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ARTICLES

U.S. CATHOLIC SCHOOLS AND THE RELIGIOUS WHO SERVED IN THEM: CONTRIBUTIONS IN THE 18TH AND 19TH CENTURIES

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This article, the first in a series of three articles surveying the contributions of the religious to U.S. Catholic schooling, focuses upon their contributions during the 18th and 19th centuries.

With the colonists establishing a life for themselves on North American soil, the Spanish Franciscans commissioned friars to minister in the New World. In 1606, the first band of friars opened the first Catholic school in the New World, located in St. Augustine, Florida, dedicating it "to teach children Christian doctrine, reading and writing" (Kealey, 1989). Not long afterward, other religious communities followed in these pioneering Franciscans' footsteps.

Over the next 294 years—an era during which the colonies revolted against the crown to become the United States of America, citizens fought a civil war to abolish slavery, and millions of Catholic immigrants journeyed from the Old World to the New World—the successors of these pioneering religious contributed mightily to establishing Catholic schooling in the United States. The religious not only staffed schools, they educated the poor and marginalized, solidified the schools' institutional purpose, and provided students with effective values-based instruction. Furthermore, they established teacher preparation programs to better assure quality teaching for the young.

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STAFFING CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

As the number of Catholic schools gradually increased, providing teachers became a more pressing need. But to find women and men to teach in and administer Catholic schools was a difficult proposition. In his pastoral letter of 1792, the nation's first bishop, John Carroll, made a fervent appeal to his co-religionists to offer their lives in service to the Church as educators. His appeal failed, and within decades bishops returned to the Old World to recruit teachers for Catholic schools.

It is ironic that two congregations of cloistered nuns were among the first women's religious communities to establish schools on North American soil. A small cadre of Carmelite nuns journeyed in 1790 from Antwerp in the Netherlands to Port Tobacco, Maryland, where they opened a school (Dolan, 1985). Two years later, the Poor Clares sailed from France to Georgetown, Maryland, where they established a convent school. Evidently, the nuns' lack of familiarity with the English language and the difficulties of colonial life, as well as the troubles the nuns brought upon themselves by their reluctance to abandon their cloister, curtailed success.

From the beginning, the outcome was different for religious congregations dedicated to the apostolic life. In August of 1727, 10 members of the community of St. Ursula opened Ursuline Academy in the port city of New Orleans (Murphy, 1958; O'Donnell, 1971; Woody, 1929). Nearly 100 years later, the Ursuline Sisters of Montreal opened the first parochial school in Boston (Walch, 1996). In 1818, the Bishop of New Orleans, William Dubourg, secured the Religious of the Sacred Heart to teach in his diocese. Under the inspired leadership of Madame Rose Philippine Duchesne, they soon established the first free school west of the Mississippi River. In 1836, six Sisters of the Congregation of St. Joseph traveled from France to New Orleans on their way to St. Louis. In the area south of the city known as Carondelet, the Sisters constructed a motherhouse replete with convent school. The community gradually expanded and, by the 1850s, sent Sisters to minister in the Diocese of Rochester (Sisters of St. Joseph of Rochester, 1950).

Despite these successes, some attempts to secure religious sisters in the Old World for educational work in the New World ended in disaster. For example, the first bishop of Cincinnati, Edward Dominic Fenwick, journeyed to France in 1825. Although he was successful in recruiting one French Sister of Mercy to come to Cincinnati and to found a school, Fenwick's success was short-lived. Within one year, the sister died and the school she founded collapsed (Perko, 1981). Things fared better for Bishop Fenwick's successor, John Baptist Purcell. By 1850, Purcell had secured the services of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, the Sisters of the Precious Blood, and the Ursulines to operate schools in Cincinnati (Perko, 1981).

But, as generous as European religious communities were, they could not

provide enough teachers to fill the need. With the founding of the Sisters of Charity in 1808 by Elizabeth Ann Seton, however, the nascent U.S. Catholic Church began to provide teachers for its schools by training its first native-born sisters.

Women's religious congregations were particularly successful during the antebellum era, as their love of neighbor and courage in the face of many odds attracted aspirants to their ranks. By the middle of the 19th century, religious life was expanding incrementally with at least 13 communities of women religious teaching in Catholic schools, all but three of the communities being native to the United States (O'Donnell, 1971). Then, as the tide of the Great Immigration washed upon the shores of the eastern seaboard during the second half of the 1800s, religious life was expanding exponentially. By 1900, 119 communities of women religious were sending 40,430 sisters into the nation's parish schools (Ewens, 1981). Women's religious communities also were now attracting new vocations in numbers that would sustain Catholic schools well into the second half of the 20th century.

Concurrently, male religious communities also were providing a stable resource for some of the nation's Catholic schools. Prior to their suppression in the 17th century, the Jesuits had established several schools in Maryland. In the early 19th century, the Dominicans and the Trappists opened schools in Kentucky. Also during this era, a group of French Christian Brothers arrived in New Orleans to open schools. Things did not go so well at first for their confreres, the Irish Christian Brothers. When Brother James Boylan and his two compatriots arrived in New York in 1828, they set about building a school for boys. The Brothers' enthusiasm notwithstanding, their work stalled when their credentials were challenged. In 1842, a band of Augustinians, recently emigrated from Ireland, whose first school closed in Philadelphia after operating only four years, tried their hand again. They opened Villanova College on the Belle Aire estate located west of Philadelphia (Contasta & Gallagher, 1992). That very same year, the Congregation of the Holy Cross turned to northeastern Indiana to open their school, dedicating it to the honor of the Blessed Mother, Notre Dame.

Historically, while religious congregations provided the backbone for U.S. Catholic schooling, diocesan clergy also responded generously to God's call to teach. In 1783, the nation's first parochial school, St. Mary's School, opened in Philadelphia. Nearly 14 decades later, in 1890, Roman Catholic High School opened in this same city, making Roman Catholic the nation's first diocesan (or central) secondary school. The establishment of these schools and hundreds of others like them attests to the pioneering contributions diocesan clergy made to the origins of U.S. Catholic schools. This spirit continues unabated today, even in rural dioceses, as some pastors heroically devote their energies to preserving their parochial schools (van de Crommert, 1995).

Even had sufficient numbers of women religious been available to teach, community regulations prohibited many sisters from teaching male students who had reached puberty. This requirement necessitated segregating boys from girls and procuring male teachers for the boys. Perko observes that the "education of boys was picked up occasionally by priests or religious brothers, but more frequently by laymen" (1981, p. 89). Thus, despite the seeming omnipresence of religious in Catholic schools by the close of the 19th century, it must not be forgotten that prior to and well into the 19th century, "the bulk of the teaching in parish schools was done by the laity" (O'Donnell, 1971, p. 89).

Indeed. In February, 1802, St. Peter School opened in New York City with a faculty of four, three laymen and a priest. In addition, a lay board of trustees—whose primary role was to insure the school's financial stability in a city only beginning to experience the first wave of Catholic immigration—governed St. Peter's. The efforts of the lay teachers and trustees were successful, as St. Peter's became by 1906 the largest denominational school in New York and the mother school for several other Catholic schools (Walch, 1996). Furthermore, when nearby Seton Hall College opened its doors on September 1, 1856, two priests and five lay teachers comprised the founding faculty (Seton Hall University, 1956).

A third example of the laity's crucial role in the history of U.S. Catholic schooling in the antebellum era is gleaned from the educational history of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. In 1852, Philadelphia's bishop, John Neumann, was busy promoting Catholic schools. To garner financial support for the schools, Neumann established the first central Catholic school board in the United States, delegating it to raise funds for the support of the schools, to review instructional materials for use in them, and to plan for new schools (Gabert, 1973).

In light of these examples, it is important not to overlook the contributions of lay teachers to Catholic schooling for, without the laity, Catholic schools could not have been opened, operated, and expanded as they did during the 18th and 19th centuries. As O'Donnell (1971) has argued, the temptation to focus exclusively upon the contributions of the religious while neglecting the laity's contributions misrepresents the situation. O'Donnell writes:

> Ironically, the lay teacher has been a part of Catholic education from its beginning in the United States. Throughout the eighteenth century, despite fierce opposition at the time from civil authorities, Catholic schools were opened in Maryland and Pennsylvania and staffed primarily by lay teachers.... The priest organized the school, parents supported it, and lay schoolmasters administered it and handled the instruction. (1971, p. 87)

From the very beginning, lay educators have been vital to the success of U.S. Catholic schools and, from all demographic research, will again be absolutely crucial in the 21st century.

Notwithstanding O'Donnell's (1971) corrective, religious sisters, brothers, and priests during the 18th and 19th centuries sustained the rapid expansion of Catholic schooling and, perhaps more importantly, fostered its distinctive identity. Increasingly, popular consciousness equated these women and men with Catholic schools—so much so that many Catholics (and non-Catholics) found it difficult to conceive of a Catholic school that did not have religious as teachers or administrators.

However, some of the more politically motivated and partisan non-Catholics were swayed by anti-Catholic propaganda asserting that the religious were pawns in a fiendish papal scheme to indoctrinate Catholic youth and to destroy American freedoms. Some of the more virulent detractors pointed to the vow of obedience, wondering whether religious could be effective in teaching the democratic ideals associated with true American citizenship (*The Converted Catholic*, 1888; Crowley, 1905). Other detractors accused Catholic schools of being "popish seminaries," intended to stir up latent and overt anti-Catholic sentiment among the Protestant majority (Ray, 1936). And there was also a band of former Catholics who published first-hand accounts alleging immorality among members of religious orders (*American Catholic Quarterly Review*, 1877).

For others, it was not simply the presence of the alleged Romish conspirators in Catholic schools that provoked harsh anti-Catholic sentiment. The religious habits these women and men wore served as a lightning rod for anti-Catholic animus.

In New York state, for example, the state superintendent of education ordered the Poughkeepsie school board to terminate a highly successful 26-year-old lease program, citing the fact that the sisters who taught in St. Peter's School wore religious habits (Burns, 1912). A similar story unfolded in the Minnesota towns of Faribault and Stillwater, the sites of Archbishop John Ireland's "experiment" with the public schools (Morrissey, 1975). The agreements were abruptly canceled when public opinion turned against the sisters (O'Connell, 1988). In Lowell, Massachusetts, where the town's school committee funded Catholic schools, the overall quality of Lowell's Catholic schools was undisputed. As the number of Catholic schools increased and additional teachers were required, pastors invited communities of religious women to staff the parochial schools. Whatever the benefits of having the sisters teach in Lowell's schools, their presence ultimately proved so divisive that the town's school committee discontinued the "Lowell Plan" after nearly 25 years of successful cooperation (Burns, 1912; Dolan, 1985; Mitchell, 1983; Walch, 1996).

Eventually, the evangelical witness of these religious women and men

sowed the seeds of new vocations, seeds that would germinate and come to fruition within two generations as the daughters and sons of Catholic immigrants, many of whom had been educated in the nation's Catholic schools, entered religious congregations and diocesan seminaries. By the turn of the 20th century, many of these youth—now vowed religious sisters, brothers, and priests—were teaching and administering in the nation's burgeoning network of Catholic schools.

EDUCATING THE POOR AND MARGINALIZED

The institutional support conventual and monastic communities provided members made it possible for them to engage in a wide array of pious works to meet the spiritual and temporal needs of the U.S. Catholic community. For individual religious communities and the Church, too, it was an economy of scale based upon increasing membership and decreasing costs.

In light of these economies, a third contribution of the religious to Catholic schooling in the 18th and 19th centuries, at least in the minds of the nation's bishops and certainly of local pastors, was financial. By providing a less costly alternative to lay educators—perhaps even a cheap labor pool—religious communities of the 18th and 19th centuries made it possible for Catholic schools not only to survive, but also to extend educational services to some of the most marginalized members of American society.

One snippet from U.S. Catholic educational history provides a glimpse into what was, by the 19th century, a fairly widespread phenomenon.

In 1727, the Sisters of St. Ursula opened Ursuline Academy in New Orleans. At its founding, the Academy boasted three divisions: a boarding school for the daughters of the city's landed gentry, a day school for the merchant class, and a catechetical program for Negroes and Indians (Kealey, 1989; O'Donnell, 1971; Woody, 1929). The approach the Ursulines used to finance the school illustrates the creative ways in which the religious utilized rather modest economic resources to provide schooling for all who sought it, especially the poor and marginalized.

For the Ursulines, the funding formula was straightforward: The Sisters charged tuition to educate children of the wealthy upper and merchant classes. These tuition revenues made it possible not only to provide for the religious community's sustenance but also to fund other Sisters to engage in teaching economically disadvantaged, working class, and poor children based on their ability to pay.

The principle underlying this financing scheme was not simply economic, nor was it simply creative or clever. The principle underlying their rationale was distributive justice: that is, members of the community who possessed more abundant resources bore a concomitant obligation to share their excess with others who did not share as abundantly in needed resources.

Because the Sisters acted in accord with the demands of distributive justice and built the common good by providing educational and other necessary services for as many children as they could, Ursuline Academy has provided educational opportunities for the needs of all strata of youth in New Orleans for 250 years. Furthermore, the Ursuline Sisters' approach to financing education across various social strata bears eloquent testimony to the fact that U.S. Catholic schooling, from its inception, provided for the children of all religious, social, and economic strata (Viteritti, 1996), not merely for the most privileged members of society as detractors falsely allege (Fass, 1989). And today, Ursuline Academy has the distinction of being the oldest continuously operating Catholic school in the United States.

However, this contribution—as important as it has been to U.S. Catholic schooling—must be viewed within the context of the larger Zeitgeist pervading this era in the nation's history. In many locales public school societies were springing up. These groups, like the Public School Society of Albany, New York, were private philanthropic bodies—oftentimes dominated by the Protestant majority—"dedicated to providing free education for the poor and open to others on a tuition basis" (O'Brien, 1992, p. 16). To contain costs, many public schools were organized according to the Lancaster System wherein older students assisted faculty in teaching younger students the basic rudiments of reading, writing, and arithmetic.

In light of this era's altruistic spirit of promoting the common good through public education, it would be false to assert that it was solely Catholic religious communities which provided for the educational needs of youth, especially the poor and marginalized. Indeed, it may well be the case that their dedicated service represents a broader evangelical spirit pervading the age, namely, to insure that the nascent republic would be a religious nation fulfilling its Manifest Destiny.

SOLIDIFYING INSTITUTIONAL PURPOSE

As noted earlier, the Franciscans opened the first Catholic school in the New World in 1606 (Kealey, 1989). Not surprisingly, but not to be underestimated either, the school's charter proclaimed its catechetical purpose first, with the school's secular intent flowing from its religious mission. The educational paradigm embodied in this Franciscan school, what a later era would call an "integral education" (Vatican Council II, 1975), emphasized the school's dual moral and intellectual purposes. For the U.S. Catholic community, this school's charter represents the broadest context in which to conceive the fundamental purpose of a Catholic school. This invaluable contribution specified the identity of the Catholic school and set into motion how Catholic schools would be envisioned and judged during the next 150 years.

In fact, by the second half of the 19th century, the religious had so suc-

cessfully identified the school's primary moral (or catechetical) purpose in the mind of the public that they incurred the wrath of nativist critics who suspected that the sisters, brothers, and priests were indoctrinating their students in "Romish" and "papist" monarchical ideals at variance with the republic's democratic ideals. Puck's famous *A Picture Without Words* and Nast's rather shocking *The American River Ganges* vividly portray the deep suspicion nativists held about papal intentions and the local parochial school's purpose.

Interestingly, the literature describing the history of U.S. Catholic schooling is largely silent when it comes to specifying what the word "Catholic" denoted and how its definition actually took shape within Catholic schools. This ambiguity provides a hint about the primary contribution the religious sisters, brothers, and priests made to U.S. Catholic schooling. Providing a moral formation for youth in Catholic schools is the critical axis around which U.S. Catholic schooling has been organized and, as we shall see, the catechetical ideals being conveyed to students in the nation's Catholic schools of the 18th and 19th centuries were as much informed by Roman Catholic thought as they were influenced by the American Catholic experience, especially as this integration was fostered by those who controlled the Catholic schools (Jacobs, 1990).

It was during the 18th and 19th centuries that trusteeism exacerbated tensions between the bishops and some of their more vociferous laity (Ellis, 1969). Taken at face value, trusteeism was nothing more than a visible manifestation of the laity's practical commitment to the faith. For Americans, it was also the exercise of the fundamental human rights and religious liberty guaranteed to all citizens. Thus, as members of the Catholic community, parishioners were simply enacting in their parishes the self-determination guaranteed them as American citizens (Carey, 1986).

However, in an atmosphere poisoned by mutual distrust and suspicion about intentions and rights and complicated by conflict over national origins and foreign languages, some parishioners sought to exercise jurisdiction over parishes, including the administration of parochial schools. Walch (1996) observes: "Through elected trustees, Catholic parents pooled their funds, built parish schools, hired Catholic teachers, and decided on the curriculum. Trustees saw no reason to consult the parish priest about educational matters" (p. 17). Evidently, Bishop John Carroll thought ecclesiastical authorities should be consulted (Carey, 1986; Dolan, 1985; Walch, 1988) and, as the bishop asserted his authority, he perhaps unwittingly stoked smoldering embers.

Some clergy found themselves to be in general agreement with trusteeism, particularly as the tide of democratic idealism washed up on the shores of the New World. After all, these pastors reasoned, who wouldn't want the laity involved, particularly in providing a Catholic education for their children? Indeed, no individual could single-handedly accomplish all

that was required. However, as the laity's involvement in parochial matters led to the perception on the part of some ecclesiastics that the laity were interfering in parochial matters, the clergy found themselves thrust into the middle of a maelstrom—while they espoused democratic ideals, they also acted as agents of a foreign potentate and theocratic monarch who was the Pope of Rome. They were trapped in the very dilemma posed by the most vituperous of anti-Catholics: How could one be both a loyal American and a loyal Catholic?

In the midst of this fray, the religious proved to be an attractive resource, most especially to the bishops, for the profession of vows—especially the vow of obedience—made the religious a somewhat more docile, sheltered, and perhaps even more trustworthy alternative to lay teachers, who themselves could be inordinately influenced by more outspoken and active members of local parishes. Conversely, for parishioners, the presence of religious in the parochial school provided a vital link to the Church, perhaps even a somewhat embellished reminiscence of the Church in the Old World from which they had emmigrated. In this context, it is not difficult to envision how a parish—especially a national parish—could be at odds with the bishop over canonical and social issues, yet feel a keen relationship to the institutional Church. To be sure, women and men clad in Old World religious garb instructed immigrant children in their parents' native tongue. And a new generation of American Catholics celebrated and renewed Old World traditions (Rippley, 1980; Weisz, 1972).

As trusteeism concerned Catholic schooling, however, the issue in contention was not simply who possessed authority to make decisions about the parish school but if there was to be such authority. More to the point, trusteeism was a clash of worldviews raising questions that would hold sway during the next two centuries. Was the U.S. Catholic Church to be a Roman Catholic Church? Or, was it to be an American Catholic Church? Ultimately, the place where this conflict would be reconciled in each succeeding generation was within the confines of the nation's Catholic schools. And, because the religious controlled the Catholic schools, they occupied a privileged position from which they could foster a resolution to these questions (Jacobs, 1990).

PROVIDING VALUES-BASED INSTRUCTION

While religious sisters, brothers, and priests negotiated the craggy terrain demarcating intentions and rights as well as national origins and Americanization, what their students learned might well have earned the ire of both the pastor and the bishop—if both knew what these educators were (and were not) teaching their students.

Generally speaking, most textbooks used in Catholic schools during the

second half of the 19th century were very much like those used in the public schools, emphasizing the values of patriotism, piety, deference, thrift, honesty, and diligence (Elson, 1964; Mosier, 1965). These textbooks functioned as the "guardians of tradition" (Elson, 1964), conveying to students the core values of a pan-Protestant work ethic (Tyack & Hansot, 1982).

In the public schools, some textbooks were not so benign. Fell (1941) studied more than 1000 social studies textbooks written between 1783 and 1860, discovering that many disseminated anti-Catholic and anti-foreigner propaganda. It was difficult to disprove these specious half-truths, Fell argues, for the authors constructed stories from factual incidents that placed Catholics and foreigners in the most objectionable light possible. To redress this imbalance, Catholic book publishers designed textbooks for use in the parochial schools and, in towns where the Roman Catholic Church constituted an influential majority, in the public schools. Some Protestant clergy quickly seized upon these texts, complaining that they contained an unacceptable pro-Catholic editorial bias (*Andover Review*, 1893).

The earliest U.S. Catholic textbook series, the Dunigan edition of the Christian Brothers' *Second Book of Reading Lessons*, published in 1852, emphasized the educational value of nature and the value of a conservative code of behavior, in particular, learning God's lessons through nature, cultivating diligent and honest work habits, and remaining devoted to one's parents. Sadlier's *Excelsior Readers*, widely in use by the mid-1870s, emphasized identical themes, and specifically, that proper values are their own reward (Fanning, 1990). The Benziger Brothers' series, introduced in 1874, entitled the *Catholic National Series of Readers*, rarely differed from other textbook series, even though it was authored by the reputedly conservative bishop of Cleveland, Richard Gilmour (Walch, 1978).

Undoubtedly, textbooks used in classrooms are important, for they function as tools in the hands of those who control the schools to further their stealthy agenda (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991). While many may recall, for example, the 1950s basal reading series featuring Dick, Jane, and Spot, they may not be as familiar with the fact that the series was reconstructed by its publishers for use in Catholic schools (Luke, 1991). Not to be overlooked either are the battles waged during the past three decades concerning the content and the underlying emphases implicit in human sexuality textbooks for use in the nation's Catholic schools.

So, textbook battles are nothing new to the U.S. Catholic community. And, while the content found in textbooks is no guarantee about what is taught in schools, a closer scrutiny of the content of the textbooks approved for use in Catholic schools provides a sense of the values and ideals promulgated. What is surprising about the textbooks used in 19th-century Catholic schools, even those approved by the more conservative bishops, is that the values and ideals emphasized in the content differed only marginally from

those approved for use in public schools. Evidently, the only substantive difference between Catholic schoolbooks and those used in the public schools during the second half of the 19th century was the partisan Catholic interpretation of the nation's past. The contributions of Catholics to the American experience were highlighted, apparently to encourage Catholic children to be activists in the nation's affairs (Walch, 1978). These were the predominant themes Catholic teachers communicated to their students through the textbooks they selected for use in their classroom lessons and for home study as well (Massbarger, 1971; Walch, 1978).

Perhaps it was partially as a consequence of this fact that the nation's bishops promulgated the *Baltimore Catechism* in 1884 as the religion text for use in Catholic schools. However, while the new catechism defined the content of *what* would be taught, the bishops could not dictate *how* the material would be taught. During the early decades of the 20th century, it would be the religious who would resolve this pedagogical issue and in rather surprising ways.

PROVIDING TEACHER TRAINING

Bishop John Carroll saw the need to provide training for those who would serve in the nation's Catholic and public schools and took a first step with the opening of the Georgetown Academy in 1791. The nation's first bishop was optimistic that parents would willingly send their sons to the Academy for a Catholic education. At the same time, however, Carroll's long-term goal included graduates who,

> ...some time after being educated at Georgetown, and having returned into their own neighborhood, will become, in their turn, the instructors of the youths who cannot be sent from home and, by pursuing the same system of uniting much attention to religion with a solicitude for other improvements, the general result will be a greater increase of piety, the necessary consequence of a careful instruction in the principles of faith, and Christian morality. (Carroll, 1984)

Carroll's Georgetown Academy was an initiative intended to provide teachers for Catholic schools. At the same time, this initiative was also aimed at rectifying what was, by all accounts, the fundamental flaw in U.S. Catholic schooling. That is, when compared to their public school counterparts, many Catholic educators during the 1800s and early 1900s lacked professional training.

Orestes A. Brownson, a convert to Catholicism, was one of the first to raise the issue of professional preparation, noting in 1858, "where we have not and cannot have good schools of our own, I think the best thing we can do is to send our children to the public schools" (p. 433). Some three decades

later, a priest of the Archdiocese of New York questioned the quality of Catholic teachers and wondered in a column of the *Catholic Review* whether there were too many "half-fledged neophytes" teaching in Catholic schools (Smith, 1891). But, as Murphy (1976) has pointed out,

> The academic training of teachers in the United States, both in secular and religious affiliated institutions, has a relatively short history. For the most part, normal teacher training was not common for most of the nineteenth century. Teaching had not yet become a profession requiring specialized and formalized training. It would not be until the first third of the twentieth century that the baccalaureate program would become fairly standard for most American teachers. (pp. 125-134)

For public school teachers, that is. But for Catholic school teachers, the problem was two-fold.

Near the close of the 19th century, Shortell (1893) illustrated one aspect of the problem. Many of the sisters in parochial schools were at a comparative disadvantage to their colleagues in public schools not simply because they were inadequately trained, but also because most had not attended teachers' college. In addition, because Catholic schools were poor and did not possess the financial means to fund educational opportunities for their teachers, many could not take advantage of the opportunities available to their public school counterparts.

The problem of providing training was exacerbated as local boards of education, such as that of Troy, New York, mandated that those religious teaching in public schools take the examinations required of their secular counterparts. In Massachusetts, Catholic periodicals trumpeted that anti-Catholic prejudice motivated this move by boards of education, especially those dominated by Protestants (Lord, Sexton, & Harrington, 1944). Some religious communities refused to acquiesce to these mandates, and their obstinacy led some boards to terminate long-standing agreements under which religious taught in public schools (*Catholic World*, 1894).

Historians of Catholic education have described the second aspect of the problem associated with staffing parochial schools with qualified teachers. As parochial schools expanded, local ordinaries asked (and in some instances created) religious congregations—particularly female religious congregations—to supply teachers. International communities did fill some shortages with Europeans who knew no English; but this was a stop-gap measure (Burns, 1908; Burns, 1912; Burns & Kohlbrenner, 1937; Dolan, 1985). One legend has it that Bishop John Carroll needed teachers so badly that, without consulting a Carmelite cloistered community in Baltimore, he obtained the Vatican's permission for the sisters to abandon their cloister and start a new school ("Medieval Fortress of Spirituality," 1996).

While this caricature may portray the case as it actually existed in many

dioceses, it fundamentally distorts reality in some dioceses. Not every bishop cowered in the face of the monumental problems associated with providing adequately trained teachers. Indeed, some bishops exercised entrepreneurial ingenuity to meet the challenges presented by the need to staff Catholic schools, a few even going so far as to establish their own diocesan religious communities.

Take, for example, the late 1860s and the diocese of Rochester which, under the direction of the energetic and unflappable Bernard J. McQuaid, organized the first sustained program for the pre-service training and ongoing professional development of Catholic teachers.

The genesis of the Rochester program was a byproduct of Bishop McQuaid's belief that parochial schools should be at least as good as their public school counterparts. So dogged was he in this belief that he took the unprecedented step of accepting state supervision of the diocesan parochial schools—which carried with it the reality that students enrolled in parochial schools would take Regent's examinations and be compared to their peers in public schools. It was a gamble, to be sure. But how else would the bishop prove to Catholics and non-Catholics alike that teachers in Rochester's Catholic schools were every bit as good as teachers in its public schools? At the same time, however, McQuaid was an astute enough politician to stack the deck in his favor. Thus, to increase the probability of success, Bishop McQuaid organized and provided continuous professional development programs for his teachers.

One such opportunity was McQuaid's weekly Sunday afternoon conferences for the diocesan congregation of religious women, the Sisters of St. Joseph of Rochester, which he founded. Following the celebration of the Eucharist and lunch, Bishop McQuaid, a self-reputed educational expert, would lecture the Sisters about diverse pedagogical topics. Paternal in tone, he provided sound advice, for example, when he described the Catholic teacher's vocation. Bishop McQuaid told the Sisters:

> Have God in your school room, and whatever you teach, even if it be the dry subject of A, B, C, or the multiplication table, let it be done so purely and so well for Him that the youngest children will recognize His presence; that they will be so well instructed in their religion as to become thoroughly grounded in His knowledge and love. Use secular studies as the tools with which you may accomplish this end. (*Annals of the Sisters of St. Joseph*, 1889)

Maintaining that the salvation of souls should be uppermost in a Catholic teacher's mind (*Annals of the Sisters of St. Joseph*, 1900a), on another occasion the Bishop reminded the Sisters that this would be accomplished as they endeavored to "[r]each the hearts of the children and in reaching their hearts bring them to God" (*Annals of the Sisters of St. Joseph*, 1900b). In light of

their vocation, *what* teachers taught, at least in McQuaid's mind, was secondary to *why* they taught. For McQuaid, Catholic education first concerned the salvation of each student's soul; of secondary importance was the communication of knowledge, skills, and values each student would need to participate actively as a Catholic citizen in a pluralistic republic.

Although the Sisters of St. Joseph had training programs available locally, Bishop McQuaid used his journeys to Europe to secure opportunities for the Sisters to receive the best possible training. The bishop selected several European Catholic normal schools (i.e., l'École normale de St. André in Bruges, the Collegio Marcellino in Genoa, and the Kloster Bondanden in Wurtemburg) where his Sisters would study pedagogy and then, he assumed, return to Rochester to teach their colleagues. Preparing expert pedagogues by sending Sisters overseas for study would take time to produce the desired effects. In the meantime, McQuaid continued to lecture the Sisters weekly and required each of them—by virtue of their vow of obedience—to spend at least one hour each day in study (*Annals of the Sisters of St. Joseph*, 1882).

In 1873, Bishop McQuaid introduced a professional development program consisting of a series of annual institutes. Soliciting experts to address the Sisters presented no problem for Bishop McQuaid. He invited the experts to his lakeside resort, ostensibly for a relaxing vacation, but also to lecture to the Sisters. Over the years, these institutes proved so popular that, in 1896, eight years before the first Catholic Educational Association meeting, McQuaid convened the first gathering of Catholic teachers (called the "Sisters' Institute") at Cathedral Hall, drawing some 350 sisters. The Institute's purpose was primarily pedagogical, providing participants from several dioceses training in secular subjects as well as ethics (*Annals of the Sisters of St. Joseph*, 1882).

Much of what was communicated at these institutes might well have served to preserve traditional pedagogy. However, at least one of McQuaid's guests, Brother Azarias, challenged those present to conceive of a new pedagogy. In one lecture, *Rule to Guide Those Who Seek to Be Successful Teachers*, Brother Azarias exhorted his audience:

> Do not rely upon the memory of pupils as much as upon the judgment. Teach the child to think. The mind of the young is quick and elastic: it should therefore be trained carefully. Do not encourage memorization. Never call on the brightest pupil of the class, but on the dullest. Unless you gain the interest of your pupils with their love and respect you can do but little. Never give a lesson without having it carefully prepared. (*Annals of the Sisters of St. Joseph*, 1882, p. 68)

Not only did Brother Azarias suggest to the Sisters that they turn their backs on the traditional lecture-and-memorize format, he also told the Sisters that their function was to form their students' minds. For citizens of a large-

ly Protestant nation, Brother Azarias reasoned, a refined capacity to think critically about and to exercise their franchise in civic matters would be a necessity. Certainly, Bishop McQuaid would not argue with this. However, Brother Azarias's rule also left open the possibility that teachers might train the minds of Catholic youth to think as critically about their Church and theological issues. That the formation of a critical consciousness is found in this early professional development program—and in a diocese presided over by a reputedly conservative bishop—provides evidence that those who taught in Catholic schools (as well as those who taught them) were being trained to offer their students something more than instruction in the four r's (reading, writing, arithmetic, and religion).

While Bishop McQuaid's weekly lectures and annual Sisters' Institutes provided for the professional development needs of parochial school teachers in the diocese, he also ventured forth to provide pre-service professional training for those who aspired to teach in diocesan Catholic schools.

As members of the Sisters of St. Joseph returned to Rochester following their pedagogical training on the Continent, the community opened a teacher training department at Nazareth Convent in 1885. Fourteen years later, the department became Nazareth Normal School, one of the nation's first pre-service teacher education programs for Catholic teachers. The charter of this school, defined by Bishop McQuaid in his address at the school's dedication, offers further evidence that he was looking for his Catholic schools to provide students an educational program that would move beyond traditional pedagogical techniques and methods. The bishop announced: "This is the special work of the members of this community.... This instruction is according to the wants of to-day [sic], not according to the principles laid down a hundred years ago" (*Annals of the Sisters of St. Joseph*, 1903, pp. 185-187).

In addition to McQuaid's entrepreneurial initiatives, one Catholic educator who had served in the New York State Education Department, Mrs. B. Ellen Burke, devised a second training program for Catholic teachers (Kiernan, 1897). Within two decades, numerous dioceses, including New York, Boston, and Rochester, had sponsored Mrs. Burke's institutes (Hollands, 1899). A third program, the Dubuque Summer Session, was inaugurated in 1895 with nearly 250 Catholic educators in attendance (Murphy, 1976). Finally, in 1914, the Catholic Sisters College at Catholic University of America opened (Ward, 1947).

In light of Fr. Joseph Salzmann's comment that "the future belongs to him that controls the schools" (as cited in Heming, 1895, p. 172), the teachers' institutes sponsored by Bishop McQuaid, Mrs. B. Ellen Burke, and others served to professionalize teaching in the Catholic schools. In addition, the educational ideals appropriate for a democratic republic propounded at these institutes in the late 19th century stimulated a dramatic metamorphosis in Catholic educational thought that would come to fruition in the early 20th

century. As the teachers who attended these institutes returned to their classrooms and integrated these ideals into their pedagogical repertoire, little did they know that among their students were the next generation's innovators. During an era characterized by the Church's anti-modernist stance toward the world, these Catholic innovators would integrate educational progressivism and advances in the pedagogical arts and sciences with Catholic educational philosophy (Bryce, 1978). And, within two generations, the teachers and administrators trained by these innovators would inculcate these ideals in their students. All of this would become evident by the mid-1960s in students' academic achievement as well as in the notions they held about American Catholicism and membership in the Church.

Thus, in the 19th century, as calls for reform emanated from various sectors, programs to improve the quality of teaching in Catholic schools emerged. But the challenge to improve teaching may not have been motivated solely by the need to rectify past failures and upgrade current standards. Perhaps, too, the need was pragmatic: If pedagogy was not professionalized, parents would be less inclined to send their children to Catholic schools.

And yet, despite these pioneering and innovative efforts, providing professional training for women religious remained a challenge that would last well into the 20th century. This challenge was often veiled in secrecy. "For too long, many of us had struggled with our academic consciences and put the seal of discretion on our lips over the flagrant status quo in Catholic education," wrote Sister Madeleva Wolff, CSC, the president of St. Mary's College at Notre Dame. At the 1949 National Catholic Educational Association meeting, Sister Madeleva lifted the veil, sounding a clarion call by asserting that young sisters need professional training before being allowed to teach. While Byrne (1990) notes that Sr. Madeleva's speech provided the spark igniting the Sisters Formation Movement, the problem of providing professional training for teachers in Catholic schools and subsequent efforts to improve it has tentacles rooting their way in U.S. Catholic history at least as far back as the mid-19th century.

A SUMMARY ASSESSMENT AND GLANCE FORWARD

In 1884, the vision of a literate and vital U.S. Catholic community tantalized the minds of the nation's bishops gathered at the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore (Baltimore III). The conservative majority believed that Catholic schools would bring this vision to fruition and eventuate the transformation of a Protestant republic into a Catholic republic (Curran, 1976). This was an ambitious goal, if only for the reason that the hierarchy had struggled for the greater part of the 19th century with how to provide Catholic youth the moral and intellectual formation they would need to seize "The Catholic Moment"

(Neuhaus, 1987). The contributions of the religious in the 18th and 19th centuries provided encouragement in this regard, even though the costs associated with Catholic schooling proved burdensome for many parishes.

While the episcopal majority at Baltimore III legislated the ambitious goal of "every Catholic child in a Catholic school," it could not legislate what would be taught in Catholic schools. In retrospect, however, had the conservative majority considered that the future belongs to those who control the schools, the majority might well have defined what would be taught in the schools they legislated.

Reflecting upon the zeal of the pioneering missionaries, the social and political context of the New World, as well as the emergence of Catholic schools during the nation's colonial period, Walch argues that sacrifice, especially the personal sacrifice required for the survival of the Church in the New World, is the most important theme pervading the history of U.S. Catholic schooling from its earliest days (1996).

Without doubt, the sisters, brothers, and priests did sacrifice their entire lives and futures to God in the belief that God was bidding them to "leave mother and father, brother and sister behind" (Matthew 19:29). Through this sacrifice, not only did the religious draw near to God in the service of youth, they also contributed mightily to the development of U.S. Catholic schooling. They staffed the fledgling schools, educated children of the poor and marginalized, solidified the schools' institutional purpose, provided values-based instruction, and attempted to perfect pedagogy through teacher training programs. At the same time, their contributions also made it possible for the religious to control the Catholic schools and, ultimately, to educate young American Catholics in the "ways of the faith"—as those who controlled the schools defined it.

In the second article of this series, the focus will turn to the contributions the religious made to Catholic schools in the first six decades of the 20th century. Providing diocesan Catholic educational leadership, supplying national Catholic educational leadership, melding progressive educational theory with American Catholic ideals, advancing women's equality, and upholding parental rights are five of the most significant contributions that the religious made to U.S. Catholic schooling during these years. Concurrently, while these contributions stabilized Catholic schooling during a period of rapid expansion—and many bishops looked upon Catholic schools as the "crown jewels" of the American Catholic Church—the religious pursued an agenda that the conservative faction of bishops at Baltimore III would have found troubling, if not disturbing.

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