevailing Catholic view of human nature during the period of this study was a distinctive factor in determining the approach to discipline in Catholic schools. Catholic pedagogy found itself in disagreement with “the attitude of those who assert that moral formation should be given according to

⁶²⁷ Michael King, *The penguin history of New Zealand* (Auckland, 2003). 374.

the false principles of naturalism and materialism”.⁶²⁸ Thus, as Praetz explains it, the role of the Catholic school was as an inculcator of moral virtues, its mission was to pass on values aimed at “fortifying the will through the exclusion of negative influences and strengthening motives for good conduct through positive training and good instruction”.⁶²⁹ It was a view that reflected the official Catholic dogma of “original sin”⁶³⁰ the effects of which — “weakness of the will and disorderly inclinations... — were to be curbed and held in control since it was better to prevent evil than to let it go unchecked”.⁶³¹ On that account, Pius XI advocated “extended and careful vigilance” in order to prevent “occasions of sin”.⁶³² In the same way that a religious recruit was continually under surveillance during the period of formation, pupils were never, under normal circumstances, to be left without supervision as a Religious of the Sacred Heart explained:⁶³³

There was always supervision in each activity, even the recreation, even things like head washing. There was always supervision – not to be finding people doing things wrong or anything like that but it was just the caring attitude, and when you had that understanding of why there was always somebody there, showing that interest in you it made a very close bond between the staff and the students. (SW6)

⁶²⁸ Fogarty, *Catholic education in Australia*. 403.

⁶²⁹ H Praetz, *Building a school system: A sociological study of Catholic education* (Melbourne, 1980). 19.

⁶³⁰ The dogma of original sin holds that every child born into this world inherits the consequences of Adam’s sin of disobedience.

⁶³¹ Pius XI, *Divini illius magistri* ([cited]).

⁶³² *Ibid.* ([cited]).

⁶³³ Fogarty, *Catholic education in Australia*. 403.

Just as religious took a vow of obedience to convent authorities, pupils were also instructed in obedience and to accept the authority of teachers, the Church and God as a Dominican Sister who taught in the 1950s recalled:

You would instruct the little ones in obedience and you would say, “Look it doesn’t matter whether you’re little or whether you’re big. You are always going to have to obey somebody”...To the very little ones I used to say and to the older ones too. “It’s not a sin to run along the corridor but you’ve got to train yourself in little things because if you don’t, when you get older you will give in to things that are very important and you can wreck your lives. You will say yes in things you shouldn’t say yes to.” (OM19)

As this extract illustrates, pupils were encouraged to learn self discipline in little things “you’ve got to train yourself in little things” – and deference to those in authority – “you are always going to have to obey somebody”, values that were seen as essential to a properly formed adult Catholic. In this way Catholic pupils were “formed” to correct the faults inherent in a “fallen” humanity tainted by original sin and for future religious leadership. In the same way that religious life implied the choice of a “higher” life characterised by the vow of chastity, the story suggests the importance of the virtue of purity for girls who had to learn to say “no”, in order that they wouldn’t later “wreck” their lives through falling into sexual sin. As future mothers, Catholic girls had important responsibilities to keep themselves pure and to act as the “moral guardians” of Catholic values for their husband and children. Thus Catholic girls were “warned not to stand on street corners”(OW3) where they might meet boys in an uncontrolled environment; rather, they were encouraged to meet future marriage partners in a structured all Catholic environment such as tennis clubs or the Catholic school ball, as a Sister of Mercy explained:

There was always a Catholic school ball where you hoped to meet your husband from Sacred Heart. (MM20)

While acknowledging the need for close supervision, the manuals of the various religious orders all stressed the importance of respect for the child⁶³⁴ and the necessity of treating each pupil as an individual.⁶³⁵ Schools were encouraged to forgo corporal punishment and replace it with an incentive system that Fogarty calls “emulation”.⁶³⁶ It was a principle which was applied in many ways: “card” days or “marks” days, terminal or yearly competitions, diocesan exhibitions, scholarships, and prizes and eisteddfods.⁶³⁷ As a Religious of the Sacred Heart explained, “there was no corporal punishment” (SW2) for girls at Catholic schools. Alternatives included a complex system of rewards and constraints:

⁶³⁴ See, for example, the *Rule of St. Augustine* and the *Constitutions of the Congregation of the Dominican Sisters of New Zealand, 1933*. NZDSA. Also the *Common Rules of the Institute of the Marist Brothers of the Schools* cited in *Ibid.*

⁶³⁵ See for example *Constitutions of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Les Constitutions des Ursulines de Paris*, cited in *Ibid.*

⁶³⁶ Corporal punishment was forbidden to teaching religious orders in these years. See *Règles Communes des Frères des Écoles Chrétiennes*, 95, cited in *Ibid.*, 404. It was forbidden, for example, in the archdiocese of Sydney. In the archdiocese of Adelaide a distinction was made: corporal punishment was “never” to be administered to girls. In the case of boys its administration was to be “limited as much as possible”. Nevertheless in the case of boys in both New Zealand and Australia the interdiction on corporal punishment during the period of this study seems to have been honoured in the breach.

⁶³⁷ Diocesan competitions such as “The Bishop’s Shield” in Dunedin involved the Catholic secondary schools in the diocese. Eisteddfods, popular in Christian Brothers’ schools were characterized by singing and speech competitions.

“school rewards” such as a prefect system, the wearing of different coloured ribbons and whole school holidays and a “joy holiday” if boarders came back from the holidays on time. These “lovely surprises” were “such a contrast to all the other discipline” (SW2) that for boarders meant compliance with a highly regulated schedule modelled on the patterns of religious life including the necessity to “keep silence”.

Despite its proscription, corporal punishment was prevalent in boys’ schools run by the teaching orders, particularly in Australia. A Christian Brother remembers being “horrified” at the amount of corporal punishment on his first teaching experience in Australia:

I was horrified when I first started teaching in Australia at the use of corporal punishment compared to what I had known in New Zealand. I was horrified. It was the big classes. You simply had to be in charge and you had to get on top, no matter what, because if you weren’t, it was chaos and in the few cases where somebody was not on top, you spent most of your life trying to sort out the pieces... you had to be a very, very strong personality... and make it clear that you were here for business and that’s what we’re going to do. (CN22)

Like the Christian Brothers schools, Marist schools maintained a strict discipline of regimentation and corporal punishment. Some Brothers found this went against their nature:

Well for me personally, the attitude that I had to have, to maintain discipline, was against my nature. I had to kind of act a role out in that way. It was made easier by the fact that we all wore habits, we all came into school at the same time, went through the same routine day in and day out. I suppose that sort of regimentation – I didn’t notice it so much then but when you look at it now, it was, you know, a difficulty in its own right.(FJI0)

As the extract illustrates, maintaining a regulated school environment was helped by the fact that Brothers “wore habits”, “came into school at the same time” and kept “the same routine day in and day out”. Thus the disciplinary practices that

characterised many Catholic boys' schools were used as a mechanism of social control: a way to ensure that pupil learned to obey those in authority. As I have already argued in chapter four, they were based on models of Catholic masculinity and premised on contemporary beliefs that strict discipline and hardship would produce the "hard men" needed for post-colonial New Zealand society.

Although Catholic boys' schools had a reputation for severe discipline, a Christian Brother remembers that there was a wide range of personalities and styles among the Brothers who taught in them:

I think in practice there was a great deal more variety than people would give us credit for. There's a way of lumping us into "The Brothers" and "The Brothers" Schools"...There really were innovative teachers. There were severe teachers and people with regimental ways of dealing with kids and with classes and discipline, but there were also poetic sort of jokers. There were every kind of fellar there but somehow or other there is a lump in there somewhere they call "The Brothers" and it probably has the characteristics of hard men who will thump you if you get it wrong.

As the speaker suggests, there was a great deal of "variety" in the teaching styles of individual Catholic teachers, a diversity that included innovative teachers, disciplinarians and "poetic" teachers. It is an argument that supports my earlier contention that while Catholic educators worked to maintain a continuity of Catholic religious and cultural values, their own practice reflected a diversity of pedagogical and disciplinary values.

Tensions between conservative religious values and pressure to change

The final section of this chapter will consider some of the tensions implicit in an educational mission that was premised both on the maintenance of Catholic religious values and on the social, economic and educational success of Catholic

pupils. By the late 1950s and early 1960s, the relaxation of some of the strictures of religious life combined with the increasing integration of Catholics in New Zealand society inevitably raised questions about the educational mission of Catholic schools. There were tensions, as we shall see in the following chapter, between the desire to successfully integrate Catholic pupils into New Zealand society and the need to maintain Catholic values in a state-mandated education curriculum. However the Church was determined to maintain its authority in key matters of faith and morals. While it may be argued that new understandings of child psychology caused some relaxation of the more coercive discipline of earlier times,⁶³⁸ the Catholic educational pedagogy continued to be premised on a resistance to any developments that smacked of “pretended self-government and unrestrained freedom on the part of the child” and that diminished “the teacher’s authority and action”. Catholics might encourage “a more active cooperation on the part of the pupil in his own education” and “banish from education despotism and violence” but the Church continued to uphold the primacy of “higher law, natural and divine”.⁶³⁹

Thus Catholic educators might incorporate aspects of the new pedagogy into their practice as long as they did not threaten the central values of an educational mission that emphasised the formation of pupils for their salvation and deference to the “higher” authority of the Church and God. As O’Donoghue argues, “even when they embraced progressive pedagogical practices, Catholic teachers were not encouraged to contemplate the epistemological foundations of

⁶³⁸ See Fogarty, *Catholic education in Australia*. 405.

⁶³⁹ Pius XI, *Divini illius magistri* (I cited).

these practices”.⁶⁴⁰ This is hardly surprising given that “such relativistic foundations”⁶⁴¹ had the potential to undermine the certainties of theological assumptions underlying the religious way of life and to threaten teachers’ commitment to the religious values implicit in the Catholic educational mission.

Catholic educators were expected to submit to the authority of the official Church, particularly in areas such as moral education and sex instruction. The 1931 Decree of the Sacred of the Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office set the tone, refusing to give approval to “new methods” of sexual instruction “imported from America”.⁶⁴² These decrees became the norm for practice in New Zealand Catholic schools, with the consequence that sex instruction was never to be given in class, but only privately and individually by the teacher, and then only if parents had failed to fulfil their duty to do so. As we have seen in chapter eight, Catholic prohibitions on sex instruction resulted in “the elimination of sex instruction... for every school in New Zealand” in the 1948 Health Education Syllabus.⁶⁴³

Yet pressure to modify the strict standards of religious life and “the maintenance of the regime of the cloister within schools”⁶⁴⁴ began to be felt in

⁶⁴⁰ O'Donoghue, *Come follow me*. 113.

⁶⁴¹ See Praetz, *Building a school system: A sociological study of Catholic education*. 19. Also O'Donoghue, *Come follow me*. 113.

⁶⁴² Decree of the Holy Office on sex instruction (1931 [cited 4 June 2005]); available from <http://www.national-coalition.org/sex-ed/ppiusxi.html>.

⁶⁴³ See Gascoigne to Bishops, 13 May 1945, 4. Education Box 3, CCDA; Also Bowler, “The Johnson Report”. 99.

⁶⁴⁴ This phrase is used by Tom O'Donoghue. See O'Donoghue, *Come follow me*. 108.

the late 1950s, a time when there was some changes to regulations concerning community routines. These developments, a “precursor to a transition from a monastic way of community living to one which allows more scope and responsibility to the individual”⁶⁴⁵ in the years leading up to the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), enabled increased contacts between teachers and the families of their pupils, as a Marist Brother recalls:

We had quite a lot to do with their parents in those days. There were PTA and meetings like that and working bees with the parents created a new world for us, because for the first time in three, four years we were mixing now with ordinary people. The respect they had for the Brothers was quite remarkable. They were working-class people from, say the likes of Sydenham and some of those families were salt of the earth. They were really good people although we didn't always think that about their sons. We thought, “How could such nice parents have these children?” (FJ3-4)

At a time when Catholic teachers were developing better relations with their colleagues in the state system through their involvement in state run professional development (see chapter ten) the development of Parent-Teacher Associations in Catholic schools “created a new world” for Catholic teachers and gave them the chance to mix “with ordinary people”.

The Second Vatican Council, held in the years between 1962 and 1965, signalled major changes for the practice of religious values within religious orders, changes which had major implications for the entire Catholic educational mission. The challenges to the highly regulated nature of religious life and to the distinctive values of the Catholic educational mission that gathered pace in the years after 1965 had their origins in the years of this study. A number of the participants commented on the sense of restlessness that characterised religious

⁶⁴⁵ Scott, “Marist Brothers New Zealand province 1939-1970 (A personal history),” 77.

life for them in the years leading up to the Second Vatican Council. In the following story, a Religious of the Sacred Heart recalls the tensions, the excitement and opportunity of that period:

In 1964 I went to Rome, The first session of Vatican II had just finished. We were in Rome for the “in between part” and then the second session carried on. We were in fact called “La probation de l’intercession” it was a nick name... I think that was my life saving period really. Because at home we were getting edgy about the reality of the life we were living and the educational task we had to do. They were becoming separated from each other. We were all excitedly reading the theological literature that was coming out at the time... (SA10)

This story expresses both a sense of frustration about the constraints of religious life (“we were getting edgy about the reality of the life we were living”) and an excitement at the opportunities offered by “the theological literature that was coming out at the time”. Crucially the speaker is beginning to question the nature of “the educational task we had to do”. However the implications of the challenge to the nature and function of religious life and the educational mission of Catholic schools that occurred as a result of the Second Vatican Council extend well beyond the scope of this study.

Conclusion

In the years covered by this study Catholic schools, justified on the basis that education must be infused by a religious atmosphere, provided the most formal and organised means by which Catholic beliefs, attitudes and values were transmitted to the young. In the first part of the chapter I demonstrated how the Catholic educational mission to transmit the faith and Catholic cultural practices, while maintaining certain core values, was a dynamic model that responded to both internal and external influences. Catholic religious identity, marked in the 1920s and 1930s by a distrust of modern society, changed slowly during the

period of this study as the result of a growing desire to respond to secular changes and to reach an accommodation with the modern world. In the years after 1945, notions of Catholic “moral citizenship” which had evolved in the 1930s were transformed into a belief that every young person had a right to the education and training necessary to secure economic and social mobility and his or her successful integration into New Zealand society. Underpinning the Catholic educational mission, however, was a belief that education for temporal purposes was necessarily subordinate to an education that prepared pupils for their eternal destiny.

The chapter then examined the teaching of the Catholic faith in Catholic schools that moved in the years surveyed in this study from a traditional model of catechesis to a kerygmatic one by incorporating selected pedagogical developments and progressive ideas. Catholic teachers assimilated new pedagogical models for the teaching of faith within the prevailing framework of the Catholic educational mission, and incorporated them within existing practice. The chapter then examined informal aspects of Catholic culture, the construction of a Catholic “atmosphere”, the intersection of culture and manners, practices of discipline practices and deference to authority. The complex cultural practices that characterised the life of Catholic schools in the period were grounded in Catholic faith traditions and premised on the acceptance of the authority of God and the Church. Deference to authority was manifested culturally in the emphasis on conformity, the promotion of the highly regulated religious life and enculturation of manners and discipline practices. Cultural practices in Catholic schools that promoted deference to authority appeared on the surface to be about social control, but, at a deeper level, they were at the core of debates between

Catholic educators and the State over the role of education and its relationship to the authority of God and the Church.

The final section examined some of the tensions implicit in an educational mission that was premised both on the maintenance of Catholic religious values and on promoting the social, economic and educational success of Catholic pupils. On one hand the Church was determined to maintain its authority in areas such as the teaching of faith and morals. On the other hand a transition was occurring in religious life from a monastic way of community living to one that allowed more scope for and responsibility to, the individual. Some participants in this study expressed a sense of restlessness about the constraints under which they lived and concerns about the nature and purpose of their educational task. This “restlessness” was to manifest itself in a major challenge to the role of Catholic teachers and the fundamental premise of the Catholic educational mission in the post-Vatican II years. A consideration of that challenge awaits future research.



Photo 12.1: Catholic teachers paid great attention to highlighting a Catholic perspective when teaching officially proscribed History curricula. In the photo a Mercy Sister teaches a class on the history of trade unions, c.1950s. *F.E. McGregor Collections Canterbury Museum.*



Photo 12.2: It was not unusual for Sisters in Catholic primary schools to take the boys for sport. The photo shows a Sister taking the boys at St Joseph's Boys' Home Halswell for rugby practice, c.1950s. *F.E. McGregor Collection Canterbury*



Photo 12.3: Catholic women religious taught piano before and after school as a way of helping to meet convent and school costs. The photo shows a boy having a lesson with a Holy Faith Sister. c.1950s. *F.E. McGregor Collection Canterbury Museum*

Chapter Twelve

Ensuring the “secular” success of Catholic schools

In God, all truths meet. Hence to divorce secular branches of knowledge from religion is to remove them from their unifying centre. To separate religion and education is to injure both.⁶⁴⁶

Introduction

The evidence presented in this thesis thus far supports my contention that the educational mission of the Catholic Church is a dynamic one. In part two of this thesis I argued that Catholic faith practices were founded on nineteenth-century Roman-based policies that reflected the Catholic Church’s deep suspicion of the secular world and formed the basis of the Catholic educational mission from the 1850s until the 1920s. Devotional practices which were promoted by these policies encouraged the practice of a “simple faith for a simple people”, providing the rationale for an elementary education for a largely working-class Irish population, few of whom would go on to secondary school. They highlighted those aspects of Catholic belief and practice that differentiated Catholics from other New Zealanders. Nevertheless, as part three of this thesis has illustrated, the mid-twentieth century expansion of secondary education led to an expansion of the Catholic educational mission to promote the successful

⁶⁴⁶ "Submissions presented to The Commission on Education July 1960." (Wellington. 1960).

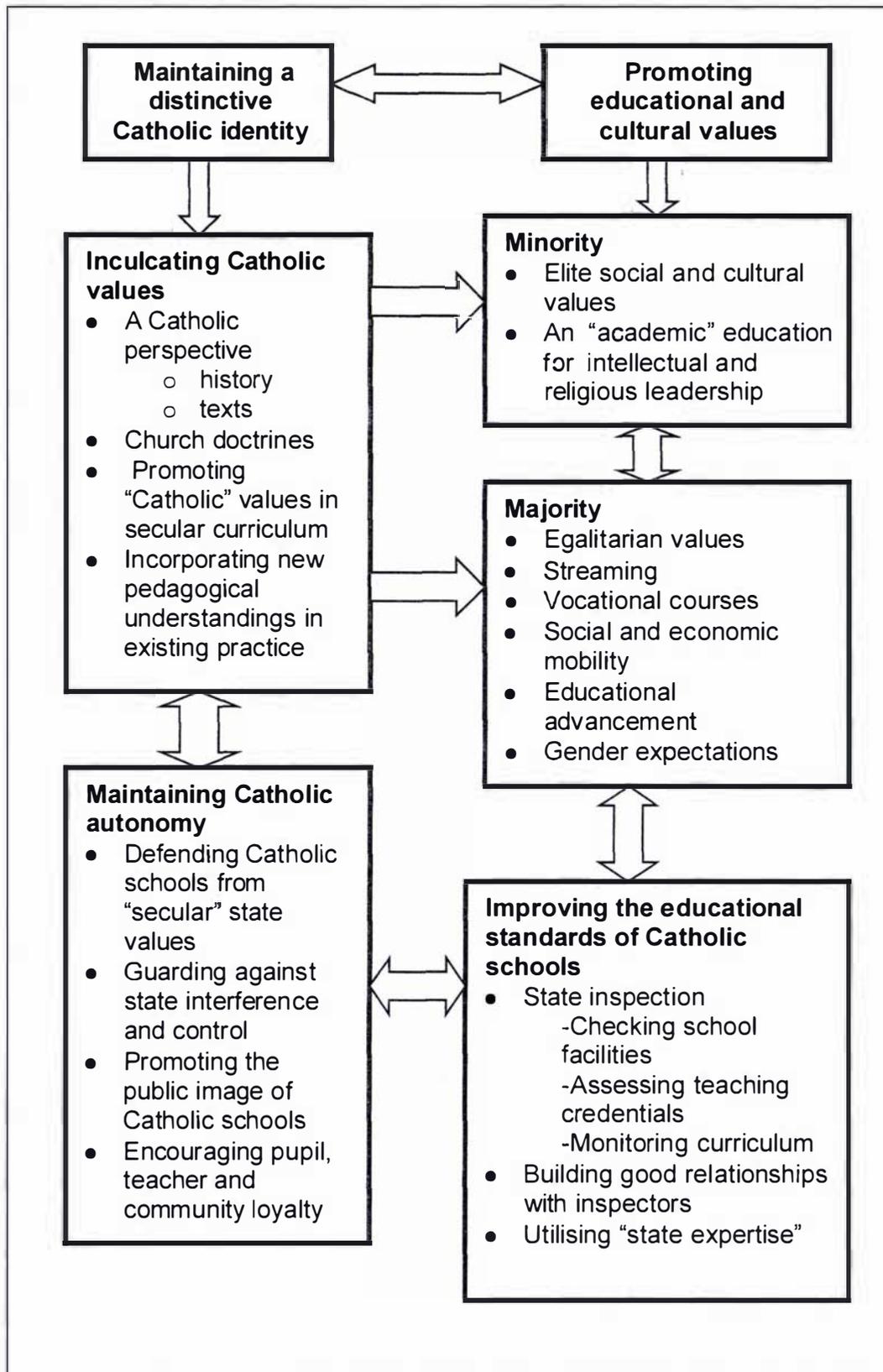
integration of all Catholic pupils into New Zealand society through their social, economic and educational advancement. In the process Catholic educators found themselves engaged in a dynamic process of debate and contestation within the Catholic community and with the State about the nature and purpose of education and the tensions between the role of an avowedly secular state and the rights of a professedly religious culture.

In chapter eleven I detailed how Catholic teachers assimilated new pedagogical models for the teaching of faith within the prevailing framework of the Catholic educational mission and incorporated them within existing practice. The complex cultural practices that characterised the life of Catholic schools were designed to ensure a continuity of religious and cultural values grounded in Catholic faith traditions and premised on the unconditional acceptance of the authority of God and the Church. Nevertheless, it is also clear that there were implicit tensions within an educational mission that was based on the maintenance of religious values and a desire to promote the social, economic and educational advancement of Catholic pupils. The present chapter will examine how Catholic teachers resolved some of these tensions in their teaching of the secular curriculum. I will demonstrate how Catholic teachers brought a distinctively Catholic approach, infusing secular subjects with religious values and promoting a Catholic worldview, while working to ensure that their pupils did not “miss out” on curriculum resources available in state schools.

The second section of this chapter will demonstrate how Catholic educators utilised their relations with the state inspectorate to improve the educational standards of Catholic schools. Historically Catholic educational authorities had been concerned to maintain distinctive religious and educational

values, objecting, as we have seen, to the “state interference” of the Thomas reforms because these represented “progressive” ideas and threatened academic standards. Nevertheless, as I will demonstrate, they incorporated state expertise in the form of school inspections to monitor and ensure the adequacy of school facilities, to assess the standard of teaching and to supervise the implementation of the state curriculum. The discussion will consider the way Catholic educators worked to protect the distinctive values of their schools and a working relationship with state inspectors: a two way relationship that was based on the need to provide suitable plant and resources, quality teaching and educational standards that would ensure the long-term viability of the Catholic educational mission. Diagram 12.1 presents a model of how Catholic educators worked to ensure the “secular” success of Catholic schools while maintaining a distinctive Catholic identity and thus the long-term viability of the Catholic educational mission.

Diagram 12.1: Techniques used to ensure the “secular” success and to maintain the distinctive identity of Catholic schools, 1943-1965



Teaching the secular curriculum in Catholic schools

The influence of religious values on the teaching of “secular” subjects

While the teaching of religious instruction was a priority in Catholic schools, Catholic educational authorities were also concerned to maintain Catholic values in the teaching of secular subjects. The desire to promote Christian values across “the whole field of instruction” reflected Vatican concerns that “every discipline (be) thoroughly permeated and ruled by religion”.⁶⁴⁷ Suggestions made for emphasising religious values in other subjects are exemplified in the contents of the Christian Brothers’ *Sixth Book of Reading Lessons*:

Latin and Greek Roots

Rules for the management of the voice in reading

The affection and reverence due to a mother

Leo the Tenth

The Discovery of America

The Landing of St Patrick in Ireland

Middle Ages - What the Pope did for the diffusion of learning

Characteristics of an educated gentleman

The Rosary

“Connexion of Science and Religion” by Cardinal Wieman⁶⁴⁸

⁶⁴⁷ See O'Donoghue, *Upholding the faith*. 81.

⁶⁴⁸ From *The Sixth Book of Reading Lessons* by the Christian Brothers. Kavanagh College Records, HL.

As evidenced in the above extract, the teaching of History from a Catholic viewpoint was of central importance. New Zealand and Australian Catholic schools paid great attention to highlighting a Catholic perspective when teaching officially prescribed History curricula (see photo 12.1).⁶⁴⁹ It was a perspective that was not prominent in the state History curricula as Father (later Cardinal) Peter McKeefry complained:

Church History had been more or less neglected... in the years between 1840 and 1925... the [Catholic] Church... has had a telling effect on the building up of the structure that today gives us full claim to nationhood... we should have our proper history recorded... We hear incessantly about the journeys of Selwyn but do we hear of the journeys of Pompallier and his priests?⁶⁵⁰

The speaker complained about the prominence accorded to the contribution of other faiths such as the Anglicans in school based historical accounts, — “we hear incessantly about the journeys of Selwyn” — and suggests that the work of pioneer bishops and priests (“the journeys of Pompallier and his priests”) needs to be part of “proper history”. In order to promote the Church’s view of history within the Catholic community, publications such as the *Tablet* and *Zealandia* featured articles about prominent New Zealand Catholics. Pupils had access to publications such as the *New Zealand Catholic Secondary Schools’ Journal*, which celebrated Catholic contributions to art, culture and civilisation.⁶⁵¹

⁶⁴⁹ See O’Donoghue, *Upholding the faith*. 83.

⁶⁵⁰ *Auckland Star*, 8 January 1936 cited in “The Green Cuttings Book”, 105, ACDA.

⁶⁵¹ See for example *NZ Tablet*, 22 March, 1944, and *New Zealand Catholic Secondary Schools’ Journal*, February 1947, Kavanagh Collection, HL.

McKeefry's argument is also relevant to the concerns of Catholic historiography, particularly in the light of an increased public interest such as occurred in the context of the return of the remains of Bishop Pompallier to New Zealand in 2002.⁶⁵² In addition as I have stated in chapter one, accounts of the history of New Zealand education have tended to exclude or marginalise the contribution of Catholic educators and a system that has educated hundreds of thousands of New Zealand children.

In the teaching of school subjects the Church emphasised Church doctrine and belief. Teachers were encouraged to promote “an unimpaired appetite for books” and to utilise “a Catholic range”.⁶⁵³ Teachers could bring the Catholic perspective into a range of subjects as a Christian Brother explains:

Well you could bring it into other subjects. If something came up in your Social Studies or English or something, you could give your perspective on that. It wasn't set in a water tight compartment; it was parallel and integrated right through all of your other subjects. You could use it to your advantage at times. (CG14)

At the same time Catholic educators wanted to ensure that their pupils did not miss out on the use of “secular” textbooks for examinations – a state of affairs that would threaten their educational advancement. The tension between the “faith” and the values of “secular society” is exemplified in the following extract in which a former diocesan director of education explains the 1944 controversy sparked by the publication of a Social Studies textbook, *Man and His World* by

⁶⁵² See for example Cardinal Tom Williams, Pompallier's legacy ([cited 12 August 2005]); available from <http://www.catholic.org.nz/pompallier/legacy.html>.

⁶⁵³ ‘Observation Lessons – English Literature’, c.1939. Brother Pastor, Marist Brother (by kind permission).

Mainwaring. This debate, already profiled in chapter one and in the context of the Thomas reforms in chapter eight, took the form of a number of public statements in the Catholic press and contemporary mainstream newspapers and was led by Bishop Liston:

Bishop Liston made a very strong statement that got published in the Herald, I think, when they started to bring in Social Studies... and what he was protesting about it in terms of the social studies curriculum was the way in which Buddha, Confucius, Mohammed and Christ were equilibrated and that was the issue, if you like in terms of the way in which there was a conflict between science and religion. That was something the schools lived with. They taught the subjects that they had to teach so that the kids could pass. But say with the evolutionary theories, they would teach a modified evolution. They would not follow, in that sense, the logic of what you might call the religion of evolution, that this was the total answer. They lived with that tension all the time because Catholics lived with that tension in that society as they do now in the present society... there is still a tension between the humanism of a secular society and the tenets of faith. (DJ7)

While Catholic objections to the textbook centred on the way in which, “Buddha, Confucius, Mohammed and Christ” were presented as equals, the speaker goes on to explain the conflict in values between contemporary understandings of “science and religion”. In a situation where Catholic beliefs about the centrality of Christ clearly conflict with the “secular” view of religion, Catholic teachers were encouraged to take a pragmatic approach: “they taught the subjects that they had to teach so that the kids could pass”. Faced with the need to present candidates who would pass examinations, accommodations were made; teachers “would teach a modified evolution”, incorporating Catholic understandings of the origins of humanity into Darwinian notions of “survival of the fittest”. The example illustrates the frequently contradictory discourses operating at the juncture between “the humanism of a secular society and the tenets of (Catholic) faith”. Although Catholic schools had been established with a primary goal of

combating materialistic and secular values, it became increasingly necessary for Catholic educators to adapt their teaching practice in the light of new understandings about science. Just as they incorporated new pedagogical understandings of faith into their teaching practice, Catholic teachers now incorporated new aspects of evolutionary theory into Catholic understandings of the world, teaching a “modified evolution” to their pupils. They did this to ensure the equivalence of Catholic educational standards with those in state schools, a goal now seen as vital to the long-term viability of the Catholic educational mission as the following section will explain.

Promoting the social, economic and educational advancement of Catholic pupils

While the majority of Catholic schools catered for the social and educational aspirations of the working-class pupils who filled their schools, Catholic secondary schools in the years covered by this study included brand new schools built to house the post-war baby boom population alongside long established secondary schools built originally to serve the academic and social elite.⁶⁵⁴ While the longer established secondary schools run by orders such as the Religious of the Sacred Heart, the Dominicans, and the Marist Fathers were proud of the social and cultural values of a liberal education – “I do think that the Greek and Roman cultural values have come through in our education” (SP22) – the majority of Catholic schools catered for working-class Catholics as a former diocesan director of education recalled:

⁶⁵⁴ St Dominic’s College established in Dunedin 1871 is an example of the former; Xavier College founded in Christchurch in 1945, the latter.

Catholic schools were too poor to cater for elitism... whatever may be said of the other denominational schools, Catholic schools were too poor in almost all material conditions to cater for elitism... denominational schools were also supporting in that sense those Christian principles that by and large we shared with them and the changes that were coming from the secularised society were undermining all of them... (DJ8)

It was the sons and daughters of the aspirational working-class and middle-class parents who filled the classrooms of secondary schools run by orders such as the Sisters of Mercy as the following account by a Sister of Mercy illustrates:

St Mary's was always a working-class, middle class school right from its inception and the fees were consequently very low even until recently compared with other schools around the city. It was always kept confidential but there would be a number of girls who didn't pay any fees. What people don't know is a lot of parish priests paid fees for some girls if they thought they were promising and probably boys too although I don't know that for sure... The day scholars were mainly from families, working families, business families, and managers of factories. Some were quite well off... and some of the less economically advantaged were probably the best students, because they knew they really had to work. (MM14-15)

These schools were characterised by low fees, egalitarian values and programmes that catered for the educational and vocational ambitions of their pupils. While there were fees for pupils attending Catholic secondary schools, these were kept low in order to facilitate the entry of Catholic pupils from a wide range of economic backgrounds. In cases of hardship, families didn't pay fees or in the case of a "promising" pupil the fees might be paid by the parish priest.⁶⁵⁵ The Catholic educational mission to improve the lot of "the less economically advantaged" was supported by the wider Catholic community. Catholic schools were characterised by a distinctive "homeliness", a homeliness reflected in the

⁶⁵⁵ The author (one of seven children) recalls that during the 1950s and 1960s families with more than one child at a Catholic school also paid reduced fees.

presence of “ordinary people” and shared egalitarian values as a Christian

Brother explains:

I think there was a homeliness about the schools and the parents were part of it too. Again, it might be anti-snobbish or something, but I think the parents that were involved were all ordinary people. They were people who drove a truck, or worked in an office or something and they were prepared to give their time and effort, or you had professionals too who were very good. By and large. I remember one fellow. He had a “Pommy” accent of the Northern variety. He was on what we called the Parents and Friends Association. He said to me one day, “Look, I’ve been on this committee now for two years and no one has asked me what I do for a living”. That surprised him because back in “Pommy Land” you would have been put into a class or caste without any difficulty. (CB18)

Although the practice of streaming might seem incompatible with an educational mission that was premised on the success of all Catholic pupils, there were important reasons for its use in Catholic secondary schools. Catholic educators were determined to promote the progress of all pupils, at the same time they were determined to protect the “academic” standards in Catholic schools and the educational advancement of able pupils. Developing the ability to reason was a central tenet of a Catholic educational philosophy that emphasised the intellectual development of their pupils, deemed necessary to “established understandings about person, society and God”.⁶⁵⁶ Thus, while the viability of the Catholic educational mission was premised on the educational and social advancement of the majority working-class Irish pupils via state examinations such as School Certificate, “academic” standards were seen as crucial to the interests of “academically able” pupils, who might go on to future careers as professionals, religious and future leaders in and beyond the Catholic community. Pupils were streamed according to their measured or perceived ability into

⁶⁵⁶ Bryk, Lee, and Holland, *Catholic schools and the common good*. 31.

academic, commercial or technical classes. In a smaller school streaming might be done on an informal basis: “they were divided into classes, I think, irrespective of their former reports until you got to know them” (SW12) or on an ad hoc basis, as a Marist priest recalls:

It was discovered that there were too many for geography, and so it was necessary to divide the geography class and I was going to teach one and Father ____ was going to take the other. The first day that this occurred, I discovered that the 46 or 48 or 52 or whatever it was had not been sorted into their classes. So I said to Father ____ – we called him the Discipline Master – today you would call him the Deputy Principal. I said, “Is there a test we give them or something?” Father ... went in and said, “Hands up those who know where Malaya is”, and about half of them put their hands up. “Right, you stay here and the rest go with Father ...” And it worked reasonably, possibly as well as the formal pre-assessment I sweated over when I became Deputy Principal. (SJ4)

Streaming in New Zealand Catholic schools meant that pupils were allocated into the top, middle, or lower stream with the academic “professional” class having two languages, the middle “general” class doing one, and some schools including a lower “commercial” class that undertook “Commercial Practice and Technical Drawing”. Boys in the lower stream were intended for the trades as is evident in the following account recalled by a Christian Brother:

(The lower stream boys), because they had to struggle, they learnt more. The brighter ones probably sat back a bit in their lives. They did well of course, several of them, but by and large the lower ones had more practical sense with their woodwork, technical drawing, and commercial practice and they became the trades-people, whereas the top ones became your academics. (GD7)

Sue Middleton notes that in 1950s New Zealand the “trade class boys were going to leave school and do apprenticeships at the end of their fourth form year... the commercial ones... were going to leave school early as soon as they turned fifteen and go to work in a bank or something. And the general stream of

course were going to work in shops or local factories”.⁶⁵⁷ There was a high demand for skilled young men with trade qualifications in the expanding post-war economies of New Zealand and Australia. A Christian Brother remembers that graduates of the technical courses “went straight into” jobs in Railway Workshops.

Catholic schools for girls, by comparison, established “commercial courses” for girls who went on to work in business and secretarial jobs. A Mercy Sister recalls that although there were few options for the non-academic girl in the 1940s, commercial courses soon expanded to meet the demand for skills in this area:

You see, when I started off, there wasn't much option for a non-academic. (Then) there was a commercial class; book-keeping, typing, English of course, and they usually had to do a School Certificate subject like geography or biology or something like that. And many of them did extremely well, got very high exams because there were very good exams in that area too... later there was home economics. (MK12)

Nevertheless few girls took senior mathematics and sciences (other than biology) and as a group girls left school earlier than boys and with lower qualification levels.⁶⁵⁸ Career options for girls were relatively few, even for the academically able, as the following story from a Sister of Mercy suggests:

They (parents) did not see a large variety of options for their children anyway. Hopefully they would get them into teaching or nursing or a good business, an office job, or something like that. And it was a rare parent, I would say, who saw further than that. Music was always very strong over here. There was a lot of music opportunity thanks to Sister Mary Leo and

⁶⁵⁷ Sue Middleton and Helen May, *Teachers talk teaching, 1915-1995: Early childhood, schools and teachers' colleges* (Palmerston North, 1997). 170.

⁶⁵⁸ Fry, *It's different for daughters: A history of the curriculum for girls in New Zealand schools, 1900-1975*.

Sister Francis Xavier... But to be a professional singer from a New Zealand point of view until the 1970s was just a wild dream wasn't it? Or for women to be doctors or that kind of thing. Nevertheless we did have some very good people, but they'd have to go overseas of course. (MK13)

Career options for academically able young women in the 1950s were limited to teaching, nursing and business; however, as the story suggests it was still difficult for young women in New Zealand to go on educationally after secondary school, to get into medicine or to undertake professional training in fields such as music or singing.

Catholic schools encouraged the social, economic and educational aspirations of their pupils in order to facilitate their successful integration into New Zealand society. The following extract, recalled by a Christian Brother, although it describes the characteristics of Christian Brothers' schools, highlights key strategies used by Catholic schools to ensure the success of the Catholic educational mission in the years covered by this study:

They are stereotypes. I guess we've brought them on ourselves but there would be characteristics of schools all over the world, of our schools with that frame of mind: the great sports team, or the great academic achievements and the great buildings. The important thing is that they were built up from nowhere essentially. We came (up) from the grass upwards, we didn't come with the backing of high finance, or steer ourselves towards the rich and famous... they kind of pulled themselves up to there for the sake of the kids. I think the basic attitude has always been quite good, that it wasn't for us. You don't hear too much of individual Brothers. Our places have become good schools that were highly sought after as the result of a great deal of hard work by a whole lot of guys over a lot of generations. Even so there is I suppose a bit of a stereotype of us. (CJ16)

As the speaker explains, the stereotype of Catholic schools might include particular characteristics such as "the great sport team", and in the older established schools such as those in Sydney run by the Christian Brothers or the Religious of the Sacred Heart "great academic achievements" and "great

buildings”. While an academic education in the elite secondary colleges offered Catholic pupils access to social position the professions, and Catholic leadership in society, by the mid-twentieth century, Catholic secondary schools had moved from an educational mission that catered for a select few to a comprehensive model that increasingly focussed on the social and economic mobility of all Catholic pupils: “we came up from the grass upwards”. The majority of pupils came from the working-class (“we didn’t steer ourselves towards the rich and famous”), the Catholic community paid for its own system (“we didn’t come with the backing of high finance”), and Catholic teachers worked as part of a cohesive team that didn’t promote any individual religious (“you don’t hear too much of individual Brothers”). In this way Catholic educators worked to maintain the distinctive educational and religious values of Catholic schools while adapting to the changing needs of their pupils, thus helping to maintain the long-term viability of the Catholic educational mission.

State inspections: Maintaining educational standards and the viability of the Catholic educational mission

This chapter has so far examined the way Catholic teachers incorporated their religious values in the secular curriculum and the strategies adopted by Catholic schools to ensure the social, economic and educational achievement of their pupils. As I have detailed in part three of this thesis in the context of the Thomas reforms, Catholic educational authorities were determined to protect the Catholic education system from state interference and control while providing a secular education that was equivalent to (or better than) that of state schools. In the following I will demonstrate how Catholic educational authorities, under pressure from burgeoning rolls and an expanding secondary system, turned to

state educational authorities for the expertise and support necessary to maintain the educational standards of their schools, the qualifications of Catholic teachers, and the educational success of Catholic pupils. I will consider the key role played by inspectors in monitoring teaching standards and the secular curriculum, the way Catholic educators worked to protect public perceptions of their schools, and the nature of the working relationship between state inspectors and Catholic teachers.

Becoming at least as efficient as the state: State inspection of Catholic schools

Since the arrival of the teaching orders in New Zealand in the 1850s, inspection has been utilised by Catholic educational authorities to protect Catholic religious values and to improve the educational standards of Catholic schools. Parish priests were initially responsible for the erection of schools in their districts and for visitation to supervise the teaching of religion and the quality of ordinary studies and the adequacy of teaching standards.⁶⁵⁹ But the bishops were not satisfied with appointing inspectors of their own. From the 1880s, after the withdrawal of state funding to Catholic primary schools, numerous attempts were made to bring about state inspection.⁶⁶⁰ The desire for state inspection was not unanimous. Some religious orders objected to it on principle; others objected on

⁶⁵⁹ Fogarty, *Catholic education in Australia*. 424.

⁶⁶⁰ Bishop Luck applied unsuccessfully for state inspection for Auckland Catholic schools in the 1880s. See Delany, *Gracious is the time: 1850-1950 Centenary of the Sisters of Mercy Auckland New Zealand*. Otago and Southland Catholic schools were the first in New Zealand to be granted state inspection in 1895. See McCarthy, *Star in the south*. Catholic schools in Victoria, however, were granted state inspection in 1905. See Fogarty, *Catholic education in Australia*.

the grounds that Catholic schools provided capable teachers and a satisfactory course of studies and therefore could surely provide their own inspectors.⁶⁶¹ Nevertheless the bishops argued that inspection by the State had the advantage, “because it would show the world that they (Catholics) were doing in the matter of secular education what was being done in state schools”.⁶⁶² Thus state inspection was an essential mechanism for Catholic schools competing to be “as efficient as those of the State” and ambitious for “equal recognition and, therefore, an equal share in government educational funding”.⁶⁶³

Monitoring school facilities, teaching credentials and curriculum implementation

In their periodic visits to Catholic schools, state inspectors exercised three key functions: they checked the adequacy of school facilities, assessed teaching credentials, and monitored the implementation of the state curriculum. In the

⁶⁶¹ The Christian Brothers, for example, maintained their own regular inspection of their schools in New Zealand from the 1880s onward. See *Inspection Report*, Christian Brothers' Schools 1900, Institute reports 96-124, Hocken Library. During the period reviewed in this study diocesan inspectors in New Zealand and in Australia were appointed by the Bishop and reported directly to him. They monitored the quality of religious and secular instruction in primary schools and visited secondary schools to monitor the standards of Catholic teaching. With the reorganization of Catholic schooling after 1960 the practice of inspection by Catholic inspectors diminished, and inspectors were absorbed into the Catholic Education Offices in each diocese. See Fogarty, *Catholic education in Australia*; John Luttrell, *The inspector calls: Catholic school inspectors in Sydney, 1848-1970* (Leichhardt, 2003); Spenser, "Interim Report."

⁶⁶² *Advocate*, 29 September 1900, cited in Fogarty, *Catholic education in Australia*. 427.

⁶⁶³ *Freeman's Journal*, 9 April 1905, cited in *Ibid.*, 428.

period 1943 to 1965, inspectors examined the educational facilities of numerous Catholic schools who were applying for secondary registration.⁶⁶⁴

It was the responsibility of these persons to inspect the adequacy of school buildings. One, a Miss Jessie Hetherington (who was an inspector of secondary schools from 1932 to 1948), features in a number of participants' stories. A Sister of Mercy recalls her preoccupation with "the drains":

Miss Hetherington. French and drains. Mother Benedict used to come in, "Oh that woman, she's on the drains again". Apparently it was part of her portfolio, to go around the outer establishment and check on what was functioning and what wasn't. I think later on she did home economics and that kind of thing. Thinking back on it, I'm afraid, that these things might have been shoved on her by the men... (MK27)

As one of very few women inspectors of secondary schools, Jessie Hetherington seems to have been responsible for "French", "home economics", and "to go around the outer establishment and check what was functioning and what wasn't". As the Sister recalls, she had a particular interest in maintaining the standard of the plumbing at St Mary's Ponsonby to the consternation of Mother Benedict who was principal at the time: "Oh that woman, she's on the drains again".

The inadequate buildings and the large class sizes that were characteristic of Catholic secondary schools in the period of this study are evident in a 1945 inspection report of a visit to St Dominic's College, Dunedin wherein it was stated that "the increased roll has thrown a heavy strain on the existing classroom

⁶⁶⁴ Sacred Heart Boarding School Island Bay, Wellington, for example, was granted provisional registration in 1922 and full registration on 15 June 1944, G III-1-1-5b Alexander Turnbull Library - hereafter ATL.

accommodation and the position is rapidly becoming acute”.⁶⁶⁵ The visit from an inspector often highlighted a school’s lack of specialist facilities in an area such as science as a Christian Brother remembered:

We didn’t have the facilities, so we had to get a science room built in a bit of a hurry and that of course meant more money and here we were again and this was always the problem. (NG24)

Even a relatively new school, like Sacred Heart College in Auckland which transferred to Glen Innes in 1955, and St John’s Hastings, founded in 1941, often had to cope with very basic facilities. Catholic teachers expected a state inspector to have the expertise to understand the requirements of the pupils and to identify problems that needed fixing, as a Marist priest recalls:

I remember in St John’s particularly, in about our fourth year, we had two inspectors come. They were satisfied with the place even though it was a fairly rumpety school. It was a very small place really. I still remember one of the inspectors, Henderson was his name... He came in the door, he kind of shuffled in and said, “I’m new to this business”. So, he was quite hopeless you know. (SG5)

In the above story the teacher expresses disappointment at the failure of an inspector to identify the lack of resources and other problems faced by a brand new school “they were satisfied even though it was a fairly rumpety school”. It is clear from this and from a number of stories that many Catholic teachers relied on state inspectors to identify shortcomings relating to curriculum or plant that needed to be addressed. As a religious, subject to the disciplines of religious life, he or she was constrained from speaking out publicly. In the above story, the inspector, who is “new to the job” does not identify key deficiencies. As a

⁶⁶⁵ *Inspection Report* on St Dominic’s College 1945, Dominican Sisters Records HL.

consequence the teacher judges that he was not doing his job: “he was quite hopeless you know”.

State inspectors checked the credentials of qualifications of teaching staff, monitored class sizes, and teachers’ competency for certification . In Victoria, as I have detailed in chapter ten, they also examined teachers for registration. As we have seen in chapter ten, concerns over the lack of teacher certification in the Christchurch diocese resulted in threats in the early 1960s from state inspectors of the kind noted by a former Diocesan Director of Catholic Education: “We’re going to close your schools, we’ll deregister them” (DT2). As a result the diocese

had to reduce class sizes which were in the fifties, but not only that... we had to take out twenty nuns or brothers each year for five years (for teacher training)... we had somehow to make cuts... so after much debate we decided that the better thing to do would be to take out the primer classes, that is the first two years of infants... [rather than] taking them out at ages eleven and twelve. Bishop Ashby was very courageous about that, he wasn’t happy, but he said, “Well what alternative have we got”? As a result we struck considerable opposition, mainly from the religious who were saying we were destroying the system and so on. They were not able to see that they were destroying the system internally already. (DT2-3)

When the state inspectors threatened Catholic schools with deregistration as a consequence of large primary classes “in the fifties” and inadequately qualified teachers (“we had to take out twenty nuns or brothers a year”), the bishop found it necessary to act to protect the educational standards within his diocese. By closing primary classes (“we decided that the better thing to do would be to take out the primer classes... [rather than] taking them out at ages eleven and twelve”) the movement of pupils from primary into Catholic secondary schools was protected. In this way Catholic educational authorities utilised pressures brought to bear on them by the state inspectorate as a way of addressing fundamental issues of teacher training and class sizes.

In addition to the inspection of facilities and the assessment of teacher qualifications, the periodic visits of state inspectors helped to provide support for teachers in areas such as curriculum and teaching methods, as a Sister of Mercy recalled:

You'd normally have an inspection maybe once every three years with state inspectors. And on the whole I must say they were very, very helpful. And sometimes you'd get indications that what you were doing was not up-to-date. (MM26)

Teachers generally remembered the visit of an inspector as “helpful”, although they might “get indications” of curriculum areas that needed to be improved “sometimes you'd get indications that what you were doing was not up-to-date”. Similarly, the 1945 inspection of St Patrick's College Wellington commented on the school's lack of implementation of the new Thomas curriculum, “the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Forms follow the orthodox organisation in secondary schools prior to recent educational developments”.⁶⁶⁶ Despite the difficulties they faced during the period of this study Catholic schools were determined to establish their academic and educational equivalency with state schools in areas such as the accrediting of University Entrance. A Sister of Mercy remembered that “The inspectors who did the accrediting came, and of course they came every year for the Sixth Form” (MM26). In Catholic schools, ambitious for state recognition of their academic standards, it was a matter of pride to be granted accreditation rights for University Entrance, as the following extract illustrates:

Later in the year (1960) St Dominic's was placed on the list of schools entitled to

⁶⁶⁶ *Report of Inspection*. St Patrick's College, Wellington, May 2 and 3, 1945, E2 1946/2c (E14/6/25), National Archives - hereafter NA.

accredit candidates for the University Entrance examination, regarded by the Archbishop (Liston) as "a tribute indeed to the quality of the school fashioned over the years by the skill and devotedness of the Sisters"⁶⁶⁷

Maintaining ranks: The loyalty of Catholic pupils

Although Catholic educators utilised the visits of state inspectors as a way of assessing their educational standards in areas such as teaching and curriculum, they were also concerned to assert the distinctive identity of Catholic schools particularly in regard to the core religious and cultural values. A number of the participants in this study remembered the strong sense of loyalty expressed by Catholic teachers, pupils and the Catholic community, a loyalty that grew out of a shared commitment to the values of the Catholic educational mission and a belief that Catholic schools were disadvantaged in comparison with state schools. It was common, for example, for Catholic teachers and pupils to "pull together" to ensure the success of a particular inspection. A number of participants in this study spoke of the sense of loyalty to the school and the support given to them by the pupils when an inspector visited. In the following, a Sister recalls the way the girls "knew exactly what this was" in her inspection for Victorian registration in the 1940s:

By that time I was getting on a bit and I had one of the upper classes, and the girls were great in it. They knew exactly what this was, (this was about Sixth or Seventh Form level, but they backed me up). I've never had such a stimulating class to teach as that one, and they knew I was on my mettle in front of the inspectors, so I was very lucky that way. We were doing "Wuthering Heights", so that was rather good. There was plenty of character and atmosphere and that sort of thing. (SP7)

⁶⁶⁷ McCarthy, *Star in the south*. 299.

Her comment that “they backed me up” is echoed in the following story in which a Brother recalls his schooling in a Christian Brothers’ school in Dunedin. The comment “we came in behind” and “we did our damndest to make sure those inspections went well” points to a strong sense of loyalty to teachers (“we sensed somehow the dedication of these people”) and to the Catholic school system which both pupils and teachers saw as “disadvantaged” in comparison to state schools:

When the inspectors came, we were very much on the side of the Brothers, even the ones we didn’t particularly like. We came in behind and we did our damnedest to make sure that those inspections went well. There were often comments made in the reports, we’d hear back from the Brothers, about how impressed the inspectors were with the politeness of the boys... we’d go out of our way to make sure things were right... Indeed I remember on one occasion, we were doing Geometry and somebody had a blunt pencil in his compass and the inspector said, “You’ve got a lot to learn about Geometry”, and we all made sure we had sharpened pencils. The sharpeners went around the room in a hurry. There was a strong loyalty there. We kind of sensed, because we didn’t ever talk about it, but we sensed somehow, the dedication of these people and we knew that we were disadvantaged in terms of facilities and the general Governmental appreciation of what was going on. The Catholic schools were poor relations, and we knew there were struggles there at times. (NG3-4)

The theme of Catholic schools struggling against the odds to provide an education that would ensure the educational advancement of their pupils is one that has been highlighted before. In this context it can be seen that pupils worked alongside teachers to prove the educational worth of a school despite the disadvantages they had in terms of “facilities and the general Governmental appreciation of what was going on”.

Maintaining good relationships with inspectors

In order to maintain the long-term viability of a Catholic educational mission that focussed on the educational success of its pupils, Catholic teachers worked hard

to promote good relations with state inspectors. Participants' stories provide evidence of a shared sense of camaraderie between the Catholic teachers and state inspectors. In the following encounter an inspector came to watch a Christian Brother teach a large physical education class which was doing a series of exercises on a circuit course. In this story, which comes from the 1960s, the Brother got involved in a conversation with the inspector and kept sending the boys around the circuit:

Brother__ had this circuit course. They did this exercise and then they went over there and they did something else. They had about eight little things. Well he was talking to the inspector and off they went and in no time at all they seemed to be back again. We said, "You'd better go round again and then come back again". This happened about four times and the report said that, "PE tended more to physical endurance". We laughed uproariously about that. We were used to them. They knew what was going on and we knew what was going on but once again the kids were on side. We were complimented on how the boys were respectful and polite, well you'd hope so. It was a Catholic school. (CN24)

The story sheds light on the professional nature of the relationship between Catholic teachers and inspectors ("they knew what was going on and we knew what was going on") and a suggestion that the inspection was part of a game of proving the school's worth to state authorities. The inspector's compliment — "the boys were respectful and polite" — is repeated in a number of recollections and a large number of reports of Catholic school inspections.⁶⁶⁸ The learning of good manners and courteous behaviour were an important part of the distinctive culture of Catholic schools, as has been detailed in chapter ten, and it was a point of pride for Catholic teachers when this was noted in inspection reports.

⁶⁶⁸ See for example "The girls are tastefully dressed in neat green uniforms. They are relaxed, natural, polite and obviously happy". *Inspection Report*, 30 April 1959, St Dominic's College, Northcote, NZDSA.

At the end of an inspection the whole staff would gather to hear the “verbal report”. This was an opportunity for a school to get immediate feedback on matters relating to facilities, teaching standards, and curriculum as a Mercy Sister recalled:

Very seldom did you ever meet anybody who wasn't (supportive). We used to gather round after the inspection was over, usually in the reception room in the boarding school, with all of them, and they would give a verbal report as well as the written one they later gave in to the principal... Now and again you'd get one that was perhaps not used to or a new inspector maybe, who was perhaps unaware of Catholic philosophy... But they kept us up to the mark. You didn't get away with anything sloppy, your paperwork had to be up-to-date and everything kept properly. Even as a principal, the support you got from them was really quite tremendous. (MM28)

During the years reviewed in this study, Catholic schools utilised state inspection as a mechanism for improving educational standards – “they kept us up to the mark”. Crucially, however, good relations between Catholic teachers and state inspectors provided Catholic educators with professional and pedagogical support, as the following remark reveals: “the support you got from them was really quite tremendous”. The relationship was based on shared professional values, an appreciation that state inspectors were there not only to ensure compliance with state requirements but also to improve educational standards, and an expectation that inspectors would respect the distinctive values of Catholic schools. The comment that the occasional “new” inspector was “perhaps unaware of Catholic philosophy” suggests that Catholic schools worked to ensure a good working relationship with state inspectors, a relationship based on an understanding of Catholic educational values and “philosophy”. It was a relationship that fostered good relations between state and Catholic educators and the long-term viability of the Catholic educational mission.

Conclusion

Catholic educators worked to maintain religious values and a distinctive Catholic culture in the teaching of “secular” subjects. They promoted the Catholic viewpoint in areas such as History, and worked to make sure that Catholic pupils did not miss out on access to “secular” knowledge that might threaten their educational advancement. This chapter demonstrated how Catholic teachers brought a distinctively Catholic approach to their teaching of the state curriculum. They infused secular subjects with religious values while working to promote a Catholic worldview. Although the longer established secondary schools were proud of their social and cultural traditions, working to maintain the elite values of a liberal education, the vast majority of Catholic secondary schools in the years covered by this study worked to encourage the social and economic advancement of the majority of working-class and middle-class pupils who filled their schools.

The second part of this chapter demonstrated how the relationship between Catholic educators and the state inspectorate was a key factor in maintaining the viability of the Catholic educational mission in the period 1943 to 1965. While Catholic educators worked to maintain distinctive religious and educational values, they utilised state surveillance in the form of school inspections to promote educational standards and to prove that Catholic schools were as efficient as the state school in providing their pupils with access to and success in the state-mandated examination system. The chapter examined the key role played by inspectors in monitoring teaching standards and the secular curriculum and the way Catholic educators worked to protect the distinctive values and public perceptions of their schools. The positive working relationship between state inspectors and Catholic teachers provided Catholic teachers with

professional and pedagogical support. Catholic teachers generally saw their relationship with state inspectors as one of mutual support based on a sense of camaraderie and shared professional values. Catholic teachers worked with inspectors to improve the educational standards of Catholic schools and to protect the distinctive religious, cultural and educational values that underpinned the long-term viability of the Catholic educational mission.

Chapter thirteen

Conclusion

I am an advocate for religious education. I am opposed to the mixed or secular system, and I am opposed to the system that exists in this province. I demand for the Catholic body help from the state to educate their children in their own way.⁶⁶⁹

Introduction

The photographs at the beginning of this chapter present two images of the subject that has been the focus of this research, the Catholic educational mission in transition. The first, taken in 1937, represents the world of Catholic education experienced by my parents. The boys in this photograph, as the names indicate, are largely from an Irish-Catholic working-class background. There are also two boys from Lebanese families.⁶⁷⁰ A number of boys in the photograph went on to the seminary to train as priests (including T. Ives, I. Mee, and F. O’Dea) and as Brothers (M. Condon). This world is familiar to me because, as Ailsa Zaindu’ dinn says, it has “to some extent... been shared”, but it is also more difficult to perceive than our parents might have found because “we have already

⁶⁶⁹ Diary of Bishop Moran, 24 March 1871, Moran Papers, Dunedin Catholic Diocesan Archives -hereafter DCDA., cited in Sweetman. *A fair and just solution?* 24.

⁶⁷⁰ Small numbers of Lebanese had settled in Dunedin in the early part of the twentieth century. The population was largely Catholic.

glimpsed it as children through a glass darkly".⁶⁷¹ The issues that concerned Catholic educators in the 1930s and 1940s seemed distant from the issues facing the Catholic schools I attended in the 1960s. Yet there are continuities. The majority of children in Catholic schools in 1937 and in 1960 were of Irish-Catholic parentage (some are the children of those in the 1937 photo). Yet, when I look at the list of names on the back of the photo taken of my primer class, there are now a number of children from Dutch and Italian families who had settled in Dunedin in the 1950s. Catholic schools continued to be characterised by a "Catholic atmosphere", the complex formal and informal practices that underpinned the teaching of the religious and the secular curriculum in Catholic schools. Throughout those years Catholic educators worked to protect the integrity of Catholic religious and educational values and the autonomy of the Catholic education system from state interference. In addition they were concerned to protect the educational standards of their schools and to promote the success of their pupils in the state examination system. Yet, as I have demonstrated in this thesis, there were some key shifts in the Catholic educational mission in the years covered within this study, shifts that resulted from the particular challenges facing Catholic schools in the post-war years.

In this research I have presented a variety of documentary and oral evidence to substantiate the argument that Catholic educators worked to protect the autonomy of a separate Catholic education system from state interference and control while incorporating state expertise and curriculum reforms that would

⁶⁷¹ A. Zainu'ddin, "The poor widow, the ignoramus and the humbug: An examination of rhetoric and reality in Victoria's 1905 Act for the Registration of Teachers and Schools;" *History of Education Review* 13 (1990): 41.

ensure the success and ongoing viability of the Catholic educational mission. Documentary, archival, visual and life history evidence have illustrated the diversity of views held by Catholic educators and the complex workings of educational politics. The inclusion of the life history accounts of Catholic teachers has enabled unique insights into the range of Catholic views about the role and function of education and the impact of educational reforms on the lives of teachers. This thesis has demonstrated how the Catholic educational mission to secure the “common good” of their pupils via their social, economic and educational advancement was a dynamic one predicated on the maintenance of core Catholic values and the incorporation of state expertise and educational reforms into Catholic educational practice.

The research findings

This research has analysed:

1. The complex political, religious, educational and cultural influences that helped to forge the Catholic educational mission. These included:
 - a. the creation of a Catholic spiritual identity;
 - b. the construction of a Catholic educational system; and
 - c. the religious formation of Catholic teachers.
2. The Catholic educational mission under pressure via an examination of:
 - a. the role of Church-State relations;
 - b. the politics of educational reform;
 - c. Catholic reactions to the Thomas Report; and
 - d. the impact of the reforms on the work of Catholic teachers.

3. Strategies for maintaining the viability of the educational mission including:
 - a. changes in the professional training of Catholic teachers;
 - b. the maintenance of a distinctive religious and cultural identity;
and
 - c. moves to ensure the “secular” success of Catholic pupils and
the educational standards of Catholic schools.

Forging the educational mission of the Catholic schools

In order to facilitate a clearer appreciation of the historic influences on the Catholic educational mission and the issues faced by Catholic educators during the years reviewed in this study, part two of this thesis presented an historical perspective on the religious, cultural and political factors that shaped the Catholic educational mission in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

Creating a Catholic spiritual identity

Chapter three detailed the principal historic trends in Catholic spirituality and religious identity that came together to forge the Catholic educational mission in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. I demonstrated how nineteenth-century Roman-based policies reflected a long-held suspicion of the secular world and provided the rationale for an education system designed ensure the transmission of Catholic faith and the maintenance of religious and cultural values. I detailed how an austere and authoritarian Irish inheritance was dominated by clergy who worked to protect the autonomy of Catholic schools from the spectre of state interference and control and the incursion of secular values. The chapter showed how devotional practices, encouraged by the Irish clergy and religious orders, promoted a basic level of religious awareness among

Catholic pupils. Pupils learned the catechism and cultural practices that assumed “a simple faith for a simple people”, they were exposed to those aspects of Catholic belief that set Catholics apart from other New Zealanders. The chapter then detailed the way the Church utilised schools to promote selected aspects of new and more active forms of spirituality and liturgical reforms from the early part of the twentieth century. It was argued that tensions emerging between conservative understandings of Catholic spirituality and a twentieth-century Church increasingly committed to the successful integration of Catholics into society would have significant implications for the Catholic educational mission in the years of this study. I demonstrated how distinctive Catholic understandings of the roles of men and women in the Church’s salvation mission to humanity were influenced by historical traditions of the renunciation of sexuality and pleasure, the promotion of celibate religious life and distinctive beliefs about the role of men and women in society and the Church. Catholic constructions of a woman portrayed her as temptress, virgin, and mother and emphasised the mother’s unique responsibility for transmitting the faith and Catholic values to the next generation. The chapter concluded by highlighting the importance of the Catholic educational mission for the preservation of a distinctive Catholic identity in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

Constructing the Catholic education system

In chapter four I examined the key historical influences on the construction of a separate Catholic education system in nineteenth-century New Zealand. The nineteenth-century Catholic educational mission aimed to provide a basic primary education to the children of the Irish working-class and a “classical and accomplishments” secondary education to the select few. I demonstrated how

this mission was expanded to include secondary education from the early 1920s as Catholic educators worked increasingly to ensure the citizenship, social and economic mobility of the increasing numbers of pupils going on to secondary schools.

I then examined the distinctive characteristics of diocesan and pontifical teaching orders and their complex relations with the diocesan authorities. Diocesan-based orders were able to provide a quick response to local needs, but were subject to the power of the local bishop and suffered from a certain insularity and inflexibility in regard to national educational needs. The pontifical orders by comparison retained a greater independence and a closer contact with international educational developments. Their educational interests extended beyond diocesan boundaries, yet they in their turn were constrained by the requirements of their own internationally based authorities. Accepted religious values, the perceived social needs of the Catholic community and the pedagogical traditions of the teaching orders helped to shape the educational mission of Catholic primary and secondary schools in New Zealand in the late nineteenth century.

While the majority of the “new” nineteenth century religious orders worked to provide a basic primary school education for the Catholic population, some female religious orders offered a “culture and accomplishments” curriculum aimed at the development of religious, cultural, and intellectual skills in girls. Selected male orders offered a classically based curriculum designed to produce the next generation of Catholic intellectual and religious leaders. Particular religious orders, such as the Society of Mary, the Sisters of the Sacred Heart and the Dominican Sisters, catered for the upper echelons of Catholic

society, while the Christian Brothers, the Marist Brothers, the Mercy Sisters and the Sisters of St Joseph worked to provide for those at the lower end of the social ladder.

The second part of this chapter examined the expansion of the Catholic educational mission, an expansion that was justified on the basis of the need to protect the faith of the growing number of pupils going on to secondary school. The expanded educational mission was also grounded in a new Catholic identity as “moral” patriotic citizens committed to Catholic family values and successful participation in New Zealand society. Catholic secondary schools increasingly offered a utilitarian secondary education that focussed on success in state-mandated examinations to the children of parents ambitious for their social and economic success in the world. Nevertheless, there were significant tensions between Catholic educators who wished to preserve the “academic” and “cultural” standards of a select secondary education and those who worked for the social and educational advancement of working-class Catholic pupils while aiming for the protection Catholic religious and cultural values. These tensions would resurface in the context of the Thomas reforms.

The religious formation of Catholic teachers

In chapter five I considered ways in which the religious formation of Catholic teachers worked to ensure the maintenance of Catholic values and to shape the Catholic education mission. New religious were socialised into particular religious and cultural practices and were constructed as “expert” teachers capable of transmitting the faith and Catholic cultural practice to the next generation of pupils. The chapter considered the values that permeated the process of religious formation and the ideals of mission, service and sacrifice: ideals that were

handed on in the schools. The chapter outlined the organisation of novitiate training before detailing initiation practices underpinned by a mix of authoritarian and regulatory practices, particular constructions of gender and the distinctive spiritual traditions of religious orders.

Catholic teachers were trained for their critical role in transmitting the faith and Catholic culture to the next generation of Catholic pupils, a process of religious formation that provided the value framework for Catholic schools. The vocation of a religious teacher was characterised by assumptions of a lifetime commitment to the educational mission of the religious order to which the new recruit aspired. The chapter outlined the organisation of religious formation in six teaching orders, demonstrating how the training of new recruits involved specialised theological and spiritual training within religious communities and socialisation into practices of work and prayer that were replicated in Catholic schools. It detailed initiation practices including secondary schooling in a Juniorate environment and the facilitation into religious life through early experiences as pupil-teachers.

Novitiate training, which marked the formal stage of religious formation, was a totally spiritual year characterised by a highly regulated authoritarian environment and the influence of particular Novice Masters or Novice Mistresses. Novices learned to cope with the vicissitudes of religious life through the companionship of their cohorts and by developing a sense of humour. Designed to promote the higher calling of celibate religious life, the formation practices discouraged relationships between individual religious and between teachers and pupils. Practices of religious life formed new religious for the educational mission particular to each religious order. Male and female novices

were treated in distinctive ways; females experiencing the restrictions of habit, and limited access to physical exercise. Males, while living in a highly regulated environment, had greater freedoms of habit, mobility and physical activities. By the late 1950s, some women religious began to challenge the authoritarian regime of the novitiate and constructions of female that located them in the domestic environment.

Finally the chapter outlined the influence of the distinctive spiritual traditions of the six religious orders in this study including the devotional practices of the Christian and Marist Brothers, the intellectual freedom allowed to Dominican,s and the enclosure regulations that constrained the lives of Religious of the Sacred Heart and the Dominican Sisters. The religious formation of the participants in this study was designed to construct Sisters, Brothers, and Priests who would transmit the Catholic faith, maintain religious and cultural values, and to forge the key values of the Catholic educational mission and reproduce them in the next generation of Catholic pupils.

The Catholic educational mission under pressure

The four chapters in this section of this study examined how the Catholic education mission came under pressure. In the context of an expanding secondary school system, the Thomas reforms were to become a crucible for change having consequences for educational policy-making, for Church-State relations, for the work of Catholic teachers, and for the nature of the Catholic educational mission in the post-war years.

Maintaining a “ground of difference”: Church-State relations

Disputes about Catholic autonomy, funding and the values underpinning the distinctive identity of Catholic schools soured relations between the Catholic

Church and the State in the years after the 1877 Education Act had made state education free, compulsory, and “secular”. Chapter six examined the Act, the influence of Bishop Moran, the Bible in Schools debates and disputes over state aid and their implications for the Catholic educational mission in the twentieth century. For the Catholic hierarchy, relations with the State were predicated on defending the autonomy of the Catholic school system from state interference and the incursion of secular values.

The chapter outlined historic influences, highlighting the role of Bishop Patrick Moran and subsequent Irish-Catholic bishops whose relationship with the State over educational matters was based on patterns of suspicion, grievance, and crisis. The Bible in Schools campaign prompted long-running political debates over the role of religious instruction in schools and fuelled continued antipathy between Catholics and the rest of New Zealand society. The hotly contested issue of state aid to Catholic schools, seen as crucial to the long-term viability of the Catholic education system, became a continuing cause of discord between Catholics and the State. The chapter then summarised the achievements of the Catholic educational mission in the mid-twentieth century. It detailed how, when the Thomas Committee first met in 1943, there was in existence in New Zealand a fully-formed Catholic school system which received some state aid but which was held together by a circle of religious devotion and the fund-raising efforts of Catholic community. In a time of educational reform and rapid expansion, the capacity of the Catholic education system to cope was to come under serious strain.

The politics of educational reform

By examining events leading up to the reform of post-primary education in New Zealand, chapter seven examined the process of educational policymaking and the implications of debates about the role of post-primary education for the Catholic educational mission. Catholic commentators were part of a wider group of educators who publicly objected to the “secular” values implied by the curriculum reforms. They feared the state imposition of the “progressive” values implicit in “new education”, and any moves seen to pose a threat to “academic” standards, the authority of parents, teachers and the Church and the integrity of the Catholic educational mission. Yet oral evidence suggests that behind the official public statements highlighting the dangers of state control, the threat of secular values, and the loss of a “classical” academic curriculum, individual members of the Catholic education community held diverse views on the value of the proposed educational reform.

The second section of the chapter demonstrated how Beeby’s omission of Catholics from the Thomas Committee caused resentment on the part of the Catholic hierarchy and increased the chances of a Catholic challenge to the Report. Key recommendations from the Report included the proposal for a common core curriculum that would cater for the educational needs of all adolescents as well as the academically able minority. Catholic responses, though initially muted, were to gather momentum and during the early months of 1945 the situation would reach the status of an “education crisis”.

A crucible for change: Catholic reactions to the Thomas Report

The desire to protect the distinctive religious, cultural and educational values of Catholic schools underpinned Catholic objections to the Thomas Committee’s

recommendations for a state-mandated reform of the post-primary curriculum. Under pressure from burgeoning secondary rolls and faced with the prospect of educational reform, the Catholic educational mission was presented with a crisis. While the Catholic bishops were determined to defend Catholic schools from state interference and the “pernicious” influence of secular values, they also wished to protect the educational standards of Catholic schools and to ensure the economic, social and educational advancement of Catholic secondary pupils. As the chapter detailed, negotiations with state educational authorities over the Thomas reforms resulted in key accommodations on both sides and improved relations between church and state educational authorities. It was a process that had implications for national educational policymaking and for the Catholic educational mission in the years to come.

Catholic opposition to the Thomas reforms reflected a long-held antipathy to any suggestions of state surveillance and control over Catholic schooling, a resistance to the incursion of secular values into the curriculum and a desire to protect the integrity of the Catholic educational mission. Chapter eight utilised a variety of documentary sources to consider the Catholic reaction to the Thomas Report, a reaction that was led by the hierarchy and nominated representatives of teaching religious orders and which centred on opposition to the values of “new education”, fears about the impact of state control and anxieties over the lowering of academic standards.

The first part of the chapter challenged the premise that the Catholic response to the 1944 Thomas reforms could be dismissed as “conservative” by outlining the diversity of views held by Catholic educators and demonstrating that the Catholic position developed as a result of extensive discussions within

the Catholic educational community and protracted negotiations with the State. My analysis of this process highlighted the workings of educational politics and the ongoing complexities inherent in relations between the State and the Catholic education authorities. Negotiations between the Director of Catholic Education (Wellington) and the Director of the Department of Education moved from confrontation to accommodation as it became clear that both were willing to compromise. Gascoigne and Beeby were able to negotiate the minefield of Catholic sensitivities to a resolution acceptable to both state and church authorities. Had this solution not been achieved, then the alternative may have been a separate curriculum for Catholic secondary schools.

Catholic education authorities took “the hard road” in their response to the curriculum reforms proposed by the Thomas Committee. Not content with minor adjustments to a curriculum they perceived to be imposed by the State, they re-examined their own theory and practice, challenging the ideological basis on which the reforms were premised. At the same time they successfully negotiated changes to specific curriculum specifications. Ironically, however, they found it necessary to modify the very freedoms they cherished in order to ensure the success of the Catholic educational mission for the increasing numbers of working-class pupils entering Catholic secondary schools.

The impact of the reforms on the work of Catholic teachers

Chapter nine identified the key concerns of the Catholic educational mission in the years immediately after the Thomas Report. By utilising life history accounts I was able to highlight the pressures on teachers following the implementation of the Thomas reforms including lack of Departmental support for implementing the new curriculum, staffing shortages and increased pupil-teacher ratios. While

some teachers feared a fall in academic standards and the incursion of secular values, others saw opportunities in the new “general” curriculum. Teachers’ accounts of the pressures they faced in the years following the implementation of the Thomas reforms offer unique insights into changes in the Catholic educational mission, insights not available to researchers relying on documentary evidence alone. Catholic teachers encountered difficulties implementing a new curriculum without much support initially from the Department of Education. Faced by burgeoning roles they worked to meet state requirements while maintaining existing pedagogical traditions and the integrity of Catholic values. There were tensions between teachers who espoused an “academic” education for the select few and those who saw that new curriculum offered advantages for pupils with a wider range of abilities. Fears of the loss of Catholic autonomy to state control were expressed in the context of a state-controlled curriculum based on secular values. Yet teachers saw the advantages of a public examination system and benefits in gaining access to the expertise of the inspectorate. They also found ways to modify the curriculum to suit their existing pedagogical practice.

A consideration of ways in which the focus of the Catholic educational mission shifted to the provision of a post-primary education for all pupils formed the basis of the second part of the chapter. The revised 1946 School Certificate examination came to be seen by Catholic teachers as a way of ensuring the success of the Catholic educational mission for all Catholic pupils: access to a good job and to further school qualifications. In the final section of the chapter Catholic teachers explained how they worked to encourage working-class pupils to stay on at secondary school and to seek further educational credentials. In this

way the Catholic educational mission in the years after 1945 expanded (in the context of a raised school leaving age) to promote the “common good” of all Catholic pupils: their educational advancement, social mobility and economic success and their successful integration into New Zealand society.

Part four: Tensions and transitions in the Catholic educational mission in the post-war years

During the years 1943 to 1965 Catholic schools had become the most important mechanism for passing on Catholic beliefs, attitudes and values to the next generation of Catholic pupils. Part four of this thesis highlighted ways in which Catholic educators worked to resolve tensions between the religious, cultural and secular goals of the Catholic educational mission in the post-war years. It detailed the fundamental processes that operated to maintain the distinctive values of Catholic schools and the viability of the Catholic educational mission in the period of transition from 1943 leading up to the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), after which the Catholic educational mission faced further challenges that would change the nature of Catholic schooling forever.

Apprentice to professional: The training of Catholic teachers

Changes in the training and professional development of Catholic teachers in the years covered in this study were designed to protect the educational standards of Catholic schools and to maintain the viability of the Catholic educational mission in changing times. Chapter ten examined some of the pressures that resulted from the expansion of the Catholic educational mission into secondary schools including burgeoning rolls, staffing shortages and a crisis of teacher credentialing. These pressures hastened shifts from an “apprenticeship model” of order-based teacher training to a system of training that focused on primary

teacher certification. The establishment of a Catholic training college at Loreto Hall in 1950 provided a partial solution to the teacher credentialing crisis, enabling the incorporation of “state” professional standards and pedagogical advances into a “national” model of primary teacher training that retained its distinctive Catholic outlook.

From the 1950s onwards increasing numbers of religious completed university qualifications as part of their training to teach specialist subjects such as Mathematics and Science at secondary level. Nevertheless, as the oral evidence indicated, the majority continued to learn to teach via an apprenticeship system in their orders’ primary schools. By the 1960s factors such as the development of professional and social relations with state educators and the easing of the restrictions of religious life enabled Catholic teachers to take part in state-run professional development. In the years up to and including the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), a time when questions were beginning to be asked about the nature and purpose of religious life, teaching orders were increasingly utilising state models of professional development and contributing the expertise and the best practice of their own teachers in what became increasingly an integrated approach to the professional development of New Zealand educators.

Transmitting the faith and maintaining a distinctive Catholic culture

Chapter eleven considered the essentially dynamic nature of the Catholic educational mission, detailing how the teaching of Catholic faith incorporated selected pedagogical developments and progressive ideas within the prevailing framework of the Catholic educational mission and incorporated them within existing practice. The second part of the chapter demonstrated how Catholic cultural practices were passed on in the schools and the way Catholic traditions

of faith and culture were premised on deference to authority, the promotion of religious life, the enculturation of manners, and discipline practices.

In the first part of the chapter I demonstrated how the Catholic educational mission, while maintaining certain core values, was a dynamic model that responded to both internal and external influences. Catholic religious identity, marked in the 1920s and 1930s by a distrust of modern society, slowly changed between 1943 and 1965 as the result of a growing desire to reach an accommodation with the modern world. In the years after 1945, notions of Catholic “moral citizenship” which had evolved in the 1930s developed into the view that every young person had a right to the education and training necessary to his or her successful integration as citizens in New Zealand society.

Underpinning the Catholic educational mission, however, was a belief that education for temporal purposes was necessarily subordinate to an education that prepared pupils for their eternal destiny.

The chapter then examined the teaching of the Catholic faith in Catholic schools detailing how, in the years of this study, it incorporated selected pedagogical developments and progressive ideas to move from a traditional model of catechesis to one based on kerygmatic catechesis. Catholic teachers assimilated new pedagogical models for the teaching of faith within the prevailing framework of the Catholic educational mission, and incorporated them within existing practice. The chapter then examined informal aspects of Catholic culture, the construction of a Catholic “atmosphere”, the intersection of culture and manners, discipline practices, and deference to authority. The complex cultural practices that characterised the life of Catholic schools were grounded in Catholic faith traditions and premised on the unconditional acceptance of the

authority of God and the Church. They were manifested culturally in the emphasis on conformity, the promotion of celibate religious life, the enculturation of manners and discipline practices. Cultural practices in Catholic schools that promoted deference to authority appeared on the surface to be about social control, but at a deeper level, they were also at the core of debates between Catholic educators and the State over the role of education and its relationship to the authority of God and the Church.

The final section of the chapter examined some of the tensions implicit in an educational mission premised both on the maintenance of Catholic religious values and on the social, economic, and educational success of Catholic pupils. While the Church was determined to maintain its authority in areas such as the teaching of faith and morals, a transition was occurring in religious life that allowed more scope for and responsibility to, the individual. Some participants, reflecting on the early 1960s, remembered a sense of restlessness about the constraints under which they lived and concerns about the nature and purpose of their educational task. The Second Vatican Council, held between 1962 and 1965, signalled major changes for the practice of religious values within religious orders. It was to result in a serious challenge to the role of Catholic teachers and the fundamental premise of the Catholic educational mission.

Ensuring the “secular” success of Catholic schools

Chapter twelve examined how Catholic educators resolved some of the tensions implicit in an educational mission based on the maintenance of religious values and the desire to promote the social, economic and educational advancement of Catholic pupils and their successful integration within New Zealand society. Catholic educators worked to protect their pupils from secular values by bringing

a distinctively Catholic approach to the teaching of the “secular” state curriculum. They infused subjects such as History with religious values and promoted a Catholic worldview while incorporating pedagogical and curriculum advances in order to compete successfully with state schools and to provide their pupils with access to and success in the state-mandated examination system. They also utilised state surveillance in the form of school inspections in order to improve the educational standards of Catholic schools and the long-term viability of the Catholic education system. Although the longer established secondary schools were proud of their social and cultural traditions, emphasising the elite cultural and intellectual values of a liberal education, the vast majority of Catholic secondary schools in the period 1943-1965 worked to encourage the social and economic advancement of the majority of working-class and middle-class pupils who filled their schools.

The second part of this chapter demonstrated how the relationship between Catholic educators and the state inspectorate was a key factor in maintaining educational standards in Catholic schools in the years reviewed in this study. While Catholic educators emphasised distinctively Catholic religious and educational values, they utilised state surveillance in the form of school inspections in order to prove that Catholic schools were as efficient as the state school in providing their pupils with access to and success in the state-mandated examination system. The chapter examined the key role played by inspectors in monitoring teaching standards and the secular curriculum, and the way Catholic educators worked to protect the distinctive values and public perceptions of their schools. The working relationship between state inspectors and Catholic teachers provided Catholic teachers with professional and pedagogical support. Catholic

teachers generally saw their relationship with state inspectors as one of mutual support based on a sense of camaraderie and shared professional values. They cooperated with inspectors to improve the educational standards of Catholic schools and to protect the distinctive religious, cultural and educational values that underpinned the long-term viability of the Catholic educational mission.

Reflecting on the implications of this research

Historical research using qualitative methodologies can illuminate the structures and taken-for-granted assumptions of our contemporary world, demonstrating that these have developed historically and that they emerged out of particular social, cultural, and political contexts. This project has focussed on the complex factors influencing the expansion of the Catholic educational mission in the years between 1943 and 1965. Yet it is important to acknowledge the boundaries of the particular framework used in this study as it makes no claim to be a comprehensive analysis of all the issues facing Catholic educators in the post-war years. Significantly, it excludes a consideration of issues such as the education of Māori and the study of those Catholics who, for one reason or another, chose to have their children educated outside the Catholic system.⁶⁷² Neither is it a study that focuses directly on the experience of Catholic pupils, although many of the participants attended Catholic schools. These issues are important and warrant future research in their own right.

⁶⁷² St Joseph's Maori Girls College, Hawke's Bay, Hato Petera on the North Shore, Auckland, and Hato Paora in Feilding are Catholic Boarding Colleges established to cater for Maori students.

This study utilises a multi-method approach as a way of “making visible” the processes operating in Catholic schools during a period when the Catholic educational mission was undergoing significant changes. The claims it makes are dependent on a “situated” reading of the available evidence, the documentary, archival, visual and oral accounts that form the basis of this historical narrative. As I have already indicated in chapter two, the historian of Catholic education draws on a unique and idiosyncratic range of “official” and “unofficial” sources. These, like the “official” sources available to the historian of state education bring their own conceptual and practical difficulties, not the least of them being the uneven and “selected” nature of the preservation of archival material. It is important too, to acknowledge the fact that the numbers of Catholic religious who taught during the years of this study are relatively small now – and diminishing. Therefore the interviews that inform the research narrative are, of necessity, drawn from a relatively small and select group of participants. Nevertheless, I have had the unique opportunity to record the life history accounts of more than thirty of these individuals from a range of teaching orders and to “make visible” their experiences in an account of Catholic education history.

The use of life history accounts has enabled a consideration of the diversity of the views of Catholic educators, illuminating the complex factors that helped to forge, reshape and renew the Catholic educational mission and to shape the lives of Catholic teachers and pupils during a particular historical context. Until this research, there have been few attempts to examine the history of a schooling system that over many decades catered for hundreds of thousands of New Zealand children. An examination of previously untapped oral, archival,

photographic and documentary evidence presents new insights into the little-studied field of Catholic education history in New Zealand and internationally and has implications for future research involving comparative studies in Catholic education and the relationship between Catholic educators and State education systems.

This research has examined the historical, religious and cultural values that underpinned a distinctive Catholic identity, provided the justification for a separate Catholic education system, and set the stage for a power struggle with the State over the nature and function of education in the post-war years. It was crucial, during the years of this study, for Catholic educators to emphasise the distinctive values of the Catholic educational mission and the historical differences between the Catholic education system and state education. This construction of a “ground of difference” challenged the notion that education was primarily a state enterprise and set the tone for relations between Catholic educators and the State. The hegemonic struggle between Catholic and State educators – and indeed between the State and other denominational and non-denominational interest groups – over the role of education in society and their influence in the formation of educational policy during this period is a fascinating one that warrants future research.

As a history of New Zealand Catholic education during the post-war years this research challenges the way educational historians, together with most other New Zealand educators in fact, appear to regard Catholic education (when they regard it at all) as an aberration from the norm. By examining the relationship between Catholic educators and the State, for example, I have highlighted the part Catholic educators played in the process of educational

policymaking during a period of significant educational reform in New Zealand. To include Catholic accounts is to “write into history” crucial accounts that have, until now, been ignored or marginalised. Thus, this research has added new understandings to “mainstream” education history whose parameters have been limited historically to a consideration of accounts of state education. It also suggests possibilities for future research into New Zealand education history that include accounts previously excluded on the grounds of their “difference” from mainstream understandings of education.

This study has pointed to the significance of the exchange of ideas between State and Catholic educators in educational policymaking, the influence of “secular” pedagogical developments on Catholic educational practice and the shared values and differences between Catholic and State educators in areas such as the role of religious and moral values in education. It highlights issues that have relevance to contemporary educators such as the tensions between educators who promote “academic” and “elite” cultural and social values and those who espouse a more “general” education that will fit the young for their role in society. It points to the essentially pragmatic nature of educational policymaking and the complex negotiated settlements that underpin the process of educational reform and suggests a number of questions about the role of the State in determining educational, cultural and moral values.

A consideration of the findings of this research highlights the importance of an understanding of historic and political influences in contemporary Catholic education in New Zealand. It points to a number of issues, including the nature and function of contemporary Catholic schooling in a period when Catholic schools are diverse ethnic and cultural communities and teachers are a mix of

Catholic and “non-Catholic” lay educators. In this context Catholic schools face important questions about what it is that constitutes the Catholic identity and the religious, cultural and educational goals that underpin the Catholic educational mission. This research also adds new understandings to the wider study of Catholic education history. Catholic educators have been and continue to be part of an international Catholic Church. As such, the issues raised in this thesis form part of international debates about the nature and function of a Catholic education.

At a personal level, I have been encouraged by the positive response of historians of education to the issues I have raised and the support I have had to publish this research and to undertake future work in this understudied area of education history. Finally, this research has been a personal journey for me, a journey into my past, a journey that has helped me to understand some of my own history including the basis of my values, culture and learning. In T.S.Eliot’s words:

We shall not cease from exploration
And at the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And to know the place for the first time.⁶⁷³

⁶⁷³ T.S. Eliot, *The Four Quartets* (Orlando, Florida, 1971).



Appendix One

The Catholic educational mission 1943-65

Information sheet

An invitation

You are invited to take part in the following research project.

Focus

An exploration of the distinctive culture of the Catholic secondary classroom.

Reasons for the research

This research examines distinctive factors in the relationship between teachers and their pupils and how these factors combined to shape the culture of the Catholic secondary school classroom. It also considers the impact of the common core curriculum (implemented as a result of the Thomas Report) and changes in teaching practice in the years 1943 to 1965.

Nature of Research

The research will take the form of one interview of approximately an hour in length. The interview will be recorded and the information later transcribed. Your confidentiality will be ensured as far as possible although as participants may know each other this cannot be guaranteed. However the researcher will take the following steps.

- Only the researcher and the typist who transcribes the tapes will listen to the tapes. He/she will sign a confidentiality agreement.
- The tapes and transcripts will be stored in a secure place.
- Your name will not be used unless you give permission.
- Living persons mentioned in the interview will not be named.

Participant's Rights

You have the right to decline to take part. If you agree to take part, you can withdraw at any time until the completion of the interview process. You can refuse to answer any particular question at any time. Your name will not be used unless you give permission. You are able to ask any questions about the study at any time during participation. If there are any issues raised during the course of the interview that need further support or counselling, a trained counsellor may more properly deal with these.

Some participants in this study have been approached through a community contact (in the case of religious communities). Others contacts have been made utilizing the snowball method where one participant suggests the name of another. Upon the completion of this research project I am happy to make myself available to participants (and their communities) to report on the findings. A copy of the tape and/or transcript will be given to you if you wish to have one. If you wish to give a copy of the tape or the transcript to a community archive, one will be made available. Information given in the course of the interviews will be confidential to the research and any publications resulting from it.

Procedures for reviewing audio-tapes

As this interview is part of a larger research study, with your permission, a copy of your tapes and transcript will be kept in a secure archive until the completion of the project. Since this material belongs to you, your wishes about what happens to it at the end of the project will be respected.

This project has been approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee.

Contact person

Associate Professor Kerry Chamberlain
Chairperson
Human Ethics Committee
Ph (09) 443 9700 ext 9078

Supervisor:

Associate Professor Roger Openshaw
Social and Policy Studies
in Education
Palmerston North Campus
Ph 443 9700 ext 8847

Researcher

Jenny Collins
Assistant Lecturer
Social and Policy Studies
in Education
Albany campus

Supervisor:

Professor John Codd
Social and Policy Studies
in Education
Palmerston North Campus
Ph 443 9700 ext 8965



**The Catholic education mission in transition
 1943-1965
 Questionnaire**

Please write your answers in the spaces provided. Use extra paper if required.

Background information

1. Name Date of Birth

2. Father's name..... Occupation

3. Mother's maiden name Occupation

4. Schools attended

Primary Secondary.....

Qualifications gained
 (school).....

.....

5. Year entered religious life Congregation/ Order

Year professed (final)..... Number professed in that
 year.....

6. Were there any members of your family already in religious life when you
 entered?

Yes/No Within the Order/Other Orders

Name	Religious Community
------	---------------------

a)

b)

c)



Teaching experience

7. Schools/ Institutions you taught in

School/Institution Place/Country	Years
a)	
b)	
c)	
d)	
e)	
f)	
g)	

8. Teaching/ Educational Qualifications

Qualification	Institution	Date
a)		
b)		
c)		
d).		

9. Subjects taught – an indication of your main subjects is all that is needed

- a)
- b)
- c)
- d)
- e)

Professional and leadership experience

10. Involvement in professional and educational organizations

- a)
- b)
- c)
- d)
- e)
- f)

11. Leadership experience

Secondary school

Position

Years

- a)
- b)
- c)
- d)
- e)

Other leadership roles

Position

Years

- a)
- b)
- c)

I would appreciate it if you could complete this questionnaire and return it by

.....

in the stamped addressed envelope provided. Thank you for your participation.



Massey University

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Te Kupenga o Te Mātauranga

Appendix Three

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND
POLICY STUDIES IN EDUCATION
Albany Campus
Private Bag 102 904
North Shore MSC
Auckland
T 64 9 443 9688
F 64 9 443 0717
www.massey.ac.nz

The Catholic education mission in transition 1943-1965

Outline of possible interview questions

- General background
- Entering religious life
- Formation
- First teaching experiences
- The curriculum/teaching subjects
- The pupils
- Aspects of Catholic culture



Massey University

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Te Kupenga o Te Mātauranga

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND
POLICY STUDIES IN EDUCATION

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North Shore MISC

Auckland

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F 64 9 443 0717

www.massey.ac.nz

Appendix Four

The Catholic education mission in transition 1943-1965

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

NAME

I agree to respect the privacy of the individuals mentioned in the interviews that I am transcribing. I will not pass on in any form information regarding those interviews to any person or institution.

Signed:

Name:

Date:





Appendix Five

The Catholic Education mission in transition 1943-1965

CONSENT FORM

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I understand I have the right to withdraw from the interview at any time and to decline to answer any particular questions.

I agree to provide information to the researcher on the understanding that my name will not be used without my permission.

(The information will be used only for this research and publications arising from this research project).

I agree/do not agree to the interview being audio taped.

I also understand that I have the right to ask for the audio-tape to be turned off at any time during the interview. My wishes for the disposal or usage of the tapes and transcript at the completion of the study are

.....

If circumstances (such as illness) prevent my continuing with the research process (e.g. reviewing the transcripts) I nominate the following person to act on my behalf.

.....

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Signed:

Name:

Date:

PLEASE RETURN IN ENCLOSED STAMPED ADDRESSED ENVELOPE BY

.....



Appendix Eight



26 August 2002

Office of the Principal
Massey University
Albany Campus
Private Bag 102 904,
North Shore MSC,
Auckland, New Zealand
Principal: 64 9 443 9700 ext 1
Regional Registrar: 64 9 443 1
ext 9516
Facsimile: 64 9 414 0814

Jenny Collins
C/o Professor J Codd & Associate-Professor R Openshaw
College of Education
Massey University
Palmerston North

Dear Jenny

HUMAN ETHICS APPROVAL APPLICATION – MUAHEC 02/058
“Catholic Teachers as Mediators of Knowledge and Culture 1945 - 1975.”

Thank you for your application. It has been fully considered, and approved by the Massey University, Albany Campus, Human Ethics Committee.

If you make any significant departure from the Application as approved then you should return this project to the Human Ethics Committee, Albany Campus, for further consideration and approval.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kerry Chamberlain'.

Associate-Professor Kerry Chamberlain
Chairperson,
Human Ethics Committee
Albany Campus

cc Professor J Codd & Associate-Professor R Openshaw
College of Education
Massey University, Palmerston North

Appendix Six

Glossary of terms as they are understood in a Catholic context

Apologetics

That part of theology that emphasises understandings of faith based on reason.

Apostolic

Of the apostles or their teaching. The role of bishops is to stand in apostolic succession to the Apostles, as official interpreters or guarantors of the apostolic tradition.

Catechesis

The process of “echoing” the Gospel, of introducing young people or adult converts to the main elements of the Christian faith.

Charism

A religious group draws its charism from the values of its founder, its original purposes and the convictions about God and human life that set the community apart.

Congregation

A self-governing group of religious belonging to the same religious order.

Conscience

A person acts out of conscience when they decide to act in a one way rather than in another. Conscience has been defined as the radical experience of humans as moral agents. Because self-knowledge is necessarily incomplete and because a person’s circumstances are always historically, socially, and culturally defined, decisions of conscience are seen as fallible and subject to correction and change.

Constitutions

Constitutions are the formal sets of general regulations that govern religious congregations; they must be based on one of four or five approved religious Rules (Ignatian, Franciscan, Augustinian, Benedictine etc), must conform to canon law, and must be approved by ecclesiastical authorities. The Dominican Sisters of New Zealand established their own constitutions in 1933.

Customary

A set of guidelines for behaviour that related to a particular convent or congregation based on established usage or custom.

Divine Office

The official prayer of the Church. Different sections of it are said and sung by priests and religious at particular times of the day and night., eg Tierce, Nones (the third and ninth hour)

Dominican Order

St Dominic founded the Dominican Order in the thirteenth century to express by way of voluntary poverty and their straightforward preaching of the gospel what the “true” faith required. Along with the Franciscans the Dominicans represented a new pastoral orientation on religious life. In older forms of monasticism, people entered religious life for their own spiritual welfare: the glory of God through personal sanctification. Both the Dominican and the Franciscan Friars centred their activities in the preaching of the Gospel and the care of souls, i.e. a ministry “out in the world”. Until Vatican II the Dominican Sisters lived in semi-enclosure, combining a life of teaching and prayer.

Ecumenical

Involving the whole Christian world; seeking world-wide Christian unity.

Enclosure

An enclosure represents a defined area in of buildings and grounds within which the sisters lived secluded from the world. At St Dominic’s Priory, Dunedin, St Catherine’s Invercargill, Northcote and the various primary schools this was a relatively small area consisting of the convent and school buildings and grounds while Teschemakers College in Oamaru was an area of farmland which allowed much greater freedom of movement.

Excommunication

Excommunication refers to the expulsion of an individual from the Church, more particularly from the Eucharist.

Eucharist

Eucharist literally means thanksgiving. The liturgy of the Mass is also known as the Eucharist.

Fatima

The 1917 apparitions at Fatima in Portugal where Mary was identified as Our Lady of the Rosary and Queen of Peace became the focus of anti-Communist devotions.

Hagiography

Hagiography is the writing down of saints’ lives.

Heresy

Heresy is the denial of some truth of faith deemed by the teaching Church to be essential to the faith.

Immaculate Conception

In 1854 Pope Pius IX defined the dogma that held that the Blessed Virgin Mary was free from sin from the very first moment of her existence. In 1858 a peasant girl, Bernadette Soubirous, claimed to have visions of the Virgin Mary. At the same time a spring appeared, and miraculous healings were reported.

Jansenism

Jansenism was a heresy that came out of seventeenth century France. Cornelius Jansen (d.1638) argued that Augustine, not Thomas Aquinas was the true representative of Christianity. He promoted the theory of predestination and a morally rigorous style of Christian life, believing that since Original Sin had corrupted human nature everything purely natural was evil. Grace was only given to the few, therefore reception of Communion was to be experienced only rarely as an occasional reward for virtue (in comparison to the Jesuits' promotion of frequent Communion).⁶⁷⁴

Juniorate

During the period of this study the Juniorate was a Catholic boarding school run by a religious order which provided a secondary education to students who had indicated an interest in pursuing a religious life in that order. It had a greater emphasis on discipline and religious atmosphere than ordinary Catholic schools and students followed many of the religious practices of the order

Lent

Lent is the six weeks of "prayer and fasting" that prepares a Christian for the Crucifixion on Good Friday and culminates in the celebration of Christ's rising from the dead at Easter.

Monasticism

A style of Christian life, begun in the third century as a flight to the desert to avoid persecution and later to protest the newly privileged status of the Church. It emphasises life-in-community, common prayer, silence, and contemplation.

Naturalism

Naturalism was a reaction to "rationalism", which upheld the use of reason as the highest form of intellectual activity. Naturalistic education, as developed by Rousseau, incorporated three objectives: 1) education according to nature; 2) the preservation of the goodness of humanity; and 3) society based on the natural, individual rights of humans. These ideas directly conflicted with Catholic views of the "fallen" nature of humanity.

Nun

Although the nouns Sisters and Nuns are used synonymously, even among religious themselves, they refer to two distinct paths of religious life. In Canon Law, the ecclesiastical jurisprudence that governs religious life, a nun lives under "solemn vow" made in perpetuity and indissolubility" and follows the monastic traditions of the cloister and contemplation.

Order of Preachers

The term refers to the religious women and men who follow St Dominic, the Sisters, the Friars and the third order of lay women and men.

⁶⁷⁴ McBrien, 1980, 638.

Original Sin

The state in which all human beings are now born (since The Fall). It is a situation or condition in which the possibility of sin becomes instead a probability because grace is not available in the way God intended (because of The Fall).

Prioress General

The Prioress General is elected leader of the Congregation of the Dominican Sisters in New Zealand. She is elected for a period of three years. The title was enacted after 1933, when the Sisters gained their own Constitutions. A Prioress is in charge of a large convent.

Religious life

Religious life refers to a corporate form of Christian existence in which members of the Catholic Church gather in common pursuit of poverty, chastity and obedience.

Rabat (or Stock)

A rabat or stock is a vest front traditionally worn over a collarless white shirt. It could be worn with the style of clerical collars particular to each religious order.

Rosary Beads

A string of beads, containing the fifteen decades of the Rosary, worn around the waist by the Dominican Friars and Sisters. According to a tradition current since the 15th century, St Dominic founded the devotion.

Sacraments

The sacraments are the “ritual actions through which the saving presence and activity of God, on the one hand, and the sacramental nature of the Church, on the other are visibly and effectively engaged”. The seven sacraments are Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Penance, Marriage, Ordination and Extreme Unction (Anointing of the sick).

Second Vatican Council

The Second Vatican Council took place between 1962 and 1965. It was the twenty-first general or ecumenical (world-wide) council of the Church. Unlike previous councils it was convened, not to confront a serious attack upon doctrine but to bring the Church into the modern world. It asked all religious communities to go back to their founding documents and consider their role in a changing world. A number of the sisters who took part in this study were observers at the proceedings in Rome.

Secular priest

A secular priest does not belong to a religious order and is under the authority of the local Bishop.

Sister

The second distinct path of religious life for women. Sisters are women with “simple” vows who are engaged in active apostolate, undertaking works outside of the convent walls.

Sodality

A sodality is a religious society or fellowship. Examples include the Legion of Mary and the Children of Mary.

St Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274)

St Thomas Aquinas was a thirteenth century Dominican whose *Summa Theologica* is the most comprehensive synthesis of the biblical, patristic, and medieval understandings of the Christian faith, and has guided, for good or ill the interpretation and articulation of that faith ever since. For Aquinas the act of faith is essentially an act of the intellect.

St Augustine (d.430)

St Augustine was a fifth century theologian who postulated that faith was a free gift from God, but salvation was ultimately the effect of God's own goodness. He developed the theory of original sin, linking it with concupiscence (a human's desire for material or sensual satisfaction). He believed that to the extent that concupiscence affects human acts, all acts are sinful. He never worked out the difference between Original and personal sin, because for him the consequences were the same.

The Rule

Every autonomous congregation has its own constitutions but properly speaking there are only four Rules: St Basil, St Augustine, St Benedict, and St Francis. The Dominicans used the Rule of St Augustine as the basis for its organisation and governance.

Ultramontism

Ultramontanism, literally those who look *beyond the mountains*, the Alps, (to Rome) refers to a movement which originated in France which was distrustful of all rational reflection in theology and looked to the pope for direction. It was part of a reaction against attempts by commentators like John Henry Newman to develop a theological and philosophical engagement with the modern world.

Versicularian

The title Versicularian is given to the two Sisters who are appointed each week to say the Versicles and Responsories at the Little Hours and Compline (in the Divine Office).

Wimple

A wimple is a linen or silk head-dress that covered the neck and sides of the face. It was worn by women in medieval times and retained in the dress of nuns.

Appendix Seven

Narratives of life in the Novitiate

A day in the life of a Novice Christian Brother

You'd start in the morning somewhere around half past five and you had about fifteen minutes to wash and leave your room kind of tidy and then you had to be in the chapel and there was morning prayer which took three quarters of an hour. In those days Christian Brothers' prayers were pretty fundamental things with 'Our Fathers' and 'Hail Marys' and lots of this sort of pious prayers... Acts of dedication to Our Lady, Litanies by the dozen. Every time we went near the Chapel, we seemed to be saying a Litany. Now that was the way it was the way through the whole Order, it wasn't just us.

Then at the end of the formal Morning Prayer, you had a period of about thirty minute's meditation. The whole thing took three quarters of an hour, then there was a reading. Somebody read from the spiritual book for about ten minutes or so. Then there'd be Mass somewhere around quarter to seven. After Mass was breakfast. The whole thing was done in silence. You didn't speak unnecessarily to anybody.

After breakfast the house was cleaned, so everybody had jobs to do all around the house. Somewhere around about half past nine we met in the chapel again for another visit to the Blessed Sacrament, with another Litany and then there was the first class of the morning. That went through to about half past ten and then there was a bit of a break. You didn't speak. You were in silence all morning until the early afternoon. Then there would be a second class somewhere around about 11 o'clock. There was a further visit to the Blessed Sacrament at about 12 o'clock. You had a bit of free time to read or wander around, or do what you liked. Lunch was at half past twelve.

After half past twelve you worked. We were on a farm so there was always lots of work to do, or we had a games afternoon. Now and then you would have what was known as a 'free afternoon' and you could do what you liked. Somewhere around about half past two you were able to talk, ordinarily and from then until half past four, that was recreation time.

At half past four there was a siren, because there were people all around the place. The siren went and you dashed in and had a shower. You changed back into your normal living clothes. There was the evening prayer; you

started with the Rosary at about 5 o'clock. If you missed the siren, you were in trouble. About quarter past five we had a visit to the Blessed Sacrament, and then there was a reading. This was read aloud – this time the life of a Saint – for about quarter of an hour.

Tea was at about 6 o'clock. After tea there was another class, preceded by another visit to the Blessed Sacrament and after that, which would be somewhere about 8 o'clock, you were free for about an hour. That was the evening recreation period and at 9 o'clock you had night prayer, which included the Rosary and a ten minute examination of conscience with mosquitoes biting at your feet and then you went to bed. You were in bed by about half past nine. On a Feast Day you'd get up earlier. (CN 10-11)

A day in the life of a Novice Marist Brother

Now our novitiate was in a place called Claremont, which was a stately old house belonging to one of the Rhodes family, you know, the famous Rhodes of Africa family. One of his brothers or cousins or something was in New Zealand and he had a number of big properties, so we had bought this property, the Brothers had bought the property.

Q: Is that near Timaru?

A: Yes, its about 10 or 12 miles out of Timaru, Claremont, yes. There's a lot of farming there and there's a kind of a community. When I went there, I didn't know anything about what was going to happen, so we arrived there, and I found out that the Brothers, first of all that they were wearing a religious habit. I know the Brothers that were teaching used to wear a religious habit but I had never had one in my hands, but we were wearing that so I had to wear it, at that stage I was only what they called a Postulant. A postulant is one who's asking to get there. And I think there were seven or eight, maybe seven other Postulants there at the time, and then there were something like 13 or 14 novices. It was a big group of people there. Besides that, we had a man in charge of the novitiate, a Master of Novices, who was an Australian and a very interesting character, and we had a Director or a Sub-Master, as we called him, and then he was also Director of the property, the house. He was a New Zealand man, a younger man, and without quite the sense of humour of the Master. Also we had a couple of farm workers, guys who went out and looked after the farm. We did have quite a big farm. I don't know how many acres it would be. Ninety perhaps, something like that. And they had a couple of cows and they had sheep and there was quite a lot of timber, forest land and so on, so it was quite a large property there. And it was good for wandering around in. People could do that. But the first thing of course was the day became very – it was very ordered, in the sense that you went off to bed at a certain time, and we had dormitories. The dormitory I was in, I'm not sure how many people I had in there. Perhaps a dozen, say, 10 or 12. The first night, the novice who was sleeping in the bed next to me had nightmares, he kept me awake calling out to his brother, who later on I did meet. He had a twin brother who later became a priest in Wellington.

The next day – you know, everything was done in silence, so we had the silence – you got up – the bell went and you got up in the morning and dressed in silence and had your wash and shave if you needed to shave. There was a communal wash area. It wasn't big but it was big enough. Adequate. We weren't hard up for means of doing things. And then we had our prayer. Morning prayer was at a certain time. I think it was half past, I think it was ten to six or something like that in our days. It takes me all my time to get up at ten to six now, but we met in the chapel at ten to six, say, and there was a routine morning prayer and half an hour meditation standing up. The theme was read out by the Master of Novices and you had to think about it for the half an hour, or pray about it. Occasionally some guys would go to sleep and fall over. Not too often, but it was always amusing. We were looking for an amusement all the time of course and the Master had a great sense of humour. He was a good man to have around. If you were too serious about it, you know, it could ruin the vocations of some members.

Oh let me think now. Oh yes, yes, we had Mass following. That was followed by Mass and then we'd have breakfast. And breakfast – there was nothing inadequate about our food. We were well fed, and having a farm – in those days there was rationing, rationing of milk, not so much milk, but butter. Butter was rationed, sugar was rationed. Well, the Master believed that once the butter rations ran out, if we ran out of rations he'd go and get somebody to make some butter. So we didn't have a great problem with butter. Sugar was a bit harder. I mean we had to watch the sugar closely. There was no way of getting round that one. So, we were well fed. In the morning then we would have a talk from the Master, and perhaps a study hour or something like that to read certain books. The book were rather limited, but oh well, they were about religious life but they weren't the latest in the idea, in the latest ideas. Besides, it was war time and things were not easy to get. Then, in the afternoon, perhaps after dinner – after dinner we would have a recreation, which meant we went and played games for half an hour, and the games would either be cricket or soccer, but we had to play cricket with our habits on, these long, black habits. It was crazy but still, that was the rule, but when we played soccer in the winter time we were allowed to take our habit off, play in our gardening boots and things like old trousers and that, so it was fair enough. And then at two o'clock, usually two o'clock, I'm not sure if we had, we may have had Rosary. I might be wrong there. We may have had Rosary at two, and after that we had work for about an hour. An hour's work and we had various jobs to do. The Master was a great man on cutting wood, he himself. He was not young. He must have been in his sixties, but he liked to cut wood. So he would cut – had to have trees down, of course they had blown down, some of them, in the wind and he would have a couple of the strongest novices would be helping him, and they would cart the wood up and he would cut it on this machine, and he was very keen on that.

Q: So you actually had quite a lot of physical work?

A: Yes. Oh yes. Otherwise we would dig the garden, or weed or clean the path, you know. There were always jobs to do. And instead of work, once a week, I think the Thursday it might have been, instead of recreation and work, we would go for a walk, and we would walk around the district. And it must have looked very strange for we had to wear our habits. I think the neighbours, you know, the various farms they got used to us. They knew who we were. There were no shops or anything to worry about, but you could walk around the area. You might meet the occasional dog or horse. That's about all you would meet. So that was that type of recreation. We also had reading at meals. At breakfast there was a reading of the lives of the Saints. Being good novices, we would think they were very funny. Yeah, there were outbursts of laughter occasionally about some of the happenings. They sounded a bit funny, that sort of thing. And they were, I suppose too. And then I'm not sure. We must have had something at dinner time as well, and at tea time. I think we always had reading, but occasionally we would be allowed to talk at meal, and the Master would say what we call "Benedicamus Domino", that's Bless the Lord, and that would mean you can talk today.

Q: Mm. Would that be a special occasion or a ?

A: Yes. If there was a feast day or a birthday or something like that. Yes it was – he was pretty good on it that Master was. He wasn't – you know, wasn't tight-fisted in that sort of way, and so he was a good man to have. Novices of other times have been a bit critical of their Masters of Novices, because they were too stern. This man was quite relaxed in his own way, and he told us all about Australia when we sat at afternoon tea. We'd have afternoon tea was another thing that people might be surprised at. After work we'd come in and whoever was doing the cooking would have done a batch of scones or something, and the Master would then talk to anyone around about and he'd tell us all about – especially on our walk or perhaps at recreation, he would tell us about his adventures in Australia as a Brother. So we knew all about New Norcia over in the west and we knew all about the goings-on in his own area. He was a Melbourne man largely, so most of his activities were centred on the Melbourne places like Kilmore

We had formation. Postulancy lasted about six months. In September of the first year – for me it was 1944 – we took the habit as it was said. We were allowed to wear that, the long habit. We didn't wear it before that. We had all secular clothes. And then we had a year as novices, one year. Now things have changed. They do it differently nowadays. However, we had one year as novices, and in my group we had – I think we had seven novices. Yes, we had seven novices. Then another group came in as postulants, so there were always two groups there except for a little time at the end of each year. There was no educational training in the novitiate, but there is now. Apparently in the novitiate now they do things like that. They might even do social work and all sorts of things, quite different now. We don't have one in New Zealand at the moment, but we do have one in Fiji, and they do a certain amount of social work and so on. Go out to the

villages and so on. Now, when we finished the novitiate, we made our first vows and that was corresponding a year later from the September. So September the following year, which for me was 1945, we made our first vows, which were for one year: poverty, chastity and obedience, one year. And then we moved away from the novitiate up to Auckland here, to what we called our scholasticate – scholasticate's a good name. It meant a training college. It's the same as our training college. (FT 4-6, 9)

Life in the Novitiate of the Religious of the Sacred Heart Rose Bay, Sydney

It was my first time out of the country. Five of us entered altogether then, at Rose Bay. It's hard to describe the noviceship, it really is. It's like a time of hibernation. For me it was. It seemed unreal, really, in many ways, and I thought oh well, I suppose this is important. I mean, I knew how to sweep a floor. I didn't need to be trained in how to do it again. Things like that really got on my nerves but I realised afterwards it was about the only way the Mistress of Novices could assess your character, I suppose; and get to know how you responded to things that seemed on the surface to be a little strange.

Q: Mm. So it was quite different from being in school?

Oh absolutely different. Yes. And very – very regimented. If you entered a religious congregation that was an enclosed congregation at that time, pre-Vatican II, there was a very strict rule of silence for starters. We didn't talk to anybody or to each other, except in designated times. You were given your jobs to do, they called them "employments", and study to do, mostly relative to the scriptures, Gospels and reading the history of the Order. We were given instruction daily from the Mistress of Novices and had two hours contemplative prayer a day. We had our recreations formalised. We were named in groups of three to either spend a half hour walking round the place together or to do the garden together. The second year you took on more studies and preparation for teaching if that was going to be what you were going to do, and you started to do a few things in the school.

Q: There was a school there?

Yes. There was a school on-site. The school is still there and functioning. Its called Kincoppie Rose Bay.

Q: Is it a secondary –?

It's a primary day school and a secondary boarding and day school, but it was all boarders in those days. So I completed the two and a half years of my novitiate and made my first vows. We were called Young Professed after that, and I came immediately, back to New Zealand because Loreto Hall was functioning then as a teachers' college and it was deemed to be

appropriate that I got trained in the country that I was going to work in.
(SA6)

Life in the Dominican Novitiate

Q. So tell me, what would a typical day be like once you had got up in the morning? How would the day start.

A. Well, you would get up at half past five and by six o'clock you would be down at the Chapel, at five to six, and you would say the office, recite from six till half past. And from half past six to seven you would half an hour's mental prayer. This wasn't necessary when I was a postulate but more so when we received the habit and at seven o'clock we had Mass and at half past seven we would go to breakfast or twenty to eight. At eight o'clock you would shoot up and make your bed or do whatever you had to do and then go to school at half past eight. That went right on until four o'clock and then you would have a lecture.

Q. So, after school, school would finish ... three?

A. Half past three. Then we would have corrections to do and then you would have a lecture, I think about four o'clock we would have a lecture. Up in the novitiate.

Q. And what would that be for?

A. That would be on religious life, our vows and lives of the saints. It was long before Vatican II so that didn't enter into it, but the lectures were good.

Q. And who would be giving the lectures?

A. The Mistress of Novices.

Q. Oh, right.

A. When were professed as Sisters. You see you have six to eight months as a postulant where you took part in some of that, and then you had a year as a white novice as we had the white veil, so you didn't go into school any of that time.

Q. How is that different from being a postulant?

A. Well you had more housework to do, you had a longer prayer time, more study time in terms of religious study and then when we were professed we were into school. The Normay year, they called it the canonical year, where you had to learn to be religious and so it was generally to do with the religious life proper and then when we were professed we used to go down to Mosgiel, go for lectures on Saturday morning.

Q. So you went out to the seminary?

A. Yes, or down to Moran Buildings for lectures from the professors who were priests.

Q. How many would have entered with you and would have been going through that process?

A. Oh, about eight or so.

Q. There was quite a few.

A. Yes just Dominicans. Some went on to secondary teaching and some went to primary teaching. And then you see you were sent out the Missions after that, after about a year of profession. (OL8-9)

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