THE PRINCIPAL'S LEADERSHIP ROLE

IN THE

SPIRITUAL FORMATION OF TEACHERS

IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS:

A CASE STUDY

IN ONE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree
of
Doctor of Education.
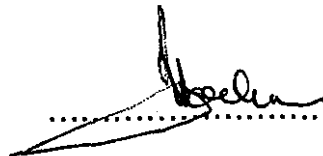
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20th August 2004

STATEMENT OF SOURCES

This thesis contains no material published elsewhere in whole or in part from a thesis by which I have qualified for or been awarded another degree or diploma. No other person's work has been used without due acknowledgement in the main text of the thesis. This thesis has not been submitted for the award of any degree or diploma in any other tertiary institution. All research procedures reported in this thesis received the approval of the Australian Catholic University Ethics Committee.

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ABSTRACT

This study arose out of experiences within the Parramatta Diocese, a large diocese located on the western edge of Sydney, associated with spiritual formation programs and initiatives within the diocese between 1990 and 2004. These experiences reinforced the pivotal role of principals in encouraging and facilitating teacher spiritual formation and also identified a lack of role definition for principals in this area. The importance of the spiritual formation of teachers to the authenticity and vitality of Catholic schools signalled a need to clarify the principal's leadership role in the spiritual formation of teachers in Catholic schools in the Parramatta Diocese.

The case study methodology utilised different data collecting methods including individual and group interviews, survey, document analysis and observation to draw different perspectives from teachers, principals, and personnel from the Catholic Education Office, Parramatta. The research explored the range of spiritual formation experiences valued by teachers, both within structured programs and in the day-to-day experiences within schools. It identified responses of teachers to spiritual formation, the challenges in this area, and the role of principals.

The research findings suggest that the principal's leadership roles in the spiritual formation of teachers apply at the every-day cultural level of school experiences for teachers, where the principal shapes and strengthens experiences of Catholic culture for teachers, and the school community; at the whole school level, where the principal has a key role in strategic planning in relation to spiritual formation, in extending individual consideration to teachers, and in nurturing teacher leadership and co-leadership; and finally, at the diocesan level, where the principal has a stewardship role with other principals in relation to the long term spiritual formation of teachers. At the diocesan level the principal also participates in collaborative alliances with diocesan personnel which increase opportunities for teacher spiritual formation.

A fundamental leadership responsibility for principals is to nurture a spiritual base to their own leadership. Support for the spiritual formation of newly appointed principals and those aspiring to the role should be a system priority and would augment initiatives currently in place for experienced principals in the diocese.

The research findings point to multiple leadership roles for principals in the spiritual formation of teachers. These findings expand and elaborate the existing role description for principals in Catholic schools in the Parramatta Diocese.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Section 1.0   Introduction

This research sets out to explore and clarify the relationship between the principal's leadership role in a Catholic school, and the spiritual formation of teachers. The research was conducted in the Parramatta Diocese, which is situated in an expanding area of Western Sydney. The Catholic Education Office, Parramatta, administers fifty three primary schools and nineteen secondary schools. There are a further six congregational secondary schools administered independently by different religious orders.

The spiritual formation of teachers refers to the growth in awareness and appreciation of the transcendent mystery at the core of their existence- God, and the reflection of this awareness in their lives and work in Catholic schools. (For further clarification of the term, refer to the definitions, at the end of this chapter). The shape or form of a teacher's spirituality is influenced by many factors including personality type, family relationships, life experiences, religious background, and experiences within a Catholic school.

The spiritual formation of teachers has been identified over many years as a priority issue in Catholic education in Australia and overseas (Bezzina, 1994; Cook, 2002; Dance, 1989; Feheney, 1998). The importance of the issue derives from a long standing recognition of the central place of teachers in ensuring the distinctiveness of Catholic schools (American Catholic Bishops, 1976; Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977, 1988, 1998). In the first important document on Catholic schools entitled, "The Catholic School", teachers are described in these words, "By their witness and their behaviour...teachers are of the first importance to impart a distinctive character to Catholic schools" (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977, par 78). As role models, teachers are crucial to the distinctiveness and identity of Catholic schools (Benson & Guerra, 1985; Traviss, 2000).

According to some commentators, the need to assert the identity and core purpose of Catholic schools is an urgent contemporary issue for Catholic educators and leaders (Grace, 2002; Monohan, 2003).

Thus, one purpose of teacher spiritual formation is to sustain the distinctive character of the Catholic school. Spiritual formation also has intrinsic worth, in as much as it contributes to the development of the teacher as person, and as an adult. The importance of the personal development of the teacher to professional practice is now acknowledged in the broader field of teacher development (Goodson, 1992; Hargreaves & Fullan, 1992; Oja, 1991). More than anything else, teachers bring themselves to teaching (Palmer, 1998). The spiritual formation of teachers, therefore, contributes to the distinctiveness of the Catholic school, and also has intrinsic worth. Understanding experiences of spiritual formation from teachers' perspective was one objective of this research.

Because teachers in Catholic schools perform a pastoral work of the Catholic Church (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1998) they can expect to receive opportunities for their ongoing spiritual formation, so that they can more adequately carry out this role within the Catholic school. Teachers are a significant adult resource in the Church (Collins, 1991) and their influence can extend beyond the school to the parish and diocese. The provision of spiritual formation opportunities for teachers, therefore, is an important pastoral responsibility of system leaders and school principals (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977). Understanding how this leadership responsibility can be carried out within the current role descriptions of principals in the Parramatta Diocese, was a further objective of this research.

Section 1.1   System level support for the spiritual formation of teachers

Structured programs of spiritual formation for teachers sponsored by a diocese are a system level response to the spiritual formation of teachers, and are evident both in Australia and overseas (Etheredge, 1998; Keely, 1992;

Matheny, 2000). In the Parramatta Diocese, the spiritual formation of teachers has been a significant priority at the system level for many years. Since 1990, the Catholic Education Office has funded spiritual formation programs for individual teachers and school communities and some of these initiatives were described in an earlier report by Bracken (1995), which was a catalyst for the current research. The development of spiritual formation initiatives in the Parramatta Diocese (1990-2004) provides an insight into one system level response to the spiritual formation of teachers and is relevant background to this research.

Section 1.2   Historical perspective to spiritual formation in the Parramatta Diocese

During the 1970s and 1980s, personnel within Catholic Education Office, Sydney, adopted the Jesuit run program, known as "Colloquium", as a three day residential program for lay teachers in Catholic schools within the diocese, and a means of providing for their spiritual formation. Essentially, this program consisted of lectures on aspects of theology, scripture, and the role of teachers in a pastoral work of the Church in Catholic schools. It involved small group work, shared meals and a brief experience of community living. "Colloquium" was the basis for the model of spiritual formation later to be developed in the Parramatta Diocese (Bracken, 1995).

In the late 1980s, three principals from different religious orders who had worked together in the delivery of "Colloquium" to teachers in New South Wales sought permission from their respective superiors to work full-time in providing for the spiritual formation of lay teachers in Catholic schools.

Experiences of "Colloquium" had highlighted a significant demand among lay teachers for spiritual formation and prompted these three individuals to move out of their role as principals in Catholic schools, and into the spiritual formation of teachers on a permanent basis.

Once permission was granted by the superiors of the orders, the three ex-principals formed an inter-congregational team and wrote to the Directors' of Catholic Education in each diocese in New South Wales, offering their services in the area of teacher spiritual formation. The Executive Director of Schools in Parramatta recognised an urgent need for the spiritual formation of teachers in the newly created Parramata Diocese. The Spiritual Formation Team (SFT), as the inter-congregational team became known, was employed full time in the Parramatta Diocese from 1990 and immediately began developing spiritual formation programs for teachers and, as well, visited many schools. A summary of the programs offered by the SFT since 1990 is presented in Table 1.

As Table 1 demonstrates, the SFT has developed a range of program initiatives over the years and these initiatives have been funded and supported through the Catholic Education Office, Parramatta, which also subsidises the costs associated with sending teachers to programs.

The range of programs offered over the years reflects a capacity of the SFT to adapt the programs to meet perceived needs (Table 1). Thus, the trend in programs and the types of programs developed by the SFT gives an insight into the priorities of the SFT at particular times, as it addressed perceived needs among teachers and principals in the area of spiritual formation in the Parramatta Diocese. Several observations can be made about the type of programs developed by the SFT, from 1990 to 2004, which gave rise to the research focus of this study.

Section 1.3   Emergence of research focus – SFT programs 1990-2004

There are several broad observations regarding the SFT programs from 1990 to 2004 with relevance to this research. These observations relate to the principal's role in SFT programs; the importance of the school environment for teachers; the significance of the program known as "Wellsprings"; and an emphasis on co-leadership in the leadership programs developed by the SFT.

Program	Years offered	Description
"Wellsprings"	1991 (3 programs); 1992 (3 programs); 1993 (3 programs); 1994 (3 programs); 1995 (3 programs); 1996 (3 programs); 1997 (2 programs); 1998 (1 program); 1999 (1 program); 2000 (2 programs); 2001 (1 program); 2002 91 program); 2003 (1 program); 2004 (1 program)	A 5 day integrated residential program followed by two twilight sessions Attendance by principal recommendation, number of programs offered dependent on demand. Size of group between 20-35 participants.
"Return to the Well"	1997, 2 programs offered	Program for participants of "Wellsprings".
"The Journey Experience" or "Shalom Journey"	1993; 1994; 2002; 2003; 2004.	A 2-3 day residential program. Focus on life journey of individuals and images of God. Community living, group sharing, liturgy.
"Journey Remembered"	1995; 1996; 1997; 1998; 2000; 2001; 2002; 2003; 2004.	An annual re-union for those who have completed "Wellsprings" consisting of Mass and supper.
"Leadership Development program" also known as "Co-leadership program" and "Call to Leadership"	1991; 1992; 1993; 1994; 1995; 1997	Program over several sessions each of two days. Scripture and Christology; liturgy; ministry and co-leadership; group facilitation and leadership skills; shared meals; community life. Principals nominate individuals for program, with the aim that they would return to school as animators for staff prayer and reflection.
"Executive Teams"	1997; 1998; 2000; 2002; 2003; 2004	Program for the school executive team, with other school executive teams, consisting of up to 3 twilight sessions including at various times input from guest speaker on the spirituality of leadership, school mission and values, prayer and a shared meal.
"AFFIRMS"	1999; 2000 (2 programs); 2001	Modules, based on Scottish program, for use in schools facilitated by trained staff members and/ or members of Spiritual Formation Team.
"Mindfulness Retreat"	1997; 1998; 1999	One day retreat, partly silent.
"Seasons Retreats"	2002; 2003; 2004	One day reflection and prayer inspired by one of the four seasons. Held in private home and gardens in Blue Mountains.
Male/ female spirituality retreats	2001	Retreat program for men and women of up to two nights and two days
Beginning teachers twilight	2004	Focus is the Catholic identity and mission of the school, nourishes the spirit of the beginning teacher.
Seconded teachers program	1992; 1993; 1994; 1995	Several teachers were seconded to join the SFT for one term or a full year.
School programs	1990; 1991; 1992; 1993; 1994; 1995; 1996; 1997; 1998; 1999; 2000; 2001; 2002; 2003; 2004	SFT have worked with schools in whole staff settings, on staff development days, and a in a variety of ways. Recognition of the different needs of school communities has developed.
"Inspirations"	2002; 2003; 2004	"Inspirations" is a magazine, now on-line detailing facilitators available to schools in the Parramatta Diocese.

Table 1

Section 1.3.1   The principal's role in SFT programs

A number of principals participated in SFT programs and some encouraged teacher involvement from within their schools. The SFT sent details of the programs to principals and principal endorsement was required before teachers could participate in SFT programs. In many cases, principal support and personal encouragement was a critical factor in the uptake of programs by teachers (Bracken, 1995). A report on the spiritual formation of teachers in Parramatta confirmed, however, that principal endorsement and encouragement of teacher involvement in SFT programs was not uniform in schools across the diocese (Bracken, 1995). Some schools were strongly represented by teachers in programs run by the SFT, while teachers in other schools had limited contact with these programs. Because principal endorsement was required before teachers could attend programs, it was a concern that teachers in some schools were not been given an opportunity to participate in a SFT program. While principals in schools with low teacher participation rates in SFT programs could have provided for the formation of teachers in other ways, the lack of involvement in SFT programs by some schools, reported by Bracken (1995), raised questions about principal awareness of their role in the spiritual formation of teachers.

Principals were not widely involved in the early development of SFT programs in the diocese, though, at the same time, were encouraged to endorse teacher involvement in these programs. There is also minimum recognition, in the current role description for principals, of any priority for principals in the spiritual formation of teachers. In the current role statement for the principal in the Parramatta Diocese, there is one general expectation within the religious leadership role of the principal, simply "To promote the spiritual development of staff" (Catholic Education Office, 1998, p. 2). Given the large investment by the Parramatta Diocese in the spiritual formation of teachers, through the SFT, recognition of the role of principals in the spiritual formation of teachers, appeared to be inadequate.

Three other observations can be made about the SFT programs from 1990-2004, that provide insights as to how the Catholic school principal can "promote the spiritual development of teachers" (Catholic Education Office, 1998, p. 2) especially within the school environment. The first observation relates to a developing awareness in the SFT itself, and reflected in programs, of the importance of the school context for spiritual formation. The second observation relates to the long running program known as "Wellsprings" which presents an "ideal" model of spiritual formation. The third observation relates to the model of leadership promoted by the SFT, described as co-leadership (Bracken, 1995).

Section 1.3.2   The school environment

In the first three years of the SFT in the diocese, there was clear emphasis on whole staff spiritual formation programs. All school principals in the diocese were contacted and programs were presented in many schools, both primary and secondary. The diverse needs, differences in maturity of teachers, different levels of openness to the spiritual dimension of life, and size of staff, however, presented intrinsic challenges to the SFT in working with teachers in whole staff situations (Bracken, 1995). Moreover, each school staff was unique- what worked well in one school did not always work well in another school. By 1993, there had been a shift of emphasis away from whole staff programs, which had worked well in some schools but not in others, toward voluntary programs for individual teachers, such as "Wellsprings" and other programs developed by the SFT (see Table 1). The preference for voluntary programs was also a predictable development by the SFT in view of prior involvement with "Colloquium" before commencing in Parramatta. An appreciation that each staff environment is unique led to the introduction of a program called "Inspirations" (Table 1) where a range of presenters was made available to school staff, each with different content to offer and a different style of presentation to suit the needs of staff in different schools. There was increasing recognition, reflected in programs such as "Inspirations", that the staff of a school not only had different needs, but that the role of the SFT was to support principals in reinforcing

existing initiatives within the school, as described to this researcher by the SFT on 24 May, 2002.

The uniqueness of the staff of a school is partly a reflection of the different experiences teachers have had within individual schools. Different traditions, stories, rituals, and community life evident in a school, constitute its unique culture (Deal & Peterson, 1999) and these unique experiences for teachers are part of what can be described as informal spiritual formation influences (Rogus & Wildenhaus, 2000).

Informal spiritual formation influences in a Catholic school can be defined as the cultural norms and experiences which create a positive environment for teachers, including the unique features of a Catholic school, and which promote spiritual growth among teachers. These unique features include Christian values and beliefs, reflected in daily practice, and a Catholic perspective of life (Groome, 1996, 1998, 2000).

Informal spiritual formation influences within the school environment present a key role for principals, and potentially link principals' current leadership responsibilities with the spiritual formation of teachers. Confirming the presence of spiritual formation experiences within the school environment, from a teachers' perspective, is a relevant first step in clarifying the link between the principal's leadership role in a school and the spiritual formation of teachers. The following chapter will explore some of the influences in the Catholic school environment that contribute to informal spiritual formation opportunities for teachers.

Another observation that can be made about the SFT programs (1990-2004) with relevance to this research relates to the long running program called "Wellsprings".

Section 1.3.3   "Wellsprings"

"Wellsprings" is a five day residential program, which was first offered to teachers in July 1991 and has continued to be offered and run in the same general format ever since (Table 1). For many years, in fact, the demand for the program meant that "Wellsprings" was run three times per year with an average of around twenty five participants. The longevity of "Wellsprings", which has been offered to more than a thousand teachers, invites consideration of the elements within the program that teachers have found valuable, as well as the underlying beliefs of the SFT that have sustained this program.

Importantly for this research, identifying and exploring experiences valued by teachers in "Wellsprings" offers pointers to similar experiences in the school environment for teachers, in spite of the many contrasts between the two settings. In this sense "Wellsprings" can act as a template or "ideal" situation of spiritual formation with relevance, in particular, to informal spiritual formation opportunities in a school.

"Wellsprings" also reflects a particular theological perspective for consideration. The founding members of the SFT, the three principals from religious orders who developed the program, had strong beliefs in the role of teaching as a ministry in the Church, a role confirmed in "The Catholic School in the Third Millennium" (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1998) where the Catholic school has a clear ecclesial role (see definitions, at the end of this chapter). How this emphasis on teaching as a ministry is sustained in Catholic schools in the Parramatta Diocese, with a wide mix of teachers, will be explored in the following chapter. The SFT developed its programs for lay teachers and were mindful of promoting a lay-centred, relevant spirituality for teachers (Bracken, 1995).

The final observation that can be made about spiritual formation programs (1990-2004) and the SFT is an emphasis on shared leadership, described as "co-leadership" within the leadership programs developed by the SFT (Bracken, 1995).

Section 1.3.4   Co-leadership

One of the early programs developed by the SFT was the "Leadership Formation Program" first offered in 1991 , followed by "Call to Leadership" which was initiated in the mid 1990s (Table 1). These programs were conceived and developed to support teachers in their spiritual formation and provide skills and encouragement for them to exercise leadership in their own school communities. As this program was open to teachers, not necessarily those with formal leadership roles, it reflected a clear belief in the leadership capacity of teachers.   Each of these programs emphasised the notion of co-leadership, a term that was initiated by the original members of the SFT to emphasise the scriptural emphasis that Jesus sent his disciples out in pairs, not alone (Nouwen, 1989). While co-leadership has secular meaning, the use of the term by the SFT referred specifically to Christian co-leadership. The SFT itself modelled co-leadership, with the three individuals of the SFT working as a team in the presentation of spiritual formation programs. Co-leadership also underpins the "Executive Teams" program which has been offered since 1998 to the School Executive (normally Principal, Assistant Principal and Religious Education Coordinator) of different schools in the diocese (Table 1). The program recognises that other members of the executive, apart from the principal, have responsibility for exercising Christian leadership in the setting of the school.

The emphasis on co-leadership clearly evident in the early leadership programs of the SFT in the Parramatta diocese, provides one perspective on leadership related to the spiritual formation of teachers. Co-leadership will be further explored in this research, in the light of contemporary leadership theory. Teacher leaders, for example, can contribute to sustained and significant school development (Crowther, Kaagan, Ferguson & Hann, 2002; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 1996). The potential of teacher leaders to build Catholic culture and influence the spiritual formation of teachers suggests the need to maintain a broad perspective on leadership in a Catholic school, inclusive of all teachers and not limited to those with positional authority. This wider understanding of

leadership, beyond positions of responsibility, is not currently reflected in documentation from the Catholic Education Office, Parramatta (Catholic Education Office, Parramatta, 1998, 2000).

Section 1.4   Research issues

These broad observations and insights from the SFT programs from1990 to 2004 raised a number of questions and issues. There were questions, for example, concerning the role of the principal in the spiritual formation of teachers, the relevance of the Catholic school environment as a milieu for the spiritual formation of teachers, and questions of leadership associated with the spiritual formation of teachers. There were also potential insights into spiritual formation that could emerge from teacher's experiences of "Wellsprings" over many years.

Section 1.5   Research rationale

The importance of the spiritual formation of teachers to the vitality of Catholic schools (Bezzina, 1994; Cook, 2002; Dance, 1989; Feheney, 1998), the benefits of spiritual formation to the individual teacher as person, and the pastoral responsibility of principals in this regard (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977), suggests the need for research to define more clearly the principal's leadership role in the spiritual formation of teachers in Catholic schools in the Parramatta Diocese.

Section 1.6   Research focus

This research will, firstly, explore and clarify spiritual formation experiences valued by teachers within the school environment and within formal programs of spiritual formation, such as "Wellsprings". Secondly, the research will explore a link between informal spiritual formation opportunities for teachers in the school environment and the current leadership responsibilities of principals. Thirdly, the research will clarify how the principal's leadership can strengthen spiritual formation opportunities for teachers.

Section 1.7   Research questions

The central research question asks:

"What is the principal's leadership role in the spiritual formation of teachers in Catholic schools in the Parramatta Diocese?"

Contributing questions direct the research firstly, toward the exploration of spiritual formation experiences, including experiences on "Wellsprings" and within the school environment, then to an identification of the challenges principals face in the spiritual formation of teachers in the school environment, and finally to principal's perceived role in the spiritual formation of teachers.

1.   What spiritual formation experiences are valued by teachers?
2.   What is the nature of these experiences and the responses of teachers?
3.   What are the challenges in the provision of spiritual formation opportunities for teachers?
4.   What is the role of the principal in the spiritual formation of teachers?

Section 1.8   Theoretical framework

The conceptual framework for the research will be built around the broad observations made in relation to the spiritual formation programs from 1990 to 2004. These observations relate to: the underlying beliefs associated with spiritual formation in the diocese; experiences within "Wellsprings"; the culture of the Catholic school and its impact on the spiritual formation of teachers; the current leadership role of principal, as defined, in the Parramatta Diocese; the relevance of co-leadership to the spiritual formation of teachers.

Firstly, underlying beliefs of the SFT about teaching as a ministry, clearly reflected in "Wellsprings", represent a foundation to the spiritual formation of teachers in Catholic schools in the Parramatta Diocese. These beliefs will be critiqued for their relevance to the principal's role in the spiritual formation of teachers.

Secondly, "Wellsprings" contains "ideal" spiritual formation experiences for teachers, with relevance to the spiritual formation of teachers in a school (Rogus & Wildenhaus, 2000). Responses of teachers to "Wellsprings" will also highlight for principals, opportunities for teachers associated with formal spiritual formation programs.

Thirdly, influences within the culture of the Catholic school will be explored for their potential to impact on the informal spiritual formation of teachers (Rogus & Wildenhaus, 2000). Relevant cultural influences in the spiritual formation of teachers will be drawn from the work of Schein (1997). Ongoing scholarship by Groome (1996, 1998, 2002) provides insights into Catholicism's unique elements with relevance to the culture of Catholic schools. The Parramatta Diocese has identified the Catholic identity and authenticity of its schools as a priority in its 2002-2004 goals (Catholic Education Office, Parramatta, 2000).

Fourthly, a link will be explored between the current role responsibilities of the principal and the informal spiritual formation of teachers in the school. Cultural influences, relevant to the spiritual formation of teachers, suggest important roles for principals as shapers of culture (Deal & Peterson, 1999; Duncan, 1998). The cultural leadership role of the principal will be shown to coincide with existing role responsibilities in the role description for principals in the Parramatta Diocese (Catholic Education Office, 1998, pp. 2-4).

Fifthly, the understanding of leadership developed by the SFT, that of co-leadership, will be reviewed in light of contemporary leadership theory. As teacher leaders potentially influence the Catholic culture of the school, the theory of parallel leadership (Crowther et al., 2002) is relevant to this research. A broad frame of leadership is appropriate for an inquiry into the spiritual formation of teachers in Catholic schools.

The theoretical framework to be proposed in chapter two will be built around these five elements related to the principal's leadership role in the spiritual formation of teachers.

Section 1.9   Design of the research

The research utilises a case study approach to respond to the research question and contributing questions.

Multiple methods of data collection were used including individual and group interviews; document analysis; survey; direct observation.

Participants in this research included teacher participants of the SFT program, "Wellsprings"; teachers and executive staff in schools; primary and secondary principals in the diocese; Catholic Education Office personnel; members of the Spiritual Formation Team.

The data was managed using the qualitative software tool NUD*IST 4 (QSR, 1997).

This research project evolved from earlier work in the Parramatta Diocese associated with the spiritual formation of teachers (Bracken, 1995). Following the earlier report, the research focus emerged in 1997 with the main data collection phase of the research in 1998 and additional data collected through to 2001. Data analysis and interpretation occurred through 1999, 2000 and 2001. A review of the literature began in 1997 and continued through to 2004, as new themes emerged within the data, and more recent literature provided fresh theoretical insights. Written reflections on emerging themes, and the integration of theory with data was ongoing from 1999 with the main write-up phase of the research occurring through 2002, 2003 and 2004.

Section 1.10   Significance of the research

The importance of teachers to the distinctiveness and identity of Catholic schools underscores the significance of this research. The spiritual formation of teachers is generally identified as part of the role responsibility of principals in different dioceses, including Parramatta. How principals carry out this

responsibility is less clear, and recognition of the principal's leadership role in the spiritual formation of teachers currently appears inadequate. Challenges in the school environment such as teacher diversity, secular values (Grace, 2002), competing priorities, and lack of time add to the difficulties principals face in addressing the spiritual formation of teachers, confirming the need to support Catholic school principals by more clearly defining their role in relation to the spiritual formation of teachers.

Section 1.11   Limitations and de-limitations of the research

The "spiritual formation of teachers" is a complex theme which has inherent language limitations associated with it. "Definitions" at the end of this chapter identify these language difficulties.

The research also relied on perceptions of individuals and groups regarding spiritual formation experiences, in order to build an understanding of the phenomenon. The subjectivity of teachers' perceptions of spiritual formation is acknowledged. Spiritual formation is a broad and inherently human phenomenon (Whelan, 1994).

This research is also de-limited by experiences of spiritual formation within one religious tradition and within one educational system.

Section 1.12   Outline of the dissertation

The research topic was introduced in chapter one and the research focus and questions presented. As well, the methodology was introduced, along with theoretical considerations, and the significance and limitations of the research described. Also included at the end of chapter one are definitions of terminology.

The literature review will be presented in chapter two and a theoretical framework proposed for this research based on five key observations from the

experiences of spiritual formation programs in the Parramatta Diocese (1990 – 2004).

The methodology of the research will be presented in chapter three. Chapter three will also include a description of the case study methodology; data collecting methods; the research design; the structure of the NUDI*IST tree; validity, reliability and generalisability issues, and ethical concerns.

The findings of the research will be presented in chapters four, five six and seven. Broad findings in relation to contributing research questions one, two and three will be presented in chapter four. That is, findings in relation to spiritual formation experiences, responses of teachers to these experiences, and the challenges associated with the spiritual formation of teachers will be discussed. Two important themes emerging from spiritual formation experiences will be explored in more depth in chapter five and chapter six, namely the communal dimension of spiritual formation (chapter five) and the significance of new theological knowledge and insight (chapter six). Contributing research question four will be discussed in chapter seven, namely, the principal's role in the spiritual formation of teachers.

Finally, in chapter eight, the framework proposed in chapter two will be discussed in light of the findings, and conclusions presented in response to the research question, as well as recommendations to the diocese. The principal's leadership role in the spiritual formation of teachers is conceptualised in a diagram in chapter eight and a model is proposed for the spiritual formation of teachers in Catholic schools in the diocese.

Section 1.13   Definitions

Section 1.13.1   Spirituality

Spirituality is the intrinsic, self transcending character of all human persons and the ways in which that character is realized in everyday life situations (Woods, 1996). Spirituality describes the specifically human longing to see our lives in

some larger, meaning-giving context, a longing to aspire for something beyond ourselves and the present moment, and which gives our actions a sense of worth (Zohar & Marshall, 2000). Spirituality is that dimension of life, complementing the psychological and physical dimension, which gives meaning to one's life and calls the person towards the higher self, usually expressed as some form of relationship with the divine being, which in the Christian tradition we call God. Rather than a special department of life, spirituality refers to a higher intensity of aliveness. Rather than being about keeping rules, spirituality is about delighting in the wonders of life, about the fullness of life, as described in the Gospels (John 10:10) (Smith, 1996). Spirituality also reveals profound interconnectedness and a common thread underpinning all major religions (O'Murchu, 1997).

Section 1.13.2   Religion

Religion refers to a particular framework, which includes a system of beliefs, a code of morals, authority structure and a form of worship, within which people find nourishment for the spiritual dimension of their lives. Within the Christian religious tradition, spirituality is concerned with the conjunction of theology, prayer and practical Christianity.

Section 1.13.3   Spirituality in Catholic schools

The lack of clarity in the term spirituality is noted by Crawford and Rossiter (1993) who argue for a redefining of the term as it applies to staff teaching in Catholic schools. The cross-disciplinary nature of the term spirituality accounts for problems of coherence and potential ambiguity (Whelan, 1994). Cantwell (1992) refers to a radical Catholic spirituality for teachers in a Catholic school, one which is essentially incarnational: that is, seeing God everywhere, in everything and everyone. A characteristic of the "new spirituality" is the recognition of the immanence of God- the presence of God in oneself and in creation. This "new spirituality" contrasts with an "other world" spirituality, where God is distant (Smith, 1996), and this "new spirituality" is consistent with contemporary Catholic theology.

Section 1.13.4   Formation

Formative education differs from critical education in that formation is a process whereby the learner is shaped by an educator according to some ideal, over time. Critical education, on the other hand, attempts to enhance the learner's evaluative thinking. In reality, both a formative and critical emphasis combine in most educational contexts: formation contributes to a person's identity and enculturation, and critical education involves critical reflection in the context of life experience. The spiritual formation of teachers, as understood in this research, includes both a formative and critical emphasis. The formation process is not entirely dependent on the individual teacher. Catholic belief contends that the Holy Spirit is the dynamic presence of God at work in the lives of teachers (Kelly, 2001, 2004).

Section 1.13.5   Spiritual formation of teachers in Catholic schools

The spiritual formation of teachers in Catholic schools describes the development of a self transcending awareness of God and one's interconnectedness with others and all creation. It is manifest in teachers' lives and work in a Catholic school, arises from free choices of the individual teacher, is informed by knowledge and experiences within the Catholic tradition, through the work of the Spirit, and in dialogue with others.

Section 1.13.6   Faith development

The term "faith development" and "faith formation" are used in descriptions of some of the programs offered to staff in the Parramatta Diocese. Unlike spirituality which is an eclectic term and not limited to a religious tradition, faith development or formation suggests personal growth within a religious tradition.

A person's individual faith is their belief paradigm, the mental construct to which they subscribe, and through which they interpret experiences and the world around them. It is not simply assent to doctrines and teachings but a personal

paradigm for living. Each person's faith is unique and freely accepted. While a person's faith can be nourished within a religious tradition it also transcends it and is open to change through new insights and experiences (Smith, 1996).

Trainor (1991) emphasises the educational process involved in "faith development". He refers to the term "faith education" which he describe as an "…ecclesial process whereby contemporary pastoral circumstances, experiences and concerns are placed in conversation with the Tradition of the Christian community to bring about transformation and emancipation for service in the political arena through a deepened union with God" (Trainor, 1991, p. 123). There are clear similarities between the spiritual formation of teachers in Catholic schools, as defined, and faith education, as defined by Trainor (1991).

Section 1.13.7   Faith stages

Faith stage theory originated in the work of James Fowler (1987). A stage of faith can be described as a more or less consistent way of relating to and making sense of one's world, which exhibits some uniformity in a range of persons. There is a developmental sequence whereby each stage is qualitatively distinguishable and adds something new to the stage that came before it. Fowler argued that each stage represents a genuine growth towards a wider and more accurate response to God and towards more consistently humane care for other human beings (Fowler, 1987, p. 57).

CHAPTER TWO
Review Of The Literature

Section 2.0   Introduction

The purpose of this research was to explore and clarify the principal's leadership role in the spiritual formation of teachers in Catholic schools, in the Parramatta Diocese. To this end, a research focus was determined that would identify, firstly, spiritual formation experiences valued by teachers; secondly, explore a link between informal spiritual formation experiences within the school environment and the current leadership role of the principal; thirdly, clarify how the principal's leadership role can strengthen spiritual formation opportunities for teachers. This chapter reviews the literature relevant to this research focus.

The literature review is arranged into five areas, each focused on a relevant aspect of the principal's leadership role in the spiritual formation of teachers. These areas were developed from observations of the SFT programs from 1990 to 2004 in the Parramatta Diocese, outlined in chapter one. The five areas of relevance to the principal's leadership role in the spiritual formation of teachers are:

1. Foundational beliefs for principals regarding the role of teachers in the Catholic school, and the nature of spiritual formation.

2. The "Wellsprings" program- insights into the spiritual formation of teachers.

3. Cultural influences in the school environment - implications for the spiritual formation of teachers.

4. The principal's role responsibility - links with the spiritual formation of teachers

5. A model of co-leadership for the spiritual formation of teachers in Catholic schools in the Parramatta Diocese.

Section 2.1   Foundational understandings for principals

The original SFT in Parramatta had several years to formulate and confirm its underlying beliefs in relation to the spiritual formation of teachers, even before commencing in the Parramatta Diocese in 1990. Each individual was also a member of a religious order steeped in a tradition of spiritual formation. Catholic school principals, in contrast, are predominantly lay men and women, and not necessarily attuned to the beliefs that were behind the SFT programs in the Parramatta Diocese. Principals were, also, not part of the early development of the programs. Attention to foundational beliefs and understandings is critical to the principal' leadership role in the spiritual formation of teachers. Principals' foundational beliefs, prior experiences and assumptions will influence their leadership in relation to the spiritual formation of teachers. One issue of foundational importance is the role of the teacher in the Catholic school.

Section 2.1.1   The role of the teacher in the Catholic school

For the SFT, a consistent theme in programs is that the teacher's role in Catholic schools is one of ministry in the Church. As early as 1986, one of the original members of the SFT wrote, "Teachers are called to recognise their role as one of ministry within the Church" (Bracken, 1995, p. 31). The focus in the SFT programs was on the person of the teacher as an adult member of the Church, rather than on their teaching role in the school, or on developing teachers to improve their contribution to the Catholic school. The SFT was promoting a vision of full lay participation in the Church, through active ministry (Bracken, 1995).

Boys (1989) observed that both positive and negative effects flow from a shift from educational language to the language of ministry in Catholic schools. To view teaching as a ministry is to provide a way of incorporating teaching into the other ministerial activities of the Church. On the other hand, a

predominance of ministerial language can encourage an ecclesiastical exclusivity, which could separate the Catholic school from the public forum and, possibly, devalue the intellectual life (Boys, 1989). Whether Catholic school principals in the Parramatta Diocese are at ease with the language of ministry described by the SFT, in working with teachers, is questionable. Bracken (1995) noted that the language of ministry is not evident in staff development initiatives or in induction programs within the diocese.

The contemporary context of Catholic schools with a diversity of teacher backgrounds and religious pluralism (McLaughlin, 1999) suggests that some teachers may not be receptive to the language of ministry in a school. On the other hand, the importance of the Catholic school as the current face of the Church for many families (McLaughlin, 2000; Treston, 2000) highlights the importance of the teacher's role within the Church and the need for an acknowledgement of this role by teachers, principals and clergy.

Viewing teaching as a ministry is an important way of highlighting the ecclesial dimension of the role and its importance in the Church. The SFT programs have made a significant contribution in this regard and spiritual formation programs in other dioceses also emphasise the ministry of teaching (Catholic Schools Office, Broken Bay, 2000). The question of whether teaching is a ministry ultimately depends on the spirituality of the individual teacher, and their own perceptions of the work they do in service to the Church. According to Sofield and Juliano (1987, 2000), ministry is always an expression of spirituality. Chittister (2003) emphasises the spiritual leadership role of teachers in re-imagining Catholic schools for the new century.

This discussion draws attention to the importance of clarifying fundamental beliefs and assumptions about the role of teachers in Catholic schools within the Church, and the terminology used to describe their role. For principals in Catholic schools in the Parramatta Diocese, belief in the indispensable role of the teacher in service to the Gospel (NCEC, 2003), is a fundamental issue. Clarity on this core issue is critical to the principal's leadership role in the spiritual formation of teachers.

Another foundational issue for principals is the nature of spiritual formation.

Section 2.1.2   *Spiritual formation*

The formative dimension of spirituality finds points of reference with literature and studies in the area of formative spirituality and human life formation (Whelan, 1986, 1994). There are principles to human life formation which are relevant to this research and warrant brief consideration. For instance, because of our intrinsically spiritual nature, all human life formation is spiritual formation (Whelan, 1994, p. 281). Human life formation also equates to spirituality since the formation of the human spirit occurs through everyday life experiences. Spirituality and spiritual formation in this respect are synonymous. Moreover, human life formation or spiritual formation requires free participation of the self.

Personal autonomy, therefore, is an important principle of human life formation. This principle refutes any notion that spiritual formation is indoctrination or uncritical enculturation, which may have been perceived by some teachers in Parramatta Diocese (Bracken, 1995). As Whelan (1994) notes, we exercise our freedom in:

> Our own unfolding as unique and communal human beings...[where]...Freedom and consciousness are essential...human beings must...implicitly or explicitly choose their participation in the formation mystery (p. 281).

Principles of freedom and consciousness suggest that spiritual formation also contains an important element of critical reflection. For teachers in Catholic schools in the Parramatta Diocese, a capacity to critique new knowledge and processes in light of their own experience is essential to spiritual formation.

Another observation about human life formation is that it always falls short of the ideal and is flawed. As Whelan (1994, p. 282), observes: "Competing with the unique and communal form that each human being is most foundationally, is the pride form which seeks to make itself, rather than the formation mystery,

the centre of the formation process". Spiritual formation can never be assumed or taken for granted, even in ideal settings - it will always fall short of its best possibilities.

A final observation about human life formation with relevance to this research is that it occurs within what is described as a formational field (Whelan, 1994). The field of formation includes the forming influence of our own powers of mind and will, imagination, anticipation and memory; the forming influence of other people with whom we are constantly interacting; the forming influence of the immediate and wider environment. The notion of a field of formation has relevance to the Catholic school environment for teachers, and will be discussed later in this chapter.

The discussion so far has described spiritual formation as independent of a religious faith tradition. While not essential for spiritual formation, a religious tradition provides language, beliefs, stories and rituals to the spiritual quest. The Catholic context of spiritual formation in this research means that spiritual formation is influenced within the Catholic tradition by the collected wisdom gathered through history relating to God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit and Church. As understood in this research, the spiritual formation of teachers refers to the growth in inner awareness, appreciation and, ultimately love, of the transcendent mystery at the core of teachers' existence – God, and a growing awareness of the story which developed around the person of Jesus Christ, and his proclamation of God's kingdom. Catholic belief holds that the Holy Spirit is the dynamic presence in teacher's lives, the source of divine intervention and grace. Teacher spiritual formation in a Catholic school, therefore, can be described as Spirit-led or "Spirit-ual formation" (Kelly, 2001, p. 316; 2004). The Church represents the community of believers in this mystery, and, according to Catholic belief is, itself, a gift of the Holy Spirit (Kelly, 2001). The experience of teaching in a Catholic school, therefore, presents teachers with spiritual formation opportunities within a specific religious tradition.

Whether individual teachers respond to opportunities for their own formation is ultimately a matter of autonomous choice (Whelan, 1994). The diversity of

needs among teachers in schools, their different life stories and experiences highlight the challenge in this area. Some teachers will be more familiar with the language and beliefs of Catholicism, and may express their own beliefs in a parish worshipping community (Prest, 1997). Others will be less familiar with the religious language of Catholicism, especially in some secondary schools, though will support the values espoused within the Catholic community (Britt et al., 1988; McLaughlin, 1999). The diversity of individual needs among teachers within school communities in the Parramatta Diocese, makes it likely that spiritual formation will fall short of the ideal in these settings (Whelan, 1994). The extent of the challenge in addressing diverse needs among teachers does not diminish the pastoral responsibility to provide spiritual formation opportunities for teachers.

It was the need being identified by teachers in relation to their spiritual formation which was the catalyst for the employment of the SFT in the Parramatta Diocese, and the subsequent development of spiritual formation programs for teachers. A closer study of "Wellsprings" also provides insight into the types of spiritual formation experiences teachers' value, with potential application to the school environment.

Section 2.2 "Wellsprings" - insights into the spiritual formation of teachers

A structured program of spiritual formation such as "Wellsprings", which has been offered by the SFT since 1991 in the same general format, is a source of potential learning and insight into the types of experiences which teachers value in relation to their spiritual formation. From the principal's perspective, aspects of the format and content of "Wellsprings" have potential to be adapted to the school environment, especially via those teachers who have participated in the program, thereby contributing to spiritual formation opportunities in the school.

Responses of teachers following "Wellsprings" also provides insights into how a formal spiritual formation program can benefit individual teachers, and extend opportunities for their spiritual formation beyond what can be offered in the school environment. Moreover, responses of teachers following "Wellsprings", especially in their teaching role, gives insights into how a formal spiritual formation program benefits the school community, the students and other teachers

The name "Wellsprings" derives from the scripture passage in the Gospel of John which described Jesus' encounter with the woman at the well (Jn 4: 14): "...The water I shall give will turn into a spring inside him, welling up to eternal life". The format and structure of "Wellsprings" is divided into four main themes: "Christology", which explores the question of the person of Jesus and his teaching; "Ministry" which provides a basic orientation to the meaning of ministry within the context of Australian society and the contemporary Church; "Art and the Environment", which provided time and opportunity for integration, reflection and creative expression; "Liturgy and Life", which opens up new ways to express spirituality through symbol and ritual. Each of these themes is connected through participants' experiences of shared meals and community life (Bracken, 1995). The format of the program is delivered through a combination of lecture type input, small group sharing and individual reflection. The program is run by a number of guest presenters and by the SFT, which mainly acts in a facilitating role.

"Wellsprings" and other residential programs run by the SFT have a number of recurring features. The presence of well prepared liturgy, use of story and symbols, input on a particular theme, prayer focus, focus questions and group sharing were evident in these programs (Bracken, 1995). These features are not necessarily unique to the SFT programs and other spiritual formation programs in other dioceses in Australia and overseas have similar elements (Glynn, 1990; Matheny, 2000). The presence of symbolic elements in all the SFT programs play a central role in conveying deeper meaning for teachers (Deal & Peterson, 1999) and have potential application in the school

environment. Further comment will be made in relation to the power of symbols in a later discussion in this chapter.

Two final comments can be made about "Wellsprings" which are relevant to the spiritual formation of teachers in the school environment. Firstly, the SFT utilised guest presenters at "Wellsprings" who gave new perspectives on ways to live out one's spirituality. For example, one presenter was involved with homeless youth and co-presented with one of the "street kids" at "Wellsprings" over a number of years. The input on Christology, from guest presenters attempted to draw on scriptural accounts of Jesus, providing insights into Jesus in the context of his times, and translating these perspectives into the contemporary context of Catholic schools (Nolan, 1992). Exemplars of a lived spirituality, individuals who model the way (Kouzes & Posner, 2000), and new perspectives, are both sources of potential transformation and growth with relevance to the spiritual formation of teachers in the Catholic school environment.

Secondly, the SFT set out to maintain contact with as many teachers as possible following "Wellsprings", through the establishment of networks, the publication of newsletters, correspondence and follow up programs. "Return to the Well", for example was the follow up program to "Wellsprings". These initiatives underscore the importance of spiritual formation as ongoing and long term, which is an important insight for the principal's leadership role in the spiritual formation of teachers. The SFT also needed to facilitate and nurture these networks and contacts, and, as Bracken (1995, p. 26) noted, "Person to person contact and support has been shown to be a vital factor in maintaining the involvement of individuals on an ongoing basis".

The ongoing nature of spiritual formation and the importance of interpersonal contact highlight the potential of informal spiritual formation opportunities for teachers within the culture of the Catholic school. Informal spiritual formation opportunities (Rogus & Wildenhaus, 2000) occur within the daily environment of

the school and are part of teachers' cultural experience of being in a Catholic school.

Section 2.3   Cultural influences in the school environment - implications for spiritual formation

The importance of culture to the experience of being in a Catholic school both for students and teachers is recognised (Brick, 1999; Cook, 2001; Dwyer, 1993; Flynn, 2000). The potential of cultural influences in Catholic schools to contribute to the informal spiritual formation of teachers makes the elucidation of these influences relevant to the focus of this research. Moreover, the Catholic school is also a field of formation for teachers, following the principles of human life formation (Whelan, 1994) described earlier in this chapter. The principal can contribute positively to this field of formation by shaping and strengthening cultural influences within the school that are aligned with the Catholic tradition. According to Deal and Peterson (1999), shaping school culture is the heart of leadership. Leadership associated with culture building will be further explored later in this chapter. It is important, firstly, to understand the elements associated with culture in a Catholic school.

Schein (1997, pp. 8-10) used a range of sources to identify important characteristics of culture, some of which are relevant to this research. For example, culture is associated with the customs and traditions that evolve within a school. The different schools in the Parramatta Diocese have unique traditions and stories associated with the past, such as key figures in the life of the school and unique community histories. Symbols, rituals and ceremonies are also reflections of culture, and will be used by the school community to express core values (Deal & Peterson, 1999).

While Catholic schools in the Parramatta Diocese share a common set of symbols and rituals as Catholic schools within the diocese, some schools also have symbols associated with a particular religious order. Values, core beliefs, and shared meanings are another expression of culture, and these are

articulated in the school mission and vision statements, and in the strategic goals of the school community. Schein (1997) also identified climate as another reflection of culture, that is, the way members of a school community interact with one another and with outsiders. Culture is also associated with root metaphors or integrating symbols, that is, the ideas or images the school community uses to characterise itself.

The following elements of culture are considered particularly relevant to the research focus: school climate, mission and purpose, symbols and rituals. Each of these cultural elements can be discussed in light of Catholicism's deep characteristics (Groome 1996, 1998, 2002) and each has potential to contribute to the informal spiritual formation of teachers in Catholic schools.

At the most fundamental level, in the day-to-day experiences of teachers, a positive climate should exist as a necessary milieu for informal spiritual formation.

Section 2.3.1   School climate

The importance of a positive working environment for teachers has been highlighted in the school improvement literature. Saphier and King (1985), for example, examined cultural norms that created a positive climate for teachers, and which facilitated school improvement efforts. Recognition of the work of teachers, and an ethos of care, were reported in their study as contributing to a positive climate for teachers. The importance of a positive, professional climate for teachers, where an atmosphere of care and trust exists, has been identified as critical in schools which have achieved improved student outcomes (Mulford, 2004). A positive climate was described as one where mutual support, trust, respect and care were evident. According to Starratt (1996), an ethic of care requires a, "fidelity to persons, a willingness to acknowledge their right to be who they are, openness to encountering them in their authentic individuality, a loyalty to the relationship" (p. 161). An ethic of care and respect toward persons is also an important tenet of Catholicism, which has clear theological foundations, as noted by Groome (2002). Such a respect amounts to

reverencing other people as reflections of God. As Groome (2002) suggests, personhood is not contingent on success or achievement. Hence the Catholic climate of the school should reflect a degree of largesse in relation to the human condition (Groome, 1998), encouraging success, while at the same time acknowledging the potential for failure. In such an environment, there is openness to the authentic individuality and spirituality of teachers, an acknowledgement of the human condition, and the possibility of growth and formation through both positive and negative experiences.

In schools that were successful in restructuring, and reported a positive working climate for teachers, power was shared among teachers (Mulford, 2004). Involvement was identified by teachers as a key factor in the culture of the school, in research associated with 23 secondary schools conducted by Razak and Abdullah (2004). How power and influence are distributed among teachers is an important issue in schools and relevant to this research, and will be treated more fully in a later discussion on co-leadership.

Of relevance to school climate is the prevailing metaphor for how the school is viewed and organised. Sergiovanni (1994, 1996) argues that school as "community" is a more appropriate metaphor for schools, than school as "organisation". School envisaged as community places more emphasis on shared values and vision than on who has positional influence, defined by positional roles. The communal nature of the Catholic school is inherent to its nature, according to the Church documents on the Catholic school (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977, 1998) and a prevailing characteristic of Catholicism (Bryk, Lee & Holland, 1993; Groome, 1996, 1998, 2000; McLaughlin, 1997; 2000). Personhood implies a connectedness to others - we live most humanly in partnership with others, in community (Quillinan, 2002). Theologically, community "is a reflection of the intimate life of God, one God in three Persons" (Pope John Paul 11, 1987, par 40).

Community is also critical to the dialogical dimension of spiritual formation (Whelan, 1994), that occurs within the formational field of the Catholic school. As Whelan (1994) notes:

> The field of formation brings strongly into relief the fact that all human life formation is dialogical - my very identity is relational, my very uniqueness implies at the same time a communion-with-others and the world in which I find myself (p. 281).

The quality of relationships is a critical factor in the strength of the community experience (Duignan, 1998; McLaughlin, 2000). For example, authentic community experiences for teachers cultivate openness and trust and encourage freedom to question, to learn from each other (Quillinan, 2001), share values and, on matters of spirituality, share doubts and life experiences. In this way, the communal dynamic of the Catholic school provides an environment for the informal spiritual formation of teachers. Teachers' experience of a positive climate in a Catholic school, through an experience of care, respect for their individuality and spirituality, through quality relationships and community, helps build morale and commitment among teachers (Deal & Peterson, 1999) and is an important milieu for the informal spiritual formation of teachers.

Commitment and motivation for teachers are focused around another important aspect of school culture, the school's core vision, its shared meanings and higher values, its mission and purpose (Deal & Peterson, 1999).

Section 2.3.2   *Mission and purpose*

Mission and purpose are often encapsulated in the mission statement of a Catholic school, which is an attempt to articulate the higher purpose of the school. Mission and purpose run deep in a school, moreover, well beyond the sometimes abstract words contained in mission statements (Deal & Peterson, 1999). Mission and purpose are often reflected in the beliefs and values, espoused and evident, in the school.

Saphier and King (1985), in their research involving the cultural norms that create a positive impact on school improvement, found a priority given to the protection of core values and beliefs among teachers. Beliefs among teachers

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are powerful cultural forces, according to Deal and Peterson (1999) because they represent core understandings about teaching, about learning and, in a Catholic school, about the religious purpose of the school. Within the Catholic school, espoused beliefs and values should be centred on the Christian Story, that is, the person and teachings of Jesus and the tradition which followed him.

Section 2.3.2.1   Shaping beliefs and values

Beliefs can be shaped by knowledge and experiences, in the case of both individuals and groups (Deal & Peterson, 1999). This is important in the informal spiritual formation of teachers since teachers can be influenced by new knowledge and experiences. Respect for knowledge, rationality and wisdom has consistently characterised Catholicism (Gilkey, 1975; Groome, 1996, 1998, 2002) with significant implications for teachers. Wisdom building among teachers, for example, requires an ethic of critique (Starratt, 1996), a capacity to see new perspectives and analyse situations from a moral perspective, described in these terms by Groome (1998):

> ...social analysis should encourage us to question our cultural context and worldview, to recognise sins as well graces, to be open to perspectives other than our own (p. 294).

The transforming role of the Catholic school (Congregation of Catholic Education, 1998), suggests that teachers themselves should have opportunities to gain new knowledge and perspectives and become critically reflective about their own values and perspectives (Groome, 1998). For teachers, engaging in critical reflection on their own values and biases is an essential step in their own spiritual formation.

In Catholic schools, spiritual formation should encourage teachers to be better spiritual leaders for students. Spiritual leadership comes from within the person of the teacher, reflected in beliefs and convictions, and this will be evident to students (Benson & Guerra, 1985).

According to Chittister (2003), spiritual leadership for teachers in a Catholic school is about assessing reality, reclaiming a gospel centred vision and having the courage to ask the right questions, sometimes perhaps to lead "where there are no roads and leave a path" (p. 29). As spiritual leaders, teachers need to ask whether they are using the right maps to lead students "on their gospel way" (p. 23). Are they enabled "to assess their world, both its raging possibilities and its limitless brutality"? (p. 23). Do their students leave them with an ability and willingness "to envision something better for the world than power and profit at any cost"? Do their students leave them with the commitment and courage "to question the world's social axioms rather than simply comply with them"? (Chittister, 2003, p. 23). Shaping the beliefs and values of teachers for this task is both a challenge and a leadership responsibility in Catholic schools.

Beliefs about teaching and learning are also central issues in Catholic schools. According to Harris (1987), a philosophy of teaching is needed that explores the dimensions of depth in teaching, a philosophy that begins not with technique but with the majesty and the mystery involved in teaching (Harris, 1987, p. 24). Teachers develop a sacramental consciousness (Groome, 1998, 2002) when they see teaching from the inside, uncovering the depth and richness of teaching. A sacramental consciousness, a depth characteristic of Catholicism, looks at the world "and then through it to see the transcendent in the ordinary, the Creator in the created ..." (Groome, 1998, p.129). In relation to the teaching of subject matter in a Catholic curriculum, a sacramental consciousness leads to a capacity to use reason, memory and imagination to see through the content to the deeper mystery, where each life question is eventually a religious one and all truth is grounded in Divine truth (Groome, 1998). Nurturing and encouraging a sacramental consciousness in teachers allows them to see the deeper meaning in the subjects they teach, to see the mystery beyond, and to see the religious dimension of all subjects (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1987). Teaching itself, in all curriculum areas, presents opportunities for teachers to deepen their own a sense of the sacred (Catholic Education Office, Sydney, 1995) and to grow spiritually.

The final cultural element identified from the work of Schein (1997) with relevance to the spiritual formation of teachers is the use of symbols and rituals. Catholicism is characterised by a strong symbolic and liturgical tradition (Greeley, 1998).

Section 2.3.3   Symbols and rituals

In the Parramatta Vision Statement there is a clear relationship made between the promotion of the spiritual life and the use of symbol and ritual. This is described as, "Promoting a vibrant spiritual life through life giving prayer and liturgy" (Catholic Education Office, Parramatta, Vision Statement, 2000, p. 1). Rituals and symbols, present in liturgy and prayer, carry deeper meaning about a school community's core beliefs and values (Deal & Peterson, 1999). The super-normative function of religious ritual can be utilised widely within the school to convey religious and spiritual beliefs and to engage participants (van Eyk, 1998). The participation of teachers in prayer and liturgy, with their own students or with other teachers, presents opportunities for engagement at a deeper level, in the realm of the spiritual (van Eyk, 1998) and has potential to influence the informal spiritual formation of teachers.

Religious symbols in Catholic schools can lead to deeper, mysterious realities (Arbuckle, 1987). They mark the school's religious character, and signify its uniqueness, tradition and roots. As teachers go about their work in Catholic schools, the presence of physical religious symbols throughout the school and classroom provide moments of reflective space and opportunities to 'see beyond' the immediate and mundane. Such symbols serve as reminders of the deeper meaning of teachers' work and can contribute to the development of a sacramental consciousness (Groome, 1996, 1998, 2002).

Some schools within the Parramatta Diocese were established by religious orders, and the spirituality of the order is strongly evident in the school as a contemporary expression of Catholicism. These orders include the Patrician

Brothers, Marist Sisters, De La Salle Brothers, Mercy Sisters, Jesuit Fathers, Marist Brothers and Christian Brothers all of which either have a religious principal in the school or continue to follow the order's traditions with a lay administration. The spirituality of an order, and the vision of its founder, is a formative influence on teachers (Short, O'Connor, Evans & Crawford, 1994). Lay teachers within these schools can be influenced by the spirituality of the order (Sharkey, 1997; Short et al., 1994). The potential influence of the spirituality of religious orders on teachers is relevant to this study.

This discussion has identified cultural elements in the Catholic school with potential to shape and strengthen Catholic culture, and influence the spiritual formation of teachers. Not all cultural influences are positive, however, and Catholic school communities are subjected to many influences and values which can threaten Catholic culture, and indirectly, the spiritual formation of teachers.

Section 2.3.4   Challenges to Catholic culture

As noted, spiritual formation involves a voluntary response of the individual and teachers cannot be coerced into their own formation. Hence, not all teachers will be receptive to spiritual formation opportunities within the school. Negativity among teachers impacts on school climate and is a significant challenge to Catholic culture.

There is also the challenge of a lack of time and intensification of tasks in teachers work (Hargreaves, 1992) and competing priorities such as restructuring and curriculum reform which can dominate school agendas. A key challenge in school communities with relevance to this research, identified by Habermas (1987), Starratt (1996) and Sergiovanni (2000), is the need to maintain a balance between the life world and systems world of teachers (Habermas, 1987). The spiritual formation of teachers requires close attention by principals to life world experiences of teachers, individually, and within a community.

The curriculum in schools is often tightly prescribed and teachers constrained by heavy content expectations ahead of external examinations. The prescriptive nature of curriculum in schools, and the external exams which are linked to curriculum, can render teachers passive, and non-reflective about aspects of content and values, thereby posing a significant threat to the transforming potential of a Catholic curriculum and to the formative opportunities for teachers within teaching itself. Starratt (2004) argued that much of contemporary learning in schools in inauthentic because it does not prepare students for what is meaningful in their lives and, instead, is focused on test achievement. The transforming potential of the curriculum is thereby significantly diminished.

As well, Catholic schools now compete in an educational market place and there are concerns about the impact of market driven values influencing policy in Catholic schools (Bezzina, 2000; Collins, 1996; Grace, 1996, 2002; McLaughlin, 2000) thereby contesting the value base of the school. A Catholic school community which promotes experiences associated only with middle class respectability and social elitism (McLaughlin, 2000) for example, diminishes its claim to be authentically Catholic. To be authentically Catholic, values of inclusion and justice and an option for the poor should be evident (Catholic Education Office, Parramatta, 1998, 2000). Indirectly, any diminishing of core values also diminishes the formative environment of the school for teachers.

Threats to Catholic culture, and indirectly to the spiritual formation of teachers, highlight the importance of positive influences in the school which strengthen Catholic culture. An important means of positive influence in the school is the leadership of the principal.

Section 2.4   The principal's leadership role

The previous discussion explored and highlighted cultural influences in the spiritual formation of teachers in Catholic schools. The leadership role of principals in culture shaping (Deal & Peterson, 1999), is, therefore, relevant to the spiritual formation of teachers in Catholic schools, and coincides with a number of responsibilities in the current role description for principals in the Parramatta Diocese (Catholic Education Office, 1998). The cultural leadership role of the principal involves focusing daily attention and behaviour on what is important and valued (Deal & Kennedy, 1982 ; Deal & Peterson, 1999). In a Catholic school, this means using cultural influences to proclaim the values of the Gospel (Duncan, 1998). The following discussion will explore the cultural leadership role of the Catholic school principal in more detail, making reference to the role responsibilities for principals in the Parramatta Diocese.

Section 2.4.1   The principal's role in shaping school climate

Creating and managing a positive working climate for teachers, is an important dimension of the cultural leadership role of the principal and relevant to the spiritual formation of teachers. The principal's leadership role in building a positive school climate is reflected in role responsibilities of principals in the Parramatta Diocese, associated with community building. Principals in the diocese, for example, are expected to, "Establish policies and practices which create a climate of care ... and ... foster a collaborative environment which promotes the development of Christian community, within the Catholic tradition" (Catholic Education Office, Parramatta, 1998, p. 1).

In contributing to a "climate of care", the principal models what Starratt (1996, p. 161) describes as "a fidelity to persons, a willingness to acknowledge their right to be who they are, openness to encountering them in their authentic individuality, a loyalty to the relationship". From such fidelity to persons, comes trusting relationships (Duignan, 2002). Teachers' experience of a trusting climate provides the supportive milieu for their ongoing spiritual formation.

Trust is the amount of "safeness" experienced by a teacher when working with colleagues (Covey, 1989), and enables individuals to be open and authentic in relation to both their professional, personal and spiritual self. Trust allows teachers to share at deep levels with one another, in the realm of the spiritual, and to grow from these interactions. Cultivating trust among individuals in a school community is an important cultural leadership role of the principal (Kouzes & Posner, 2000, p. 5). Trust has been described as a quality that is built up in small increments in a school, more by deeds than words, is nurtured by openness and authenticity in interpersonal relationships (Schmuck & Runkel, 1985). Authenticity in relationships and interaction with others is an essential characteristic of leadership in shaping a positive school climate.

Section 2.4.1.1   Authenticity in leadership

Authenticity in leadership is concerned with what is right, and is earned by principals, according to Duignan (2002), through "their personal integrity, credibility and commitment to ethical and moral conduct" (Duignan, 2002, p. 1), as well as through their own "authentic actions and interactions, in trusting relationships" with teachers (Duignan, 2002, p. 1). Authenticity in leadership "elevates the actions of the leader above mere pragmatics or expediency" (Duignan, 2003, p. 2).

Authenticity in leadership involves, firstly, a process of self-influence on a pathway to one's "authentic self". The ideal "authentic self", according to Duignan (2002), "… implies sincerity, genuineness, integrity, and trustworthiness in action and in interaction and rejects motives and actions that are deceptive, hypocritical, and duplicitous" (Duignan, 2002, p. 8). Duignan (2002) argued that a principal must first be able to influence the 'self', through the habit of reflexive practice, in order to become a "capable human being" (Duignan, 2003, p. 3) rather than just a competent administrator. Moxley (2000) identified a number of disciplines such as silence, meditation, prayer journaling,

as well as active disciplines such as deep listening, sharing of personal life stories, and work itself, which can assist in the inner journey to influence the 'self'.

The authentic self is also shaped and influenced in relationships with others, in what can be described as a mutuality of influence (Duignan, 2002). Mutuality of influence is an important theme within the literature associated with shared leadership, to be discussed later in this chapter. Within the context of Catholic schools, relationships should be imbued with caritas or Christian love (Duignan, 2002). In the present climate of educational rationalism, accountability measures and performance indicators, school communities [especially Catholic schools in this research] need to assert their own "bottom lines" argued Duignan (2002, p. 10):

> The bottom line for successful authentic relationships [and authentic leadership]…is the living of an ethic of mutual respect and love that provides deep relational meaning. Such relational meaning is, essentially, spiritual in nature as it leads us to the search for the larger meanings of life and to levels of significance and wisdom beyond the self.

An essential characteristic of authenticity in leadership for principals is their own spirituality, a sense of deep meaning from an awareness of a transcendent presence and a sense of unity and relatedness with one another (Duignan, 2003, see definitions, chapter one).

Modelling personal qualities of integrity, authenticity and trustworthiness as integral to their own spirituality and leadership is, arguably the most important role the principal has in building a positive school climate. Integrating these qualities within the principal's own spirituality and leadership highlights the importance of the inner work of leadership (Moxley, 2000).

Section 2.4.2   The principal's role in clarifying mission and purpose

Apart from personal qualities of integrity and authenticity, the Catholic school principal also represents the collective set of values and aspirations of the school community, and to be credible, his or her actions must be consistent with the commonly held mission, values and beliefs generated informally and formally over time within the professional community of teachers, and among the wider school community. In other words, the principal's actions reflect shared mission and purpose or what "We say we will do" (Kouzes & Posner, 1999, p. 134). The principal's actions help to bring clarity, consensus and commitment to core purpose (Vaill, 1998).

The vision of the principal, in imagining and communicating attractive possibilities, such as a way of life founded on gospel values, can inspire and challenge teachers (Vaill, 1998). Imagining in the light of the gospel can be counter-cultural, and according to Kelly (1990, p. 30):

> …is an activity of cultural defiance as it creates images of
> seemingly impossible community, of a world founded on justice
> and hospitable to beauty in all its forms. It refuses to foreclose
> what is possible.

According to Vaill (1998) the vision of the principal must integrate and transform all of the separate visions of teachers, evident by their individuality and diversity discussed earlier in this chapter, into an overarching vision within which all teachers can unite and work cooperatively. Covey (1999) described the leader's work as drawing out a common vision which connects with the deepest and noblest motivations of teachers. The common vision should ideally be accessible to all teachers, notwithstanding diversity, potentially connecting with the noblest motivations of each teacher, and be an ongoing source of inspiration. The importance of a common vision among teachers in a Catholic school has been emphasised in Church documents:

> It is therefore, essential, if for no other reason than a unity in
> teaching, that each member of the school community, albeit with
> differing degrees of awareness, adopts a common vision, a
> common outlook on life, based on adherence to a scale of

values in which he believes (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977, par. 29).

The Parramatta diocesan vision for schools should also contribute to teachers' common vision, "Our system of schools seeks to be authentically Catholic; inviting, inclusive and just; committed to quality teaching and learning; supportive of the ongoing development of staff (Catholic Education Office, Parramatta, 2000). The clearer teachers are about the purpose of the school, reflected in daily actions, the more likely they are to become committed to this purpose (Deal & Peterson, 1999) and participate in spiritual formation opportunities. In the Parramatta Diocese, the principal, "Provides leadership which is rooted in the mission of the Church" and "The Christian leader thinks, speaks and acts in the name of Jesus" (Catholic Education Office, Parramatta, 1998, p. 1).

There are times in a Catholic school when the defining vision is obscured by competing values and interests, as discussed earlier. Duncan (1998) discussed the need for principals to be able to negotiate Catholic values and ideals through the process of cultural politics (Bolman & Deal, 1997) and analyse situations from a Catholic moral perspective, modelling an ethic of critique (Starratt, 1996). The role description for principals in the Parramatta Diocese describes the expectation of principals to promote "Critical reflection and action in light of the Gospel" (Catholic Education Office, 1998, p. 3). In order to engage in critical reflection in light of the Gospel, principals require adequate formation in, and knowledge of the Catholic perspective in relation to contemporary issues as well as an appreciation of their spiritual leadership role. Principal formation is a significant contemporary issue in Catholic schools because the spiritual capital that once existed when the religious orders led and staffed Catholic schools needs to be replenished with new forms of lay spirituality (Grace, 2002).

Section 2.4.3   Principal formation

Support for lay principals in clarifying their spiritual leadership role in Catholic schools has been evident in the North American context (Ciriello, 1994; Mucigrosso, 1996; O'Hara, 2000; Schuttloffel, 1999, 2002), though a 1995 study of 314 lay Catholic high school principals found that nearly three quarters reported that their preparation in areas of Church teachings had been inadequate (Wallace, 2000). Despite increased attention to the preparation and formation of principals in graduate programs and through religious orders through the 1990s, Wallace (2000), observes that the "comprehensive nature of the formation challenge" is still not being adequately addressed.

Doctoral research on the spiritual leadership of principals in North America identified a generally high level of self belief in principals' perception of this spiritual leadership role (Campagnone, 2999; Moore, 1999; O'Hara, 2000), despite the findings of Wallace (2000), though levels of preparation and formation differed considerably between members of a religious order and lay principals (Moore, 1999). One of the most significant influences in the principal's leadership comes from this involvement in ongoing formation or professional development (Moore, 1999). Moore found that those principals who reported higher scores in mission motivation, spiritual satisfaction and spiritual efficacy, engaged in more spiritual formation activities themselves than those who reported lower scores in these constructs.

Grace (2002) voiced concerns about some head teachers in Catholic schools in England and Wales. Grace noted that the confidence reflected by head teachers in areas of school administration and educational outcomes is not always evident in their articulation of a spiritual vision for the school.

Findings from Wallace (2000), point to possible deficiencies among principals generally in Catholic schools (Grace, 2002), including in the Parramatta Diocese in Australia, and the need to examine current preparation programs for aspiring principals. According to Wallace (2000) graduate programs intended for prospective principals should include formal content on Church documents,

history of Catholic schools and theology, as well as opportunities for spiritual development and reflection on one's spiritual journey. Bezzina (2003), in reference to a program for experienced principals, known as "ELIM" highlighted the importance of offering an integrated program for principals, which contains a balance of content and reflective opportunities, as well as shared experiences of community life. The success of the "ELIM" format for experienced principals in Parramatta, moreover, suggests that a similar format for prospective principals in Parramatta Diocese may be viable.

Respect for knowledge, rationality and wisdom has consistently characterised Catholicism (Gilkey, 1975; Groome, 1996, 1998, 2002) and should be emphasised in the preparation of principals. The deep characteristics of Catholicism alluded to throughout this discussion (Groome, 1996, 1998, 2002) have particular relevance to the role of principals, and should be considered in formation programs for principals.

Principal formation is relevant to the focus of this research, since the type of preparation and ongoing formation of principals will influence their leadership role in the spiritual formation of teachers. Principals' own reflections and beliefs on the core Christian purpose of the Catholic school will influence the clarity of the message conveyed by their words and actions. The principal's confident engagement in cultural politics (Duncan, 1998) associated with Catholic values helps to bring clarity, consensus and commitment from teachers to core purpose (Vaill, 1984).

The third cultural element in Catholic schools which can be utilised by principals as a cultural force in the spiritual formation of teachers is symbols and rituals. The symbolic is sometimes dismissed as "soft" in favour of the rational, or it is added as an after thought (Deal & Peterson, 1999). In fact, it is often the symbolic dimension of a Catholic school that communicates most clearly the school community's core purpose (Deal & Peterson, 1999). There has been a strong symbolic tradition within the SFT programs in Parramatta, and experiences on "Wellsprings", are a source of insights into the relevance of the symbolic in the spiritual formation of teachers. Exploring how principals can use

symbols and rituals to shape culture in the school environment is relevant to the spiritual formation of teachers.

Section 2.4.4   *The principal's role in utilising symbols and rituals*

According to Deal and Peterson (1999), rituals and symbols are culture in action. The power of rituals and symbols to communicate deep meaning about core purpose and values highlights the importance of the principal's symbolic leadership. Whether the ritual is a simple reflection and prayer to remember a teacher's birthday, a ceremony associated with a critical incident or a founder's day liturgical event, rituals communicate the school community's core beliefs and values and, used well, can be powerful cultural influences in the Catholic school (Deal & Peterson, 1999; McLaren, 1986).

Rituals bring people together, creating a sense of unity and belonging, allowing expression of common beliefs, and are therefore powerful influences for principals in the building of spirit and ethos. In the Parramatta Diocesan role statement for principals, the principal is expected to, "Give priority... to prayer, ritual and celebration of the Word" (Catholic Education Office, 1998, p. 2). As cultural elements, rituals nurture identification and connection with the school and its core purpose, and are formative influences for teachers.

While the symbolic life of the school can be vital and engaging, it can also be irrelevant, separating the spiritual life from the world. It can perpetuate dualistic mind-sets, in effect delineating "a God of special religious places and times" (Duncan, 1998, p.62) rather than an ever-present God. The symbolic life can also become predictable and lose its potency. McLeod (1987, p. 70) warns that cultural symbols and rituals can become just part of the school's tradition. The leader's challenge is to reinvigorate and renew the symbolic life of the school (Duncan, 1998).

The symbolic experience for lay teachers in some congregational Catholic schools in the Parramatta diocese is an example of how the spirituality of a

religious order can be revitalised in the contemporary context. The continuation of an order's traditions through lay educators, requires partnership and dialogue between lay and religion, to discover what the order's symbols and language might look like in a new lay context (Sharkey, 1997, p. 62).

As cultural leader, the Catholic school principal in all Catholic schools, has a role in ensuring that symbolic devices are revitalised and renewed, so that they continue to be meaningful in contemporary settings, and are not adopted uncritically as part of the tradition of the school, prepared inadequately, or added in as an after-thought. The potential of the symbolic as a cultural influence in the spiritual formation of teachers, moreover, suggests that principals themselves be immersed in positive symbolic experiences, in their preparation for the role of principal and in their ongoing formation within the role.

This discussion has highlighted aspects of the cultural leadership role of the principal in three areas of cultural influence shown to be relevant to the spiritual formation of teachers. Strengthening school climate, clarifying mission and purpose, and utilising symbols and rituals, coincide with the current role responsibilities of principals in the Parramatta Diocese, and can be informed by the Catholic tradition. Experiences of authentic Catholic culture for teachers are, potentially, spiritually formative. The principal's leadership role in the spiritual formation of teachers is understood primarily as a culture shaping role. In shaping and managing culture the principal draws on his or her own spirituality, knowledge and skills to model the way for teachers.

The principal, however, does not act alone in the cultural leadership of the Catholic school. Anyone who takes actions to reinforce the positive climate of the school, reinforces core mission and purpose, creates and sustains motivation through symbolic actions, is a cultural leader (Deal & Peterson, 1999).

It is not only the formal leadership of the principal that sustains and reshapes culture, according to Deal & Peterson (1999). It is deep, shared leadership among teachers that contributes to the building and shaping of a cohesive and strong Catholic culture. An appreciation of how leadership can be distributed among teachers, in order to build a strong and cohesive Catholic culture, is relevant to the focus of this research.

Section 2.5   Co-leadership

The term co-leadership was initiated by the original members of the SFT in 1991 to emphasise the scriptural emphasis that Jesus sent his disciples out in pairs, not alone (Nouwen, 1989). Co-leadership also underpins the "Executive Teams" program which has been offered since 1998 to the School Executive (normally Principal, Assistant Principal and Religious Education Coordinator) of different schools in the diocese (Table 1). The program recognises that other members of the executive, apart from the principal, have responsibility for exercising Christian leadership in the setting of the school.

A belief in shared leadership was evident in the first programs offered by the SFT in the Parramatta Diocese. In the leadership development programs (Table 1), teachers were provided with opportunities to develop skills in co-leading small groups (Bracken, 1995) [Appendix 11]. The evidence of co-leadership in these programs was consistent with the literature being referred to by the SFT at the time, especially in the area of collaborative ministry (Sofield & Juliano, 1987). The evidence of co-leadership in SFT programs is an appropriate starting point for a fuller discussion on shared leadership in the school setting, and among teachers. Deep, shared leadership (Deal & Peterson, 1999) strengthens Catholic culture. Experiences of Catholic culture present opportunities for the spiritual formation of teachers.

The capacity for leadership to be present among the members of an organisation is described in different terms in the literature, including 'distributed leadership' (Handy, 1996; Leithwood, Jantzi & Fernandez, 1994;

Leithwood, Jantzi, Ryan & Steinbach, 1997); 'a community of leaders' (Senge, 1999); 'co-leadership' (Heenan & Bennis, 1999) and 'collaborative leadership' (Telford, 1996).

Senge (1999) described the presence of a multiple leaders in an organisation, all of whom are interdependent and connected by what he described as a: "healthy leadership ecology" (p. 90). An ecological notion of leadership, moreover, also suggests the importance of relatedness between individuals involved in leadership activity. According to Crowther et al. (2002), relatedness is fundamental to leadership (p. 27), a theme also taken up seriously by others (Duignan, 1997; Wheatley, 1992). Duignan (1997, p. 14) believed that, "relationship is an organisational dynamic that is at the very heart of leadership". Both interdependency and relatedness, therefore, are key elements of a "healthy leadership ecology" (Senge, 1999, p. 90). A similarly organic insight into leadership in organisations is provided by Nirenberg (1993) where leadership is not connected to any one individual, but is a fluid concept that moves the organisation forward as different individuals summon forth their own leadership actions at appropriate times to suit the needs of the group. In relation to the culture of a Catholic school this is the type of leadership action envisaged by Deal & Peterson (1999). Potentially, it is leadership by everyone.

Duignan (2003) argues that a contemporary view of leadership in a complex organization like a school, requires the energy, commitment and contribution of everyone. Leadership, according to Duignan (2003, p. 21) can be seen in this light as "a shared communal phenomenon, derived from the interactions and relationships of groups". Communal leadership is consistent with a Catholic world view (McLaughlin, 1997; Groome, 1998) and counters a hierarchical, top down view of leadership. According to Duignan (2003), "Principals can no longer rely on leadership philosophies and management practices that were developed for past conditions and circumstances and tended to focus on the principal as the leader or manager" (Duignan, 2003, p. 21).

A growing body of scholarship supports a new perspective on leadership as a shared phenomenon within schools. Within the literature, there is also a growing realization of the importance of teachers as leaders (Crowther, 1996, 2002; Katzenmeyer, 1996; Sergiovanni, 1994, 1996; Smylie, 1992; Wagner, 1999;). Research by Crowther et al. (2002), suggests that some teachers demonstrate sustained leadership activity over and above the norm, and that the leadership of these teacher leaders moves the school forward, and occurs in parallel with the leadership of the principal. The potential of teacher leaders to be shapers of Catholic culture is relevant to this research, and invites further consideration of the principles of teacher leadership and parallel leadership espoused by Crowther et al. (2002).

Section 2.5.1   Teacher leadership

Teacher leadership has emerged over the last decade as an important theme in literature dealing with leadership in schools (Sergiovanni, 1994, 1996; Smylie, 1992; Zinn, 1997). Releasing the potential of teachers as leaders has been described as "Awakening the Sleeping Giant" (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 1996). Underpinning teacher leadership is parallelism: that is, the leadership activity of principals and teacher leaders occurs simultaneously and is of equal value (Andrews & Crowther, 2002, p. 155). Parallelism differs from understandings of shared leadership where the principal shares his or her leadership by delegation. It also differs from distributed leadership and collaborative leadership as these understandings do not rely on an equivalence of leadership functions between principals and teacher leaders. Applied to this research, parallelism suggests that teacher leaders can strengthen Catholic culture in parallel with the principal.

The current role description for the principal in the Parramatta Diocese, defines leadership exclusively in terms of the principal, and there is no recognition of the significance of shared or parallel leadership in the current statement, even though the principal is expected to create a collaborative environment and

empower others (Catholic Education Office, Parramatta, 1998, p. 1). This is a current inadequacy in light of recent scholarship on parallel leadership, and the potential of teacher leaders to strengthen Catholic culture.

Parallel leadership can be identified by three essential characteristics, according to Andrews and Crowther (2002) and Crowther et al. (2002). These characteristics are a sense of shared purpose, that is, an alignment between the stated mission and purpose within a school and the actions of teacher leaders; mutualism, that is, mutual trust and respect between principals and teachers leaders; allowance for individual expression, that is, evidence of individual assertiveness and activism (Crowther et al., 2002, pp. 39-42). Teacher leaders, therefore, build Catholic culture by aligning their leadership with the Christian vision and Catholic tradition; they are sustained in their leadership by the trust and respect of the principal; they are encouraged to express their individuality in creative and active ways. In strengthening Catholic culture, teacher leaders create opportunities for the spiritual formation of teachers.

In light of these reflections on parallel leadership, the term co-leadership, used firstly by the founding SFT, can now be restored and re-envisaged in a more complete way in the Parramatta Diocese, beyond its limited usage in the SFT program of the early 1990s. Co-leadership means "leadership with" or parallel leadership, and has been modelled in this way by the SFT over many years (Bracken, 1995). Co-leadership implies that the leadership activity of one co-leader equates to the leadership activity of other co-leaders, whether teacher leader/ principal or teacher leader/ teacher leader. Like parallel leadership, it is not delegated leadership, nor leadership which is shared with the principal. It represents leadership in its own right, arising from the actions of individuals who are energised by a sense of core purpose. Co-leadership, therefore, accurately describes the leadership activity of teacher leaders in Catholic schools in the Parramatta Diocese, who shape Catholic culture, and create opportunities for the spiritual formation of teachers. The principal's leadership

role in the spiritual formation of teachers is to encourage and facilitate co-leadership of this kind.

Section 2.6   Conclusion

This chapter explored a number of theoretical issues and considerations relevant to the principal's leadership role in the spiritual formation of teachers in Catholic schools in the Parramatta Diocese. It identified the importance of addressing fundamental beliefs about the role of teachers in Catholic schools and the meaning of spiritual formation. The chapter also included a discussion of "Wellsprings" and attention was drawn to the program's structure and format, pointing to potential insights from the experiences of teachers, with potential application in the school environment. The significance of the cultural environment of the Catholic school was then discussed with reference to three cultural elements relevant to the spiritual formation of teachers (climate, mission and purpose, symbols and rituals). The chapter then included a discussion of the leadership role of the principal as a shaper of culture in a Catholic school, with implications for the informal spiritual formation of teachers. Finally, co-leadership was proposed as a description of the parallel leadership of teacher leaders who build Catholic culture and contribute to the spiritual formation of teachers.

The following theoretical positions are proposed:

Firstly, a foundational issue for principals is the need for clarity on the role of the teacher in the Catholic school, who performs a valuable pastoral work on behalf of the Church. The teacher's role is, arguably, a ministry within the Church, yet this perspective is not necessarily shared by all principals, clergy or diocesan personnel. An understanding of the meaning of spiritual formation is also required by principals and other stakeholders in the diocese.

Secondly, the long running SFT program "Wellsprings" in the Parramatta Diocese, can provide insights into spiritual formation experiences for teachers, is a source of learning for principals, and offers potential application in the school environment.

Thirdly, cultural elements in the Catholic school have potential to influence the spiritual formation of teachers. Teachers' experiences of a strong Catholic culture provide opportunities for their spiritual formation.

Fourthly, the principal's most important role in regard to the spiritual formation of teachers is to shape and strengthen Catholic culture. This cultural leadership role coincides with current role responsibilities of principals in the Parramattta Diocese.

Fifthly, the potential for teacher leaders to build Catholic culture in parallel with the principal, and contribute to the spiritual formation of teachers, suggests restoring and re-envisaging the concept of co-leadership in the Parramatta Diocese.

The research findings to be presented in chapters four, five, six and seven explore and test the above propositions. In chapter eight, conclusions will be drawn about the principal's leadership role in the spiritual formation of teachers, based on the theoretical considerations described in this chapter, and the empirical data.

In chapter three, which follows, the methodology of the research will be presented.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Section 3.1   Introduction

This research set out to clarify and define the principal's leadership role in the spiritual formation of teachers. To this end, the research was focused on identifying spiritual formation experiences valued by teachers, exploring a link between spiritual formation opportunities for teachers and the principal's current role description, and ways the principal's leadership could strengthen spiritual formation opportunities for teachers. A broad framework was proposed in chapter two in order to address this research focus. The framework consisted of five areas relevant to the research focus: the role of teachers in Catholic schools and the meaning of spiritual formation; experiences of spiritual formation within "Wellsprings"; experiences of Catholic culture as opportunities for spiritual formation; the principal's leadership role in this area, as defined in the role statement; and the significance of co-leadership in the spiritual formation of teachers.

The following research question and contributing questions guided the inquiry: "What is the principal's leadership role in the spiritual formation of teachers in Catholic schools in the Parramatta Diocese?"

1.   What spiritual formation experiences are valued by teachers?
2.   What is the nature of these experiences and the responses of teachers?
3.   What are the challenges in the provision of spiritual formation opportunities for teachers?
4.   What is the role of the principal in the spiritual formation of teachers?

This chapter contains a description of the research methodology. Beginning with a description of the type of study undertaken, the research design is then identified and discussed. Included in the research design is a description of the categories of participants in the research, the role of the researcher, and the

data collection methods used. This is followed by a description of the data analysis method. The data was analysed using the software program NUD*IST 4 (QSR, 1997). The NUD*IST "tree" structure is presented as a representation of the research process. Finally, the chapter includes a discussion of the validity, reliability and generalisability of the research, as well as ethical concerns.

Section 3.2 Type of study

A case study approach was used in this research which incorporated multiple approaches to data collection and multiple sources of data (Yin, 1994). A case study is a comprehensive research strategy defined by its bounded nature and the particularity of the case (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995, 2000). This research was contained within the Diocese of Parramatta, and its particularity derives from the experiences associated with the spiritual formation of teachers in this diocese through the initiatives of the Spiritual Formation Team (SFT), see Table 1, involving hundreds of teachers, and many principals over more than a decade. The large financial expenditure invested in this work by the Catholic Education Office, Parramatta, reflects its importance in the diocese. The scope and nature of this undertaking in Parramatta Diocese, arguably of national significance in Catholic education, confirms its intrinsic significance as a case (Stake, 2000).

The priority given to the spiritual formation of teachers by the Parramatta Diocese has also brought it into focus as a leadership issue for principals. Added research interest in this case arose because of perceived inconsistencies in the spiritual formation of teachers between schools in the diocese (Bracken, 1995), attributed in part to different levels of principal awareness of spiritual formation opportunities. Lack of clarity and definition regarding the principal's leadership role in the spiritual formation of teachers in published documentation from the Catholic Education Office, Parramatta, further suggested the need for research. This inquiry into the principal's leadership role in Catholic schools is also timely, given the paucity of applicants

for the role of principal in Catholic schools in Parramatta Diocese, and in other dioceses (Dorman & d'Arbon, 2003).

As with most case studies, the nature of this inquiry was complex, because the researcher attempted to understand the case in context, with the existence of many influencing factors and variables (Guba and Lincoln, 1994; Merriam, 1998). In this research, understanding the principal's leadership role in the spiritual formation of teachers in the Parramatta Diocese required a consideration of the spiritual formation experiences identified by teachers; acknowledgement of the different needs of teachers; cultural influences in the school; the leadership role of the principal; and the influence of the SFT and its programs. These factors were part of the broader theoretical framework identified in chapter two. This case study attempted to confirm what was already known, discover new meaning regarding spiritual formation experiences and the principal's leadership role, and appreciate how these different variables interacted (Merriam, 1998). A research design was chosen that identified these variables, and provided thick descriptions of experiences associated with spiritual formation (Merriam, 1998; Van de Ven, 1995).

Section 3.3 Research design

The research design included sample selection that utilised perspectives of different stakeholders, and thereby added data to each of the five areas of the theoretical framework proposed in chapter two. The voice of the researcher was also a consideration in the research design. The design included different data collection methods that provided wide knowledge of spiritual formation in the diocese, and also descriptive insights into experiences of spiritual formation.

The research was described to participants of the research as: "Fanning the Flame", Staff Spiritual Development Research Project, Parramatta Diocese", in order to generate more interest in the research. "Fanning the flame" was a

metaphor for initiatives that nurtured the "flame" of spirituality and faith among teachers. A "flame" is also part of the diocesan symbol (Appendix 1).

Section 3.3.1   *Sample selection*

Within the design of the case study, the selection of samples is a critical decision. Sampling decisions are required even within a single case, since it is impossible "to study everyone everywhere doing everything" (Miles & Huberman, 1984, p. 36). Sample selection in this research reflected an acknowledgement of multiple stakeholders who could contribute insight to the research focus, and theoretical framework, as proposed in chapter two.

Each of the following groups provided different perspectives in regard to the research question and contributing questions: teacher participants of the spiritual formation program "Wellsprings"; members of the SFT; teachers in primary and secondary schools in the Parramatta Diocese; principals of primary and secondary schools; Catholic Education Office personnel.

Section 3.3.1.1   Participants of "Wellsprings"

Teachers who participated in "Wellsprings" were a source of insight into spiritual formation experiences. They attended the five day program which included community living, theological input, small group sharing, creative expression and liturgy. Some also attended the follow up program, "Return to the Well". Rich descriptive data about their "Wellsprings" experience was potentially available from these participants.

Another source of data on the spiritual formation of teachers and the principal's leadership was the Spiritual Formation Team.

Section 3.3.1.2   Spiritual Formation Team

Members of the SFT provided unique perspectives on the spiritual formation of teachers. On a program such as "Wellsprings", the SFT played a vital role in setting up and coordinating the program as well as contributing to the informal aspects of the program. Their role in the development and facilitation of spiritual formation programs for teachers placed them in close contact with teachers and principals, and in a position to offer insights in relation to the principal's leadership role in the spiritual formation of teachers. Understandably, members of the SFT were strong advocates of teacher spiritual formation.

While "Wellsprings" and other programs offered by the SFT were important in the diocese, a large number of teachers in the diocese had not attended SFT programs, especially in secondary schools. Teachers in schools within the diocese, therefore, provided another perspective of spiritual formation.

Section 3.3.1.3   Teachers in schools

Teachers provided a school perspective to spiritual formation. Their responses reflected a range of spiritual formation opportunities, from daily experiences within the culture of the school, to whole staff experiences. Perceptions of teachers also varied with life experience and stage of career.

Another perspective to spiritual formation was provided by principals, a key group with respect to the research focus.

Section 3.3.1.4   Principals

Principals provided an important leadership perspective to spiritual formation. In their own schools they had encountered some of the challenges associated with the spiritual formation of teachers and had a view on their own leadership role in relation to the spiritual formation of teachers. Some of these principals had experienced "Wellsprings". Most principals were lay men and women, a much smaller number were members of a religious order.

A final perspective on the research focus was provided by personnel within the Catholic Education Office.

Section 3.3.1.5   Catholic Education Office personnel

Personnel with diocesan responsibility for spiritual formation were in a position to discern broad issues and challenges in the spiritual formation of teachers in the diocese, as well as provide insights into the principal's leadership role in the spiritual formation of teachers.

Internal sampling within each of the groups just described was determined by the data collection method and size of the group. In the case of the SFT and Catholic Education Office personnel, all individuals within these groups participated in the research. For teachers, principals and participants of "Wellsprings", which comprised larger groups, representatives from each group contributed data to the research. The basis of representation of participants will be discussed in a following section on data collection methods.

The use of multiple perspectives in case studies constitutes a triangulation of sources (Patton, 1987; Yin, 1994). This adds authenticity to the research since "… any finding or conclusion in a case study is likely to be more convincing or accurate if it is based on several different sources of information, following a corroboratory mode" (Yin, 1994, p. 92). Multiple perspectives were also sought in this case study because no single source of information gives a comprehensive perspective (Patton, 1990).

Another important perspective in this research was that of the researcher. What the researcher sees, or does not see as the primary research instrument, reflected his own orientation and perspectives (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984; Merriam, 1998; Schwandt, 1993).

Section 3.3.2   ***The researcher***

The researcher has spent twenty-eight years in seven Catholic secondary schools across four dioceses in the wider Sydney area. This professional experience has included roles as teacher, Science Coordinator, Religious Education Coordinator, Assistant Principal, Acting Principal and Principal in a mix of systemic and non-systemic, co-educational and single sex, Catholic secondary schools.

A significant experience in the researcher's early years of teaching was participation in a three-week live-in spirituality course known as KAIROS. The course itself had a strong community dimension, with a level of acceptance and trust that allowed sharing of questions on spirituality. The personal experience of KAIROS had the effect of consolidating the researcher's career in Catholic education. It was a watershed experience and one motivating factor in undertaking research in this field.

A professional association with the SFT since 1992 has been another source of motivation and perspective. This association began when the SFT was asked to facilitate a spiritual formation program at a school where the researcher was Assistant Principal. The association developed further when the researcher completed a report for the Catholic Education Office, Parramatta in 1995 on the history and programs of the SFT (Bracken, 1995). The report was the catalyst for this research project.

The researcher has first hand experience of the challenges of teacher spiritual formation as a leader in a Catholic secondary school. These experiences cannot be excluded from the research process since the researcher is the primary research instrument. Personal experiences, moreover, assisted in the design of the research.

A key part of the research design was a determination of data collection methods that would provide a broad diocesan perspective of spiritual formation as well as in-depth insight and understanding of the research topic.

Section 3.3.3   Data collection methods

A feature and strength of the case study is the application of different data collection methods, allowing cross-checks and verification of findings between methods (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1994; Yin, 1994).

An important criterion in method selection in this research was the need to draw from participants their genuine internalised views and perceptions (Le Compte & Preissle, 1993). The potential for ambiguity in terminology in this research, discussed in the terminology section in chapter one, required data collecting methods that allowed the researcher to check for meaning since "…the spoken and written word has always a residue of ambiguity, no matter how carefully we word the questions" (Fontana & Frey, 2000, p. 645).

Face-to-face interaction of researcher with participants, in different styles of interview, was the primary method of data collection whereby checks of meaning gave clearer understanding of the phenomenon (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). The interviews were supported by survey, document analysis and participant observation.

Section 3.3.3.1   Interviews

Two types of interviews were undertaken in this research, individual and group interviews.

Section 3.3.3.1.1 Individual interviews

Individual interviews of one hour to two hours duration were conducted in two formats: a semi-structured format was used with CEO personnel and open-ended interviews with members of the SFT. Interview notes were taken during open-ended interviews with members of the SFT and a tape recorder was used in semi-structured interviews. Interview notes and transcripts of taped

interviews were coded for later analysis. Ethical consent was obtained in writing from each individual participating in the research prior to the commencement of the group (Appendix 2).

A flexible interview format in this research was required to allow the researcher opportunity for the clarification of meaning and the exploration of emerging themes during the interview. The contributing research questions gave some structure to the interviews. The influence of the interviewer in open-ended and semi-structured interviews is more significant than in tightly structured interviews where similar responses are obtained from different interviewers (Fontana & Frey, 2000; Singer & Presser, 1989).

The first hand experiences of individuals within the SFT and the broad perspective provided by CEO personnel identified individuals in both groups as key informants from which "…one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research" (Patton, 1990, p. 169). Because of their positional status and the sensitivity of some of the themes, interviews with the SFT and CEO personnel, in particular, required a level of trust and rapport between respondents and interviewer. Individual interviews provided opportunity for candid disclosure on sensitive issues. An earlier report (Bracken, 1995), led to a professional relationship between the researcher and members of the SFT and CEO personnel and contributed to a positive research climate. The dynamics of the interaction between interviewer and these respondents shaped the type and quality of knowledge gained from the interviews (Fontana & Frey, 2000).

Individual interviews with these key informants identified multiple themes with relevance to the research focus. In order to gain further insight and depth of understanding of these themes, group interviews were conducted with samples of teacher participants of "Wellsprings" and with samples of principals.

Section 3.3.3.1.2   Group interviews

The essence of the group interview or focus group is the creation of multiple lines of communication (Madriz, 2000) and the generation of a concentrated set of interactions in a relatively short period of time. Focus groups were used in this research with samples of "Wellsprings" participants, as well as samples of principals, and were conducted in a semi-structured format, with the structure provided by the contributing research questions. Focus groups are considered a valuable tool for social researchers (Bloor, Frankland, Thomas, Robson, 2001; Frey & Fontana, 1993; Madriz, 2000; Morgan, 1998).

The choice of the group interview in this research allowed individuals to build upon the insights and comments of others based on common experiences. For example, all participants of "Wellsprings" shared a common experience of the program. Group interviewing is useful when researching a topic, such as spiritual formation, that is not normally discussed openly, when people are not used to articulating their feelings, attitudes, motivations and opinions on the subject (Knodel, 1993).

Group size can vary in focus groups (Madriz, 2000; Morgan, 1998) with numbers of around eight to ten respondents common in market research focus groups. Madriz (2000) had groups ranging from five to eleven participants in her research into lower socio-economic women in America. A smaller group is preferred when participants have in depth experiences to share or feel strongly about the experience (Kreuger & Casey, 2000). Smaller groups allowed space for respondents to describe experiences in some depth, providing rich descriptions (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Mini-focus groups with four to six participants are becoming increasingly popular because of ease of recruitment and hosting as well as comfort for participants (Krueger & Casey, 2000). Focus groups in this research consisted of no more than seven individuals, and the smaller size of the group did facilitate deep sharing and individual disclosure.

The dynamics of the interaction between participants and the line of questioning influence the type of knowledge emerging from the group (Albrecht, Johnson & Walther, 1995). This researcher's role as facilitator, known as the moderator in focus groups, was significant to the research.

Section 3.3.3.1.2.1   Moderating the group interviews

The importance of the moderator to the quality of focus group responses is well documented (Greenbaum, 1998; Krueger & Casey, 2000; Morgan, 1997). According to Frey and Fontana (2000, p. 365) "… the interviewer must be flexible, objective, empathic, persuasive, a good listener …". This researcher had facilitated groups in different settings, though the focus groups in this research were demanding and required considerable self-discipline and active listening, so that the researcher's ideas and beliefs were limited and "… the power of the participants amplified" (Madriz, 2000, p. 844). A key attribute of the moderator to the outcome of the group is respect for the participants. The moderator should "… believe that the participants have wisdom", regardless of their background and experiences (Krueger & Casey, 2000, p. 97). Empathy and positive regard were beliefs maintained throughout the focus group environment in this research.

Probing for more information was an important device used by this researcher in moderating the groups. It provided a means of inviting deeper responses, of clarifying meaning and ensuring that the language used was clear to respondents since "…language is always slippery, with its meanings ever in process" (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2000, p. 289).

Group interaction can influence the quality of the data generated in focus groups (Albrecht, Johnson & Walther, 1995). The data generated in groups can be rich and of high quality or superficial. The latter is more likely if the group dynamics are being controlled by the influence of strong individuals in superior/ subordinate relationship with other group members, or respondents do not feel free to respond genuinely to the questions.

Several "Wellsprings" groups included principals who had also participated in "Wellsprings". In these groups, there was no evidence of constrained responses because of the presence of the principal, and teachers appeared to share openly in the group. The depth and frankness of responses in all focus groups suggested that participants were not constrained in what they said, and appeared willing to share internalised responses. Facilitating genuine internalised responses is a key challenge for the moderator.

Focus group interviews in this research were conducted with samples of participants of the spiritual formation program "Wellsprings", as well as samples of principals, with differences in the two types of groups highlighted in the following discussion.

Section 3.3.3.1.2.2   "Wellsprings" focus groups

Nine focus groups were conducted of approximately one hour duration, with samples of participants of "Wellsprings". After an unsuccessful attempt to recruit for "Wellsprings" groups at a central diocesan facility, groups were arranged in the school setting involving teachers who had participated in different "Wellsprings" programs. The researcher sent out letters of invitation to all teachers at the school who had participated in "Wellsprings", using records obtained from the SFT and Catholic Education Office, Parramatta. A sample letter of invitation is provided in Appendix 3. In each school, the focus group commenced approximately twenty minutes after the end of the school day. The group size varied from three to seven, with an average of five participants. The staff room in each of the schools was the normal venue for the "Wellsprings" focus groups. Locating groups where people normally gather, such as the staff room, is becoming increasingly common in focus group research (Krueger & Casey, 2000). The researcher arrived approximately half an hour before the commencement of a group and prepared the space for the focus group. Two tape recorders were placed in the centre of the group, usually on a table and seats arranged in a circular pattern. Ethical consent was obtained in writing from each individual participating in the research prior to the commencement of the group (Appendix 2).

The group environment aided respondent's recall of experiences on "Wellsprings" (Frey & Fontana, 2000). Shared experiences of "Wellsprings" helped to create a safe environment for sharing beliefs, attitudes and values (Madriz, 2000). The synergised effect of the group interview allowed for the participation of teachers who otherwise may have found one to one interaction intimidating, or intrusive - ideas emerged in the group dynamic that might not have emerged in individual interviews (Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990). Individuals took a cue from others in the recalling of experiences, remembering and connecting with their own experience of the program. In the "Wellsprings" groups, cuing was important as respondents participated in different "Wellsprings" programs ranging over a number of years. Those with recent experiences provided fresher recall and assisted others to remember their own experiences.

The "Wellsprings" groups were a means of raising critical consciousness about issues, and, for some participants, provided an avenue for expressing deeply held views related to their own spiritual journey and experiences of Church. The "Wellsprings" focus group experience appeared to be a means of critical emancipation for some teachers (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2000).

Focus group methodology was also used with samples of principals in the diocese. Principals brought a leadership perspective to spiritual formation, which was central to the research focus. They had encountered challenges associated with the spiritual formation of teachers in their own schools.

Section 3.3.3.1.2.3   Principals' focus groups

Six principals' focus groups were conducted, each of sixty to ninety minutes duration, in a semi-structured format, based on the contributing research questions. In all, seventeen principals participated in focus groups, comprising twelve primary principals and five secondary principals. One primary principal and one secondary principal belonged to a religious order, the remainder were

lay principals. The participation rate of principals in focus groups amounted to approximately one quarter of the total number of principals in the diocese.

In contrast to "Wellsprings" groups, which comprised a mix of ages and professional experience, the principal's focus groups comprised experienced educators with clear opinions, each possessing a capacity to draw from a range of experiences encountered within the school environment. The focus groups were held at three locations around the diocese to facilitate ease of access for principals. In order to prepare principals for the research, the research was introduced and discussed as one agenda item at a normal meeting of principals, about two months before the research was to be conducted. Each principal in the diocese received a written invitation to attend a focus group and a confirmatory letter of attendance (Appendix 4). Groups were arranged based on responses from principals. Several principals, however, withdrew from the research on the day of the scheduled focus group due to unforeseen issues in their schools. As a result, two telephone interviews were conducted with principals who wanted to contribute to the research, each of approximately forty minutes in duration.

The focus groups were conducted in a similar manner to the "Wellsprings" groups, with two tape recorders placed in the centre of the group and seats arranged in a circular pattern. Ethical consent was obtained in writing from each individual participating in the research prior to the commencement of the group Appendix 2.

It was evident that a number of the principals had discussed some of the research questions with teachers in their school, based on the survey that had been sent to all schools in the diocese several weeks prior to the focus groups. Because of the smaller size of the principal's focus groups, with numbers less than five, it was possible to allow principals adequate time to fully disclose on aspects of their own experience in schools, providing rich individual responses from principals (Kreuger & Casey, 2000).

The focus group methodology, for both principals and "Wellsprings" participants, allowed the generation of a concentrated set of observations in a relatively short period of time. It provided participants with a means of fully expressing themselves in an important area not normally raised at depth with colleagues (Knodel, 1993). The synergised effect of the group interview had the effect of drawing out experiences and insights that may not have emerged in one-to-one interviews (Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990).

As a data collection method in a complex focus area with the potential for ambiguity, the interview allowed the opportunity to check for meaning and to probe for deeper insight and clarification. Knowledge was, therefore, constructed through encounters with individuals who held different perspectives of spiritual formation, based on their own experiences

Interviews with key stakeholders such as CEO personnel, the SFT, samples of principals and participants of "Wellsprings" provided some knowledge about school based spiritual formation and detailed knowledge about experiences in the program, "Wellsprings". Many teachers in the diocese, especially secondary teachers, however, had not experienced a program run by the SFT. A method was sought which would elicit responses from a wider group of teachers, whose only experiences of spiritual formation opportunities may have been school based.

Section 3.3.3.2 Survey

Surveys are often part of case study research, which may include a variety of methods (Stake, 2000). One major survey was developed based on the contributing research questions and distributed to all schools in the diocese (Appendix 5). There was some minor modification to the terminology of the questions with respect to the contributing research questions, however, in order to avoid language that may have been misinterpreted (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2000, p. 289). For example, the first question on the survey was phrased: What experiences/programs have you valued as contributing to your personal and spiritual growth? The term "formation" was avoided in the survey because

of its possible ambiguity (see definitions, chapter one). The term "personal growth" was also included for those participants who may have been unsure about the meaning of "spiritual growth". These amendments reflected the researcher's cautionary stance in regard to language and its perceived meaning.

The other questions in the survey also avoided the term spiritual formation and read as: "What are some of the challenges in providing opportunities for the personal and spiritual development of staff?" The final contributing question, related to the principal's role in the spiritual formation of teachers, was not included in the survey, because it had potential to be misinterpreted as an evaluative question regarding the principal. Instead, a general question about ways the Catholic Education Office, Parramatta, could support teachers in their spiritual formation was substituted. The question read: "In what ways could the resources of the Parramatta CEO be utilised to support individuals and schools in this area?"

Prior to the distribution of the survey, the researcher met with primary and secondary principals in a scheduled principal meeting time informing them of the survey, and the proposed principals' focus groups, discussed earlier. It was explained that the survey could be copied and completed by individual teachers at the one school or returned as a school response. In some schools, the survey was distributed to all teachers for individual response (Appendix 6). In other schools, the one response reflected the summation of teachers' experiences. Of the surveys sent to schools, responses from thirty schools were received, representing just under half the number sent out to schools. There were eighteen individual responses received from teachers. Survey responses were typed and collated. The collated responses to the survey are presented in Appendix 7.

The usefulness of the survey resulted from the breadth, rather than depth, of responses. The survey generated a broad range of experiences noted by teachers as valuable in relation to their personal and spiritual growth, as well as

highlighting the challenges in the spiritual formation of teachers, thereby addressing contributing research questions one, two and three.

In order to gain further insight into the principal's leadership role generally, and their perceptions of the spiritual formation of teachers, outside of the focus group interviews, the research included reference to two surveys that had been conducted with relevance to the principal's leadership role in the spiritual formation of teachers. The results of this research are included as key documents in this research.

Section 3.3.3.3   Documents

Document analysis is a non intrusive, non interactive method of data collection (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984; Merriam, 1998). Data from two research projects related to the principal's leadership role were useful documents in this research. As well, documentary material associated with the SFT and its programs in Parramatta was also included in the research.

Section 3.3.3.3.1   Principal research

A broad survey was sent to all principals in NSW Catholic schools by the Independent Education Union in 2001 regarding working conditions for principals. The number of responses, including Parramatta responses and the major findings of the survey are provided in Appendix 8. The survey responses described in broad terms some of the issues and challenges generally associated with the principal's role in Catholic schools, and the administrative demands placed on principals. These findings are relevant to the focus of this research, as are the findings of published research on the impediments to principal succession in NSW Catholic schools (Dorman & d'Arbon, 2003).

The second research project involving principals was conducted by the Catholic Education Office, Parramatta, in relation to future directions in the spiritual formation of teachers. Principals in the diocese were asked to complete a survey on various spiritual formation proposals and then invited to make further

written comment (Appendix 9). Some of the written perspectives from principals represented key insights into the spiritual formation of teachers.

Section 3.3.3.3.2   SFT documents

At the end of all the SFT programs, including "Wellsprings", participants were invited to anonymously reflect on their experience in writing (Appendix 10). These comments were then distributed to the participants of the program along with photos taken during the program. The researcher was given access to documents relating to all the programs facilitated by the SFT and this amounted to a large amount of documentary material. Given the quantity, availability and richness of the data in these documents, establishing the research usefulness and reliability of this material was a critical step.

Documents have to be understood and analysed in the context of their production (Hodder, 2000; Webb, Campbell, Schwarz, & Sechrest, 1966). The production of the evaluations and reflections in this research, at the end of a spiritual formation program raised questions about emotive influences in the written comments. While the comments were accurate records of individual participants, the question of the immediacy of the comments is an issue. Would the participants write the same comments after a week or a month? The volume of data available from scores of individual teachers enhanced the usefulness of these documents as a supplementary data source that could corroborate findings from interviews. Responses from four "Wellsprings" programs, selected at random, were selected for inclusion as documentary evidence in this research. This amounted to contributions from ninety participants.

As well as records of SFT programs, historical documents relating to the early work of the SFT in the Parramatta Diocese are relevant to the research focus. "Co-leadership" was a term used by the SFT, and this term was described in the theoretical framework proposed in chapter two as relevant to the principal's leadership in the spiritual formation of teachers. Correspondence from the SFT to "co-leaders" is presented in Appendix 11.

Documentary material from the SFT, as well as recent surveys involving principals and their role in school, contributed knowledge to this case study. A final data collection method related to the researcher's role as he conducted this research was observation.

Section 3.3.3.4   Observation

Observation has been described as a mainstay of qualitative research, relevant to all field work in case study research (Werner & Schoepfle, 1987). Even interviews employ "… observational techniques … that lend meaning to the words of the person being interviewed" (Angrosino & Mays de Perez, 2000, p. 763).

The researcher visited over ten schools in the diocese in the course of interviews. Observations carried out at these times provided useful data for the research. For example, it was possible to observe aspects of material culture (Hodder, 2000). Observation included observing and noting signs and symbols of Catholic culture immediately evident in the school environment which communicated school identity, religious belief, and mission and purpose. In a number of schools there was evidence of teachers' participation in "Wellsprings"- such as a prayer table, or "Wellsprings" banners, suggesting that "Wellsprings" had a material effect within these schools.

The researcher also conducted systematic observation as a participant in a follow up to a "Wellsprings" program called "Return to the Well". "Return to the Well" was a twilight program, running from 4pm - 9pm (see Table 1) Observation is a research tool when it serves a research purpose, is systematically recorded and subjected to validity and reliability checks (Merriam, 1998). The purpose of the observation was to understand the experience of a spiritual formation programs as a participant and observe first hand how the SFT facilitated a program in relation to setting, content, structure and style and to observe the reaction of participants. Elements such as these

are normally part of participant observation. Other elements include conversations, activities and other subtleties such as informal or unplanned activities and symbolic meanings (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984; Merriam, 1998; Patton, 1990). Participant observation has been described as "a schizophrenic activity in that the researcher participates but not to the extent of becoming totally absorbed in the activity" (Merriam, 1998, p. 103). Immersion in a program of spiritual formation does not necessarily compromise validity (Angosino & Mays de Perez, 2000) since this researcher always maintained a reflective research posture while participating in the program. The researcher had to be able to understand the experience as an insider and describe it for outsiders (Patton, 1990). Apart from key observations made during the program, further field notes were taken immediately after the program. The recording of observations included some sketches of the room layout and significant symbolic items. The atmosphere created through the use of reflective music and evocative symbols was noted, including natural artefacts, such as rock, and water, with coloured cloth and candles.

The participants of this program were all known to each other through "Wellsprings" so this follow-up program was an opportunity to renew friendships. This prior experience of "Wellsprings" meant that some individuals had already established bonds of trust and were prepared to share at deep levels in small group settings. The researcher participated in small group discussion, though he was conscious that the absence of prior contact with these individuals may have inhibited their open sharing and discussion.

The content and style of the presentation and the response of participants was observed carefully, and assessed by informal conversation following the input. Other aspects were also observed such as the cohesion of the group, differences among participants or signs of cynicism. Attention was also paid to how the SFT structured rituals and liturgical experiences within the program and the perceived response of participants. In this way, first hand observation was possible of elements that were reported in the "Wellsprings" focus group interviews.

Observation of unique symbols and rituals within the SFT program and signs and symbols within Catholic schools highlighted for this researcher the prominence of cultural elements, both in programs of the SFT, and in Catholic schools. These cultural elements are relevant to the spiritual formation of teachers, as they convey deeper meaning and beliefs.

Section 3.3.5   *Summary of methods*

Guided by the research question and sub-questions, multiple methods of data collection were applied in this research across groups of individuals with different perspectives to spiritual formation.

The interview was a primary method of data collection, both with individuals and with groups. Members of the SFT and CEO personnel were key informants in individual interviews in both semi-structured and open ended format. Semi-structured individual telephone interviews were conducted with two principals who could not attend the focus group. Semi-structured focus group interviews were conducted with teacher participants of "Wellsprings" and principals. The group interview created multiple lines of communication and a rich amount of data in a relatively short period of time, and was an effective method for researching a complex area. A survey was distributed to all schools in the diocese, and responses reflected a wide range of spiritual formation experiences valued by teachers. Documents were used in the research, including two surveys involving principals and documents related to responses from SFT programs. Finally, observation was an important data gathering method, especially in relation to elements of culture.

Each of the contributing research questions (Questions 1-4) was addressed using more than one data collection method, with the interview (either group or individual) a main data collection method across all four questions, as noted. The correlation between research question and data collection method is presented in Table 2, Research Design (page 73).

Contributing Research questions	Data Collection Method	Stakeholder group
1. What spiritual formation experiences are valued by teachers?	Group interview	Participants of SFT program "Wellsprings" (46 participants, 9 focus groups)
	Survey	School community responses (30 school staff responses) Teachers (25 teacher responses)
	Group interview	Principals (17principals, 6 focus groups)
	Documents	SFT documents across 4 "Wellsprings" programs
	Participant Observation	Observation of cultural elements (school communities) Researcher participated in SFT follow up program to "Wellsprings" called, "Return to the Well", see Table 1.
2. What is the nature of these experiences and the responses of teachers?	Group interview	Participants of SFT program "Wellsprings" (46 participants, 9 focus groups)
	Documents	SFT documents (participants of four "Wellsprings" programs, 90 participants)
3. What are the challenges in the provision of spiritual formation opportunities for teachers?	Group interview	Participants of SFT program "Wellsprings" (46 participants, 9 focus groups)
	Group interview	Principals (17 principals, 6 focus groups)
	Individual interview	CEO personnel (3 interviews) Members of SFT (3 interviews) Telephone interviews with principals (2 interviews)
	Survey	School community responses (30 school responses) Teachers (18 individual responses)
4.What is the role of the principal in the spiritual formation of teachers?	Group interview	Participants of SFT program "Wellsprings" (46 participants, 9 focus groups)
	Group interview	Principals (17 principals, 6 focus groups)
	Individual interview	CEO personnel (3 interviews) Members of SFT Telephone interviews with principals (2 interviews)
	Documents	Principal research (IEU and CEO) SFT documents ("Wellsprings" and "co-leadership")

Section 3.4   Data Analysis

The analysis of data constitutes a process of "bringing order, structure, and interpretation to the mass of collected data" (Marshall and Rossman, 1999, p. 150). To assist in bringing order and structure to the data, the researcher used the computer software program QSR NUD*IST 4 as a tool. "NUD*IST" is an acronym which stands for Non-numerical Unstructured Data Indexing, Searching and Theorising (QSR, 1997). It is designed for managing unstructured data in qualitative analysis. Raw documents, such as the transcript of a focus group interview, were imported into NUD*IST 4 and then coded. The coding process was based on the allocation of a node address (Weitzman, 2000).

Section 3.4.1   *Node significance in the research*

Nodes are specific locations within the structure of the NUD*IST framework. They are "containers" for the researcher's thinking about the project (QSR, 1997, p. 3). The following were primary nodes or major categories identified in the research:

1.   Base Data (sources of data, data collection methods)
2.   Settings (locations of spiritual formation experiences)
3.   Experiences (of spiritual formation)
4.   Actors (associated with spiritual formation)
5.   Issues (in the spiritual formation of teachers)
6.   Responses (to spiritual formation experiences)
7.   Leadership (associated with the spiritual formation of teachers)
8.   Spirituality (dimensions of spirituality)

Each primary node was identified as a major category during the coding process. Nodes were sourced from documents entered on-line into the NUD*IST program. For example, transcripts of all interviews were entered as text files into NUD*IST. Some documents were coded off-line, that is, the text was not imported into the NUD*IST program. An example of the coding process is presented in Appendix 12. The document coding schema is presented in Appendix 13, which shows the data collection method, the research code used, whether it is on-line or off-line and the corresponding listing number in NUD*IST which can be traced to the data source. In general, coding of off-line documents corroborated codes established through on-line documents.

Figures 1 (a) - (k) presented on pages 77-87 summarise the data findings. Each diagram highlights a primary node or major category and then multiple secondary nodes, each with an individual node address arising from the responses of participants to the research question. The diagrams are presented in this format in order to assist the reader in appreciating the various themes which emerged as a result of the coding process. The diagrams are presented in this format using the software program "Inspiration" (Inspiration Software Inc, Version 7, 2002).Three of the primary nodes listed above, "Experiences", "Issues" and "Responses" are also presented in table format in the appendix showing the node description, the number of documents which contained that node, and the number of text units related to each node (Appendix 14 (a); 14 (b); 14 (c)).

Importantly for the focus of the research, the last four diagrams, Figure 1 (h); (i); (j); (k), draw links between nodes under "Experiences", "Issues", "Responses" and "Spirituality" with the primary node of "Leadership". Links between these primary nodes and leadership are based on the empirical data, as well as the theoretical framework in chapter two, which included discussion of the cultural influences in the Catholic school, the principal's leadership role in

shaping culture, the current role of the principal and discussion of co-leadership and teacher leadership. A link has been drawn, for example, between the experience of a "supportive school environment", coded under "Experiences", with the primary node of "Leadership" (Figure 1 (h)). Under the "Issues" primary node (Figure 1 (i)), "differences among teachers" is linked to "Leadership", since an appreciation of teacher diversity is a key leadership challenge in the spiritual formation of teachers. Under the "Responses" primary node (Figure 1 (j)), ongoing opportunities for "critical reflection" for teachers is considered a leadership issue in the spiritual formation of teachers.

A description and interpretation of the NUD*IST tree structure presented in Figure 1 (a - k) will be presented in chapters, four, five, six and seven.

Section 3.4.2   NUD*IST tree display

Please see Figures 1 (a) – 1 (k) on the following pages.

Section 3.4.3   Creating node addresses

New node addresses were created when a new insight or response emerged in the data. The research process was "a reflexive activity", the emergence of data informed further data collection and writing (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996, p. 6). In some cases the response was recorded in more than one node address. Some nodes were present in multiple documents, others only appeared in one or two documents. For example, the node "Positive" under "Responses" (node address 7.4) appeared in 11 interview documents, whereas the node "Too deep" (meaning the content of the spiritual formation program was too deep for the respondent) under "Responses" only appeared in 1 interview document. As well, the number of text units related to the node is an indication of the amount of interview text space taken up in the interview in reference to the node. A list of all nodes and the number of documents and text units relating to each node is presented in Appendix 13.
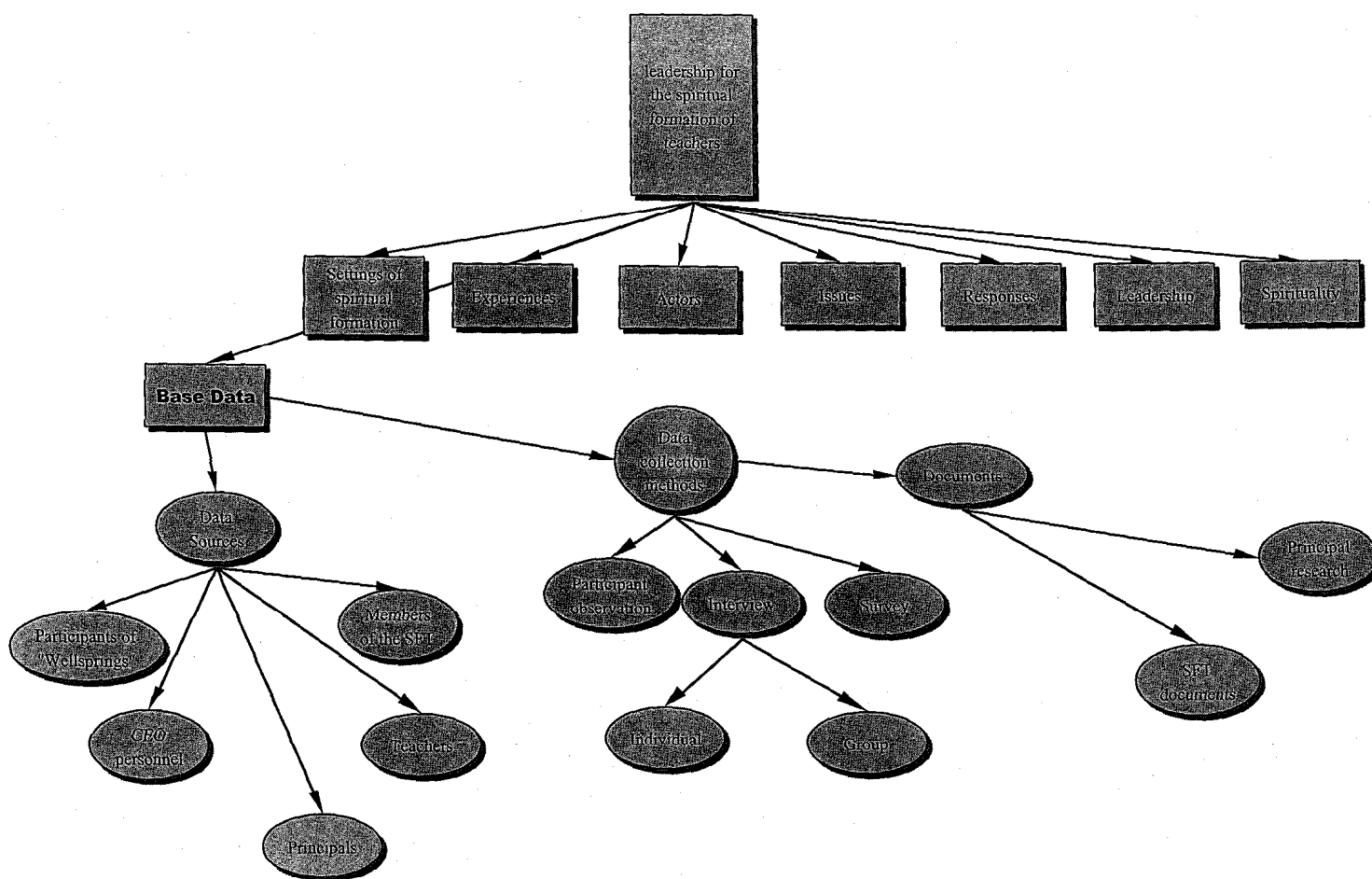
Figure 1 (a)
Base Data
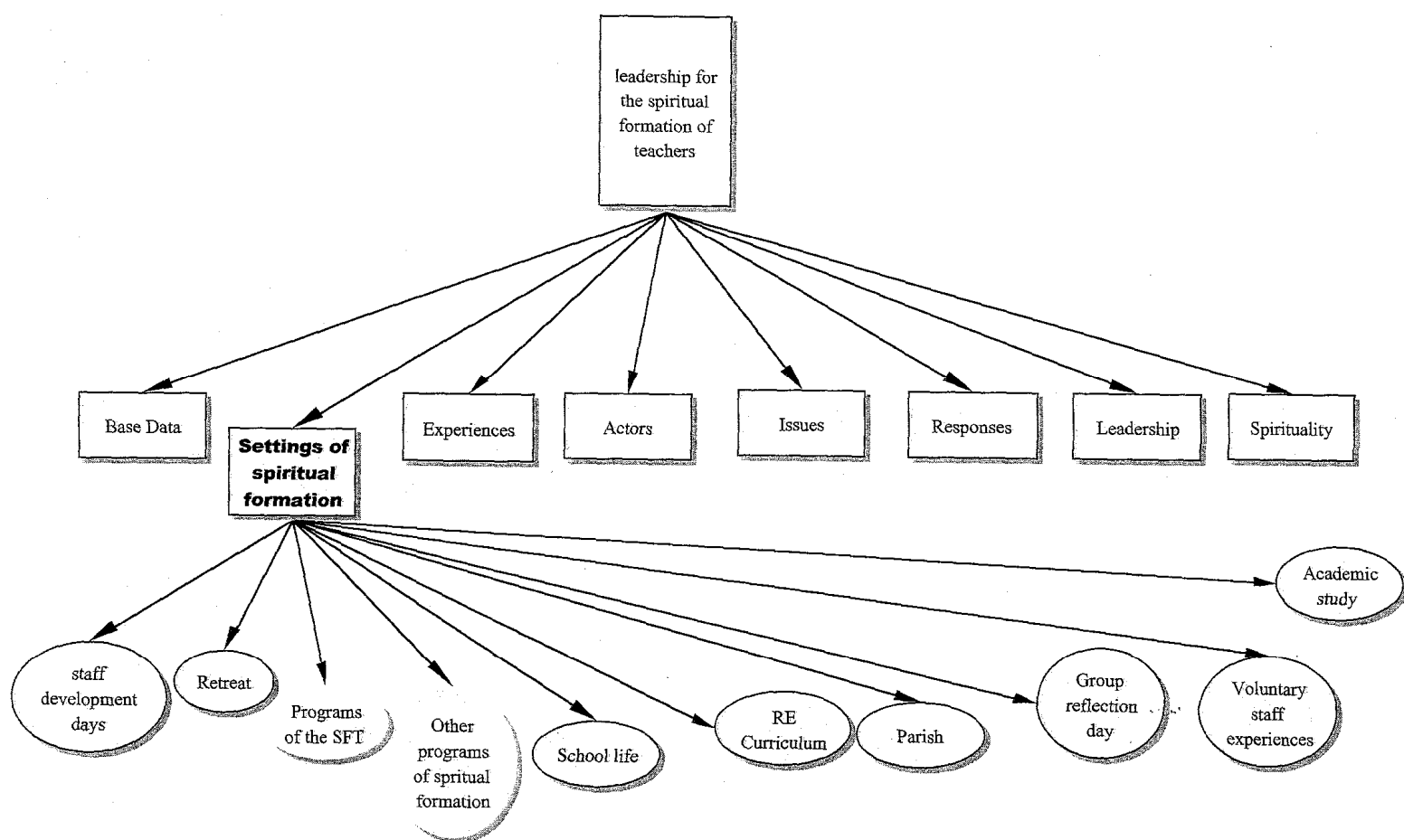
Figure 1(b)
Settings of spiritual formation
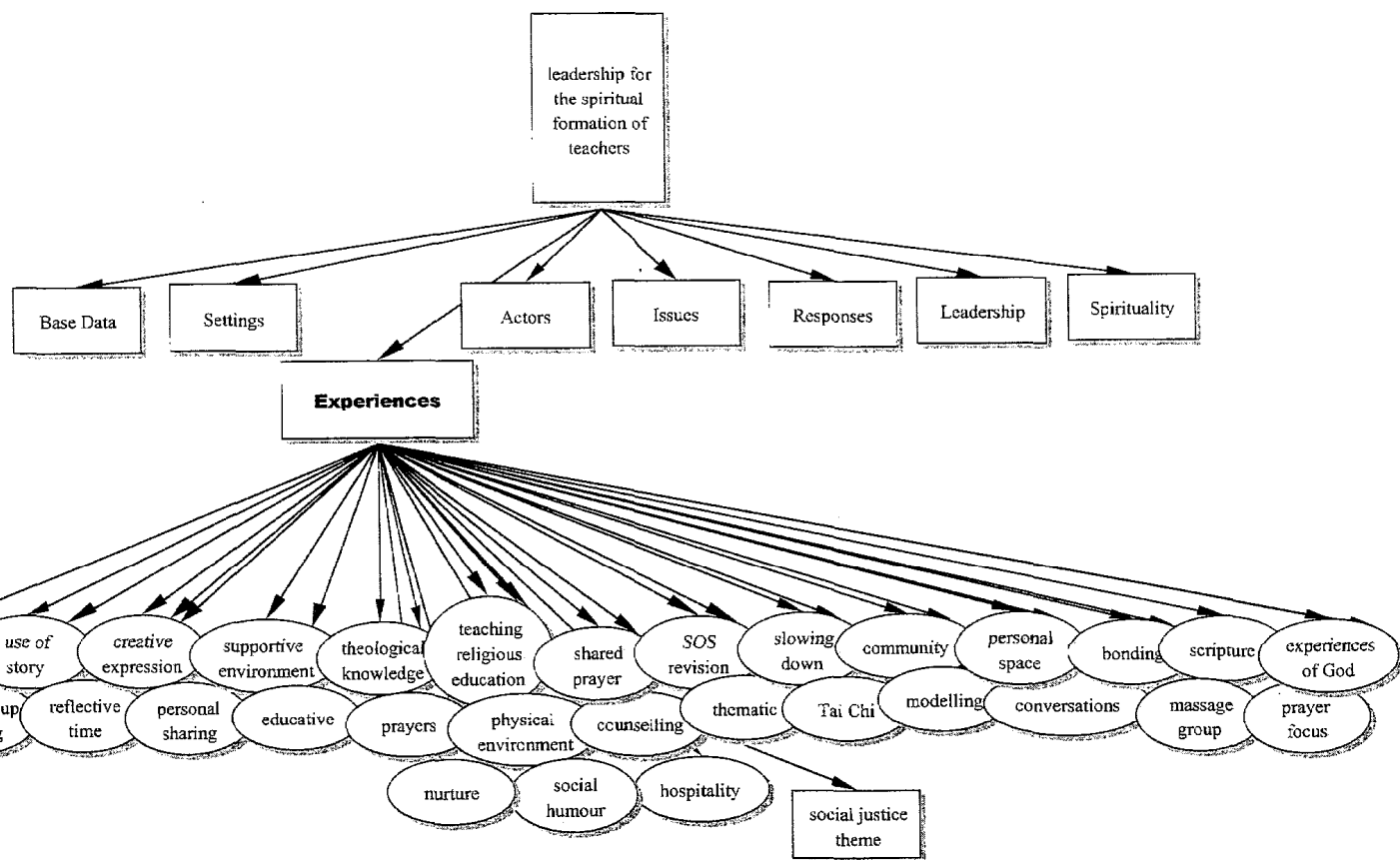
Figure 1(c)
Experiences of spiritual formation
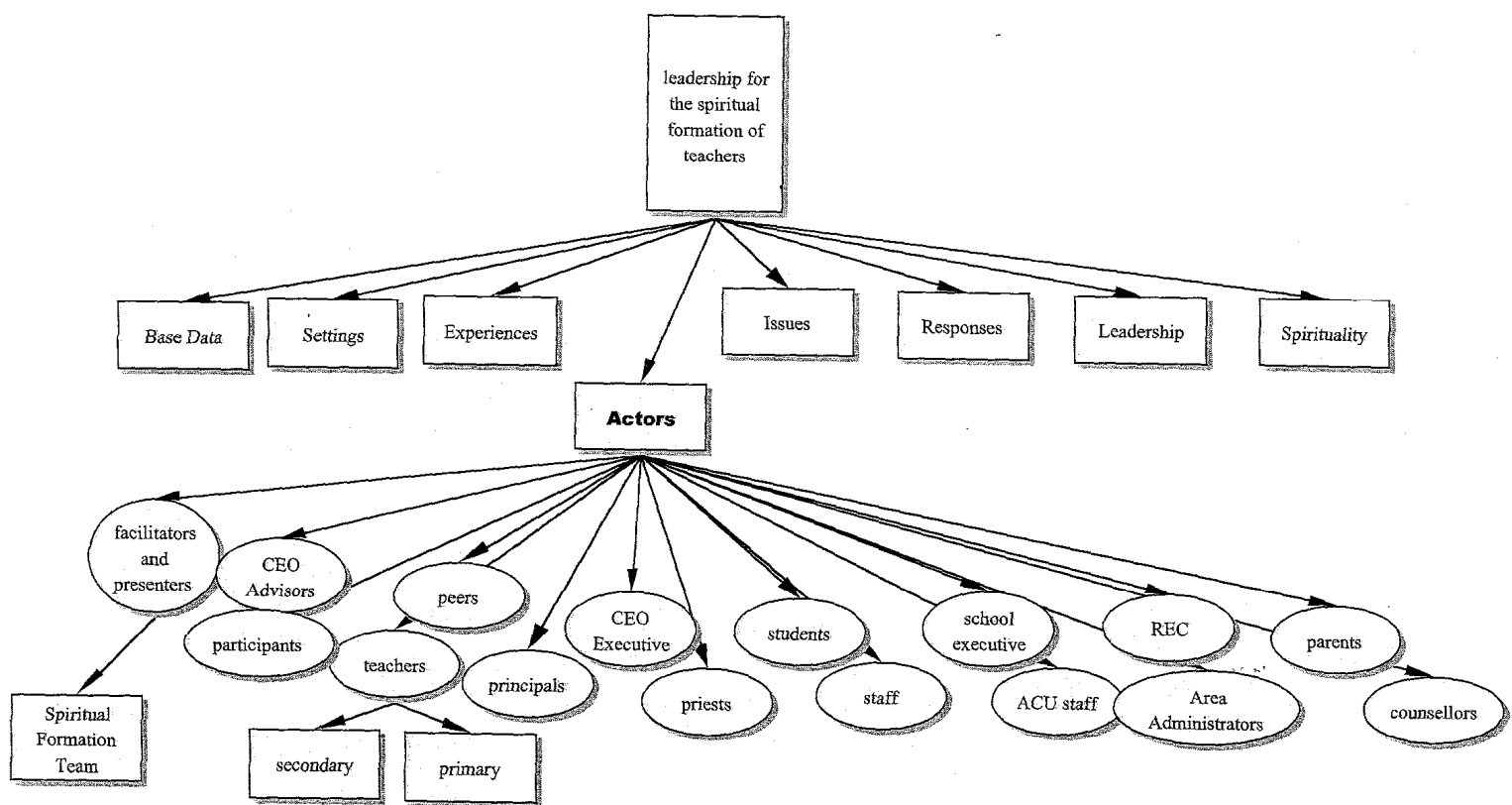
Figure 1 (d)
Actors associated with the spiritual formation of teachers
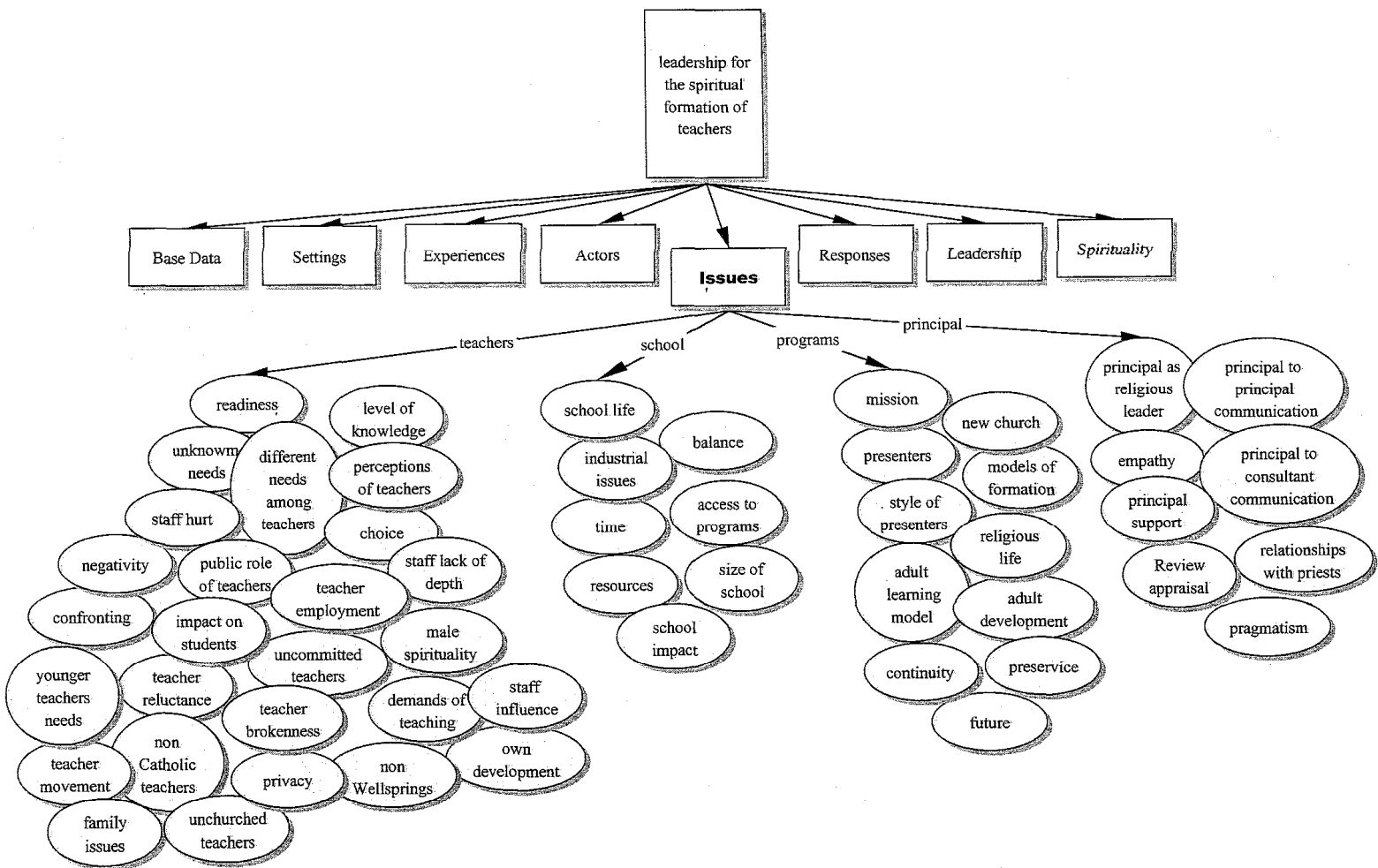
Figure 1(e)
Issues in the spiritual formation of teachers

leadership for the spiritual formation of teachers

Base Data

Settings

Experiences

Actors

Issues

Leadership

Spirituality

Responses to spiritual formation

teacher responses

responses with others

teacher responses

belonging

transformation

liberating

critical reflection

deeper understanding

empowered

positve

confidence

open eyes

inner peace

challenged

informative

energize

deeply personal

communication following

lived ressonse

consciousness

sparked off further study

changed perspective

social action

nurture self

prayer life

continue to deepen

with family

in school

draw from

parish community

relationships

feel valued by system

community building

mixed

confronting

not letting go

untouched

anger

reluctance

fear

too deep

negative

too emotional

Figure 1(f)
Responses to spiritual formation
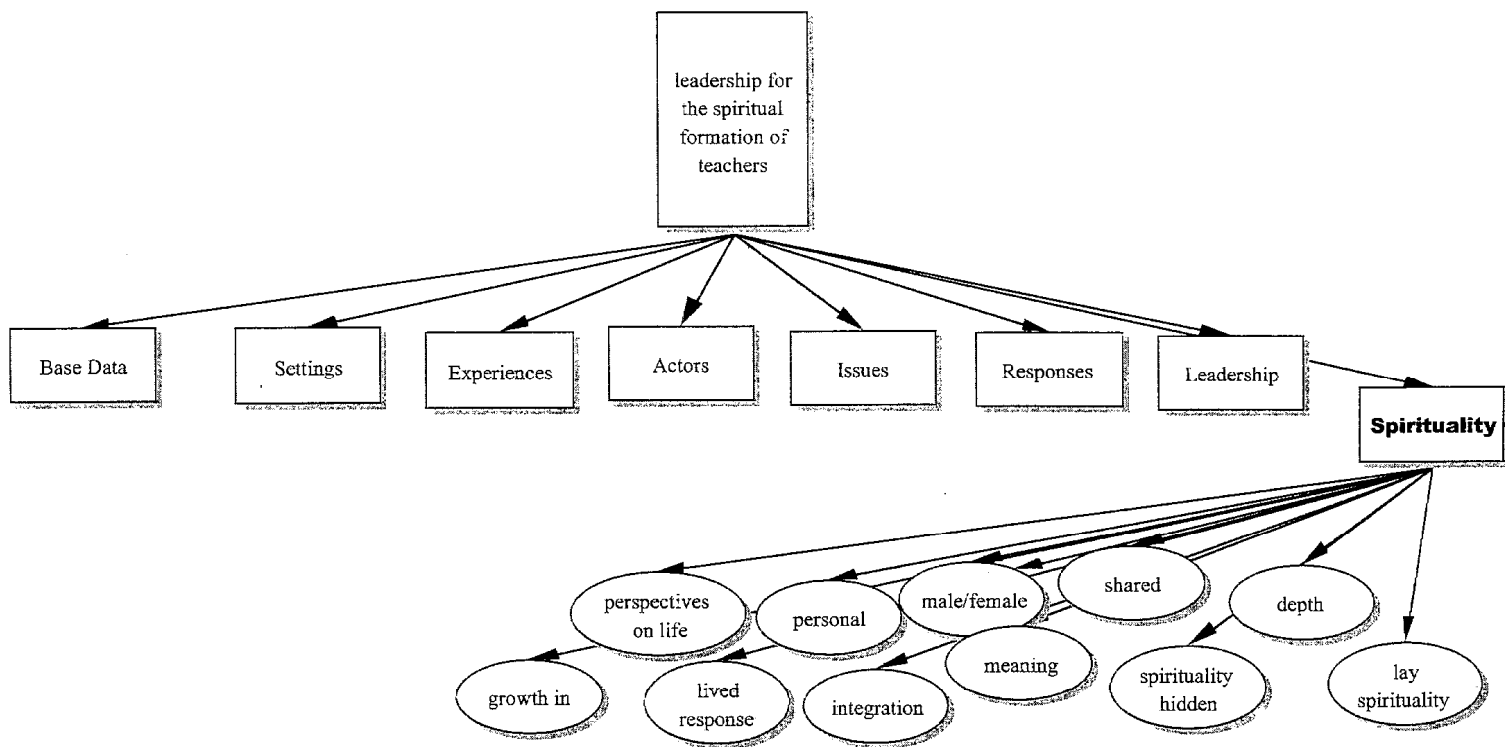
Figure 1 (g)
Dimensions of spirituality
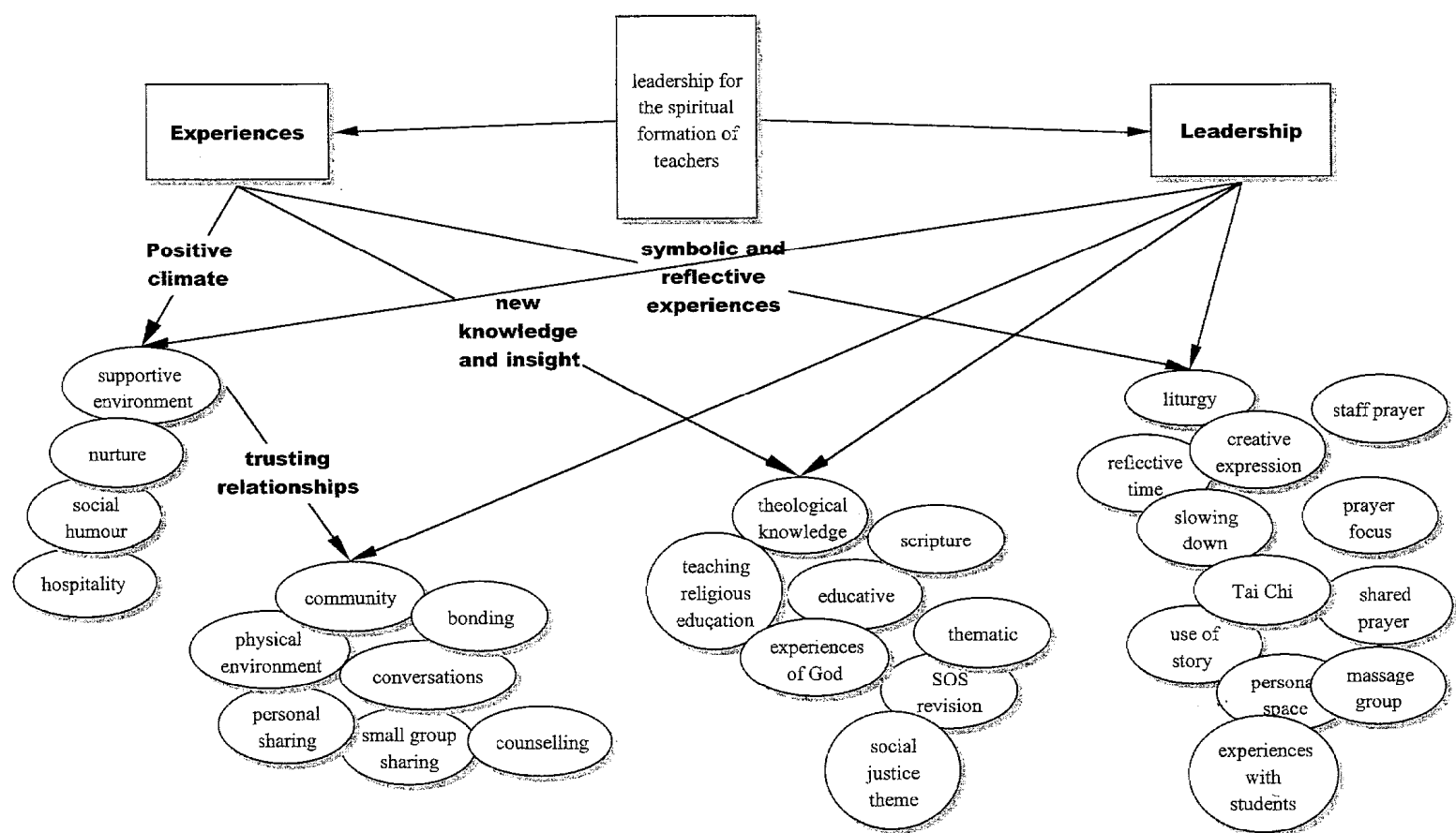
Figure 1 (h)
Experiences of spiritual formation linked to leadership
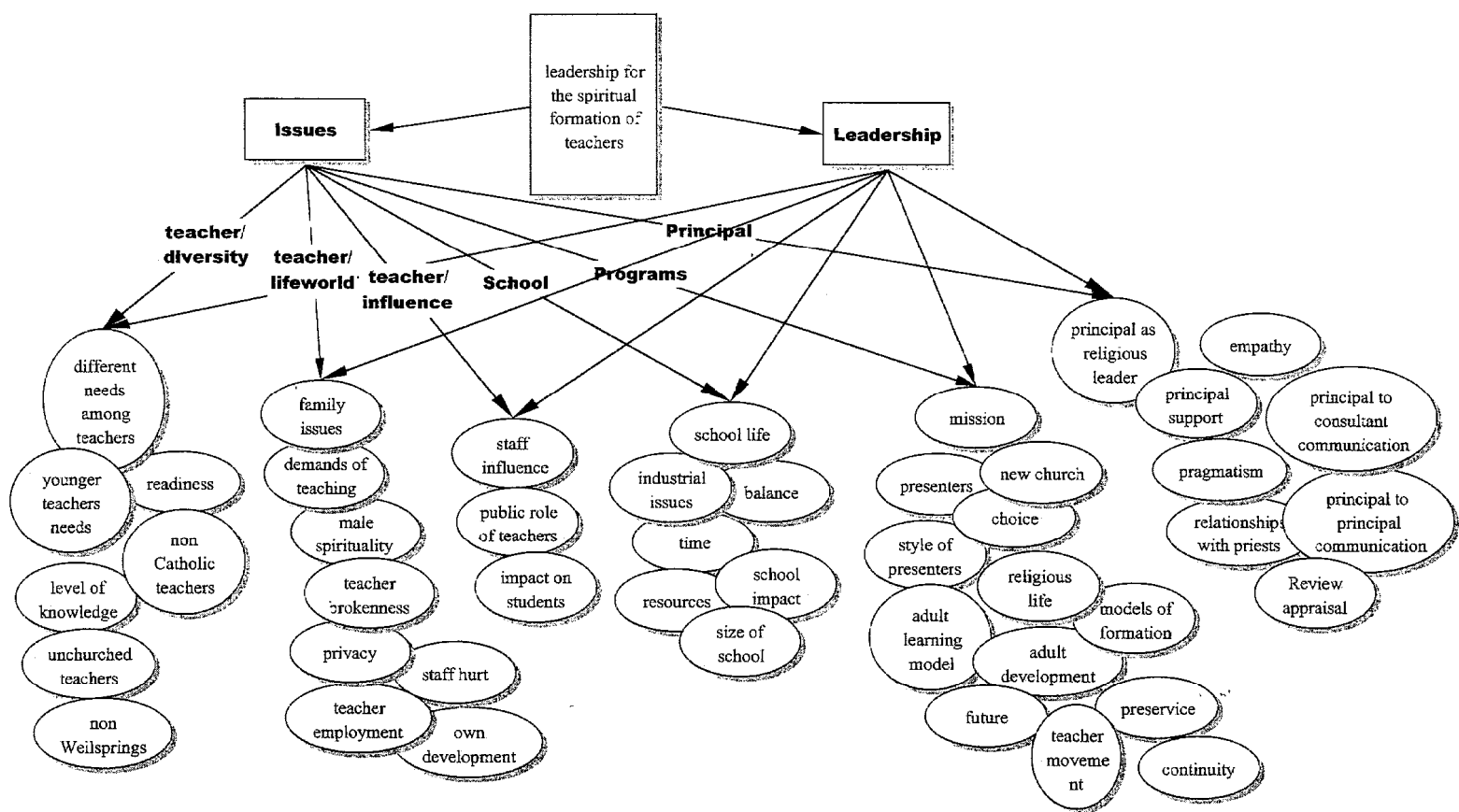
Figure 1 (i)
Issues in the spiritual fromation of teachers linked to leadership
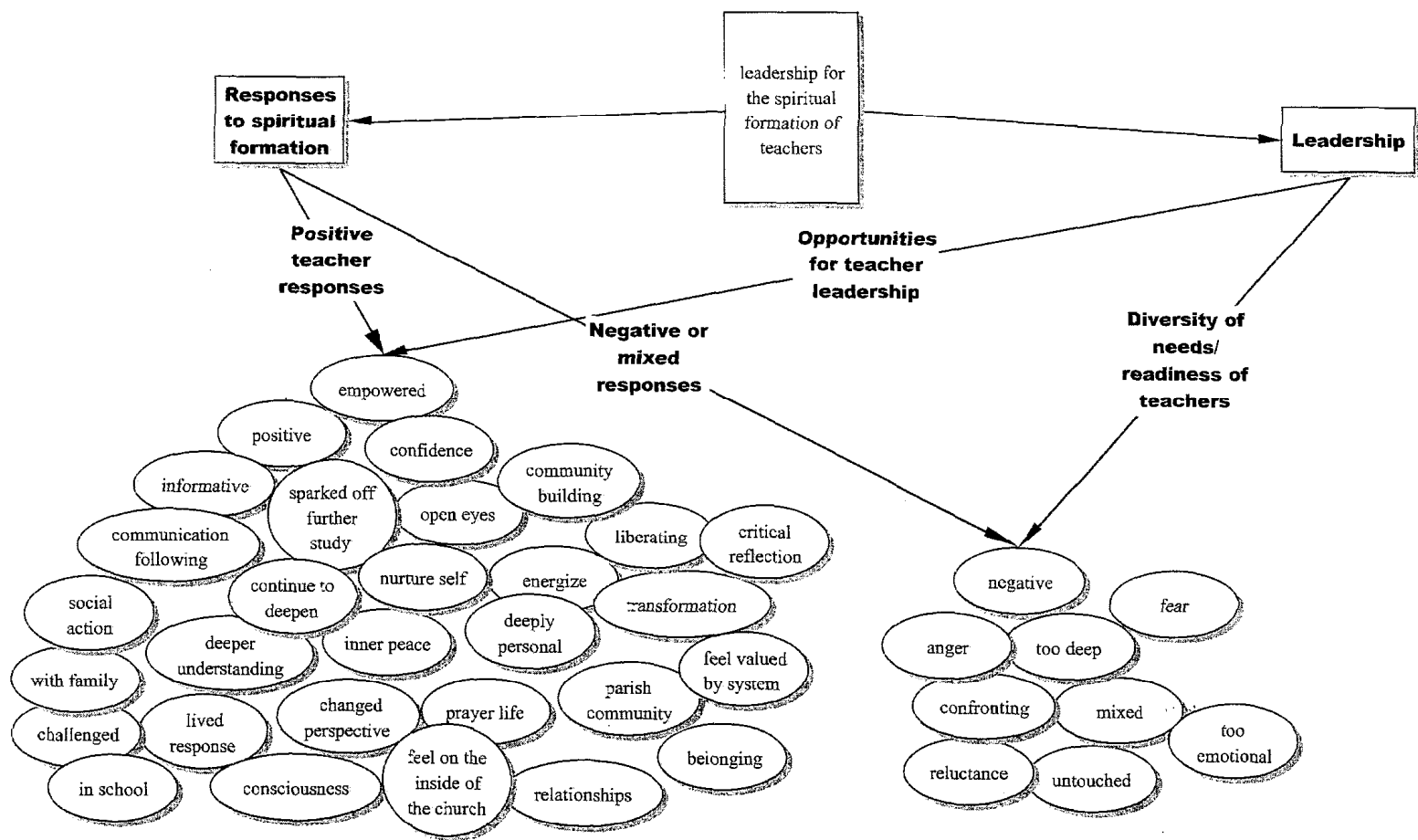
Figure 1 (j)
Responses to spiritual formation linked to leadership

leadership for
the spiritual
formation of
teachers

Spirituality

Leadership

Meaning

Principals

Teachers

meaning

lived
response

perspectives
on life

personal

integration

shared

growth in

spiritual
base to
principal's
leadership

lay
spirituality

male/female

depth

spirituality
hidden
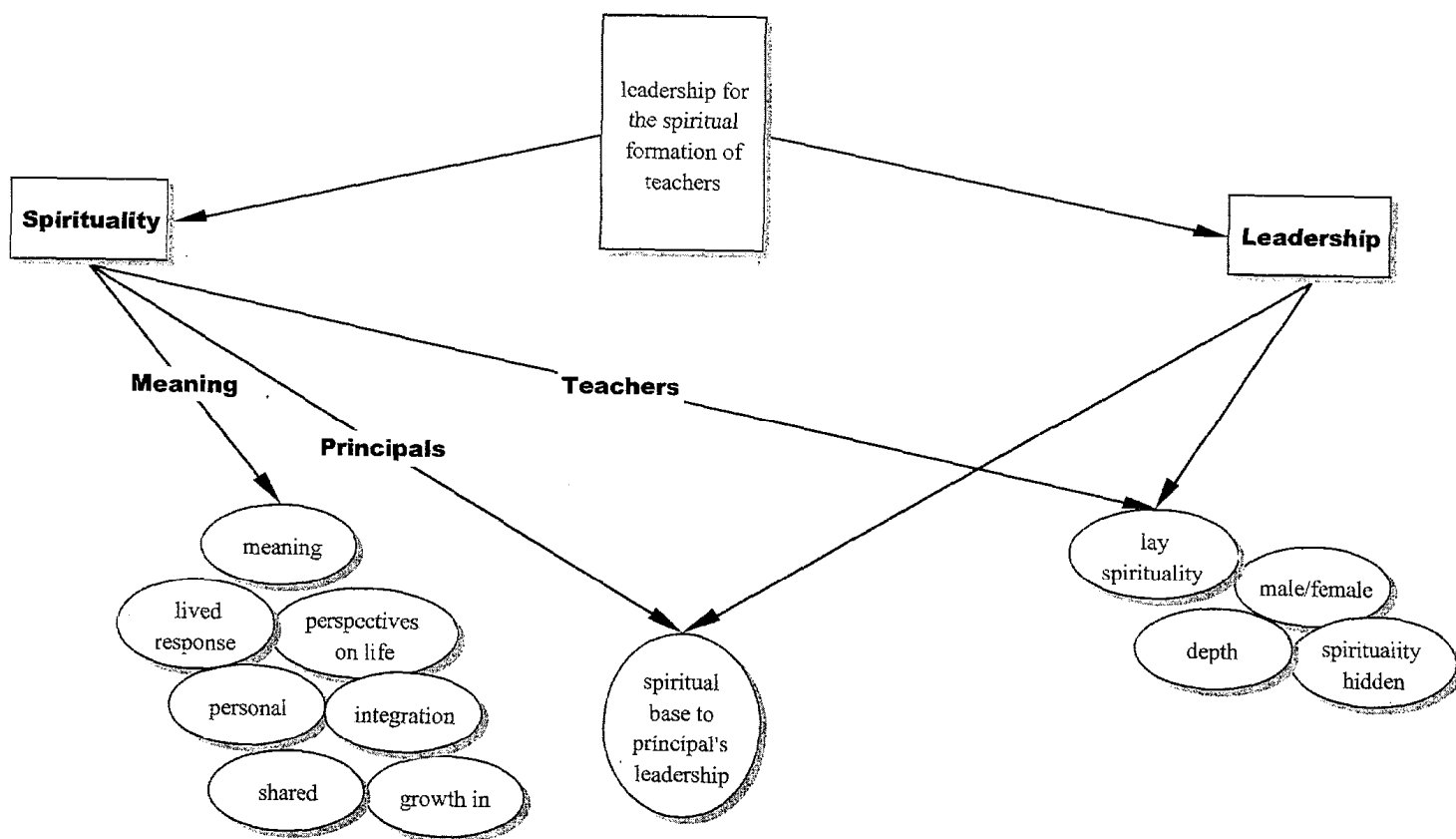
Figure 1 (k)
Spirituality linked to leadership

Care was taken in interpreting node frequency across documents. As a qualitative study in a complex area the researcher was interested in gaining deeper insight into leadership for the spiritual formation of teachers. Quantifying the frequency of nodes had some usefulness, however, in identifying broad recurring themes. For example, "Community" and "Theological knowledge" were nodes that appeared in many documents and text units (see Appendix 14a) and these themes are prominent in the discussion in chapters five and six. Conversely, some nodes only appeared in one or two documents, but were still significant to the research. The presence of one "Wellsprings" document with a response of "too deep" was significant, for example, as it departed from positive responses and prompted further inquiry and explanation.

Section 3.4.4   Contributing research questions and nodes

Contributing research questions one, two and three related directly to primary nodes. For example, contributing question one asks, "What spiritual formation experiences are valued by teachers?" Primary nodes relating to this question were "Settings" of spiritual formation, "Experiences" of spiritual formation and "Responses" to spiritual formation, which also correlated with question two, "What is the nature of those experiences and the responses of teachers?". Contributing question three deals with issues and challenges in the spiritual formation of teachers and correlates with the "Issues" primary node. A total of two hundred and forty seven individual node addresses were created.

The research design in this project was underpinned by multiple perspectives and different data collection methods, as well as an acknowledgement that the researcher was the primary research instrument. Major themes which emerged in the data analysis gave shape to chapters four, five, six and seven.

The credibility and usefulness of research findings are traditionally measured by tests of validity, reliability and generalisability. These terms, however, are derived from the quantitative research paradigm and need to be carefully considered in relation to this research.

Section 3.5   Validity, reliability and generalisability

How validity, reliability and generalisability are applied to the qualitative paradigm is the subject of considerable controversy (Janesick, 2000; Lincoln & Guba, 1995; Lincoln & Guba, 2000; Woolcott, 1995). As Janesick (2000, p. 393) observed:

> Qualitative researchers have been patiently responding to questions usually formulated from a psychometric perspective… (revolving) around the trinity of validity, reliability and generalisability, as if there were no other linguistic representations for questions.

The following discussion considers validity, reliability and generalisability in turn, drawing both from traditional and emerging understandings of how these terms relate to the qualitative case study, and to this research.

Section 3.5.1   Validity

Qualitative researchers are now redefining the concept of validity as it applies to the work they do, moving away from conceptualisations borrowed from the quantitative domain and toward understandings more congruent with the qualitative paradigm (Janesick, 2000; Merriam, 1996). As Lincoln & Guba (2000, p. 178) noted, "Nowhere can the conversation about paradigm differences be more fertile than the extended controversy about validity". For Wolcott (1995, p. 168), even a discussion of validity, "… signals a retreat to that pre-existing vocabulary originally designed to lend precision to one arena of dialogue and too casually assumed to be adequate for another." Validity, however, may well be an irritating construct in qualitative research but it will not be easily dismissed (Lincoln & Guba, 2000).

To counter the positivist legacy associated with validity, alternate descriptors have emerged that may be more appropriate to the qualitative paradigm, such as credibility (Guba, 1981) and authenticity (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Authenticity criteria are those believed to be "the hallmarks of authentic, trustworthy,

rigorous or 'valid' … inquiry" (Lincoln & Guba, 2000, p. 180). Discussion of the validity of this research draws both from authenticity criteria and from data gathering approaches traditionally considered to enhance internal validity (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993; Merriam, 1996).

'Fairness' or 'balance' in considering the perspectives and views of all stakeholders in this research is an important authenticity criterion. Every effort was made by the researcher to apply methods that allowed a range of 'voices' or perspectives to be heard, as discussed earlier in this chapter, in order to ensure balance. Apart from key personnel involved in the spiritual formation of teachers, the inclusion of other perspectives such as teachers and participants of programs allowed a fairer representation of reality to emerge.

Among the perspectives is also the voice of the researcher. The presence of the researcher's perspective required that the self be the subject of critical reflection as the research instrument (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). Critical reflection led to an awareness of the potential for multiple identities to be brought to the research setting, for example, as a result of the professional relationship between researcher and participants (Alcoff & Potter, 1993). In acknowledging this subjectivity, any potential bias resulting from influential stakeholders, such as the Executive Director of Schools in this research, was identified and the data balanced with other perspectives, including those of teachers.

A second authenticity criteria relevant to this research is described as "tactical and catalytic authenticity"- the capacity of the research to prompt action on the part of the research participants (Guba & Lincoln 1989, p. 245- 251). The SFT has responded to the emerging findings of this research in its delivery of spiritual formation experiences for teachers. For example, the inclusion of "Inspirations" (Catholic Education Office, 2002) was in response to an identified need brought out in the research. 'Inspirations' is a collection of experienced facilitators who are now available to schools in the area of spiritual formation.

The responsiveness of the SFT to emergent findings adds authenticity to the research and also underscores the long-term nature of observations in this

research with ongoing contact maintained with the SFT since 1993. Gathering field data over a long period of time enhances the trustworthiness of the findings, since the researcher is immersed within the field of inquiry for longer and is exposed to discrepancies (Goetz & Le Compte, 1984; Maxwell, 1996; Merriam, 1998). For example, the emergence of negative experiences on the "Wellsprings" program became evident in the focus groups, but was not apparent in the earlier analysis of documents. Deeper understanding was gained over time using different methods and seeking a range of perspectives.

The use of multiple data sources, and multiple methods, normally referred to as triangulation (of sources and methods) is common in case study research and is considered to enhance validity (Stake, 2000; Yin, 1996). While common themes may emerge from different sources, triangulation of sources is not, however, a technical solution for ensuring validity. Triangulation is best thought of as a way of throwing new light onto the research using different perspectives "and a spur for richer and deeper analysis" (Bloor, 1997, p. 49). Equally, different methods do not ensure validity in a case study. Direct comparisons across methods can be problematic since research findings "are shaped by the circumstances of their production, and will differ in their form and specificity" (Bloor, 1997, p. 49). Data from documents has not been accorded equal weight or directly compared to the data from focus groups, or data from the survey, since each is shaped by the data gathering process. Triangulation techniques, therefore, are not technical tests of validity, rather they enhance validity by revealing common themes and by allowing the researcher opportunities for new insights and deeper awareness of the data. Triangulation techniques are opportunities for 'reflexive elaboration' (Emerson, cited in Bloor, 1997, p. 49). They bring the researcher closer to 'capturing reality'.

Just as reality can never be fully captured in social research, the reliability or repeatability of a qualitative research project is confounded by the complexity and changing nature of the social world and the unique design of the study (Goetz & Le Compte, 1984; Merriam, 1998).

Section 3.5.2   *Reliability*

With others, Wolcott (1995, p. 167) questioned whether reliability, as understood in the quantitative paradigm, can be applied to field work, because "…in order to achieve reliability (in a strict technical sense) a researcher has to manipulate conditions so that replicability can be assessed. Ordinarily, field workers do not try to make things happen at all, but whatever the circumstances, we cannot make them happen twice." Like validity, the term reliability, in the traditional sense, "… is something of a misfit when applied to qualitative research" (Merriam, 1998, p. 206). Reliability, however, cannot be dismissed and needs to be understood in a different way in the qualitative paradigm.

Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 288) suggested the notion of "dependability" or "consistency", rather than repeatability or reliability. That is, the research results are dependable and consistent given the nature of the data collected for qualitative research. Applying this understanding to this study suggests that another researcher would arrive at the same conclusions based on the data collected. If the data is limited, dependability is reduced. In this research, dependability has been enhanced by triangulation of both sources and methods and by critical reflection on self as the research instrument (Lincoln & Guba, 2000; Merriam, 1998).

Research findings dealing with the spiritual formation of teachers in the Parramatta Diocese are only dependable for the particular case. The case researcher chooses the particular in order to gain a deeper understanding of the case, rather than to find out what is generally true (Merriam, 1998). The search for particularity therefore "competes with the search for generalisability" (Stake, 2000, p. 439).

Section 3.5.3   *Generalisability*

Is it possible to generalise at all from the single case? From a traditional experimental perspective the lack of generalisability is a limitation of the case

study (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 1994). However, if the term generalisability is re-framed to suit the assumptions underlying qualitative inquiry, then it is possible. For example, Erickson (1986, p. 130) argued that the general can be found within the particular. What is learned in one situation can be generalised to similar situations encountered in the future (Merriam, 1998). Stake (2000) also described how the single case can be a source of generalisation:

> When the researcher's narrative provides opportunities for vicarious experience, readers extend their memories of happenings. Naturalistic, ethnographic case materials, to some extent, parallel actual experience, feeding into the most fundamental processes of awareness and understanding…the reader comes to know some things told as if he or she had experienced it. Enduring meanings come from encounter, and are modified and reinforced by repeated encounters (Stake, 2000, p. 42).

The findings in this research will extend readers' memories to like experiences and happenings, within their own contexts, in relation to the spiritual formation of teachers. In this way, the findings may be generalised by others within their own context and situation. How the reader responds to the account of the findings is, of course, never straightforward, nor predictable. The transfer of knowledge from researcher to reader faces what Stake (2000, p. 443) described as "a hazardous journey".

While the researcher cannot entirely predict the interpretation of findings by readers, the foregoing discussion dealing with validity, reliability and generalisability has suggested ways that knowledge is authentically constructed and safeguarded in the research process. For example, one criteria of the authenticity (or validity) of this research has been balance through the inclusion of multiple perspectives. Ultimately this is an ethical requirement.

Section 3.6   Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations were an important part both of data collection and analysis in this research. In relation to data collection, conventional ethical principles were followed whereby informed consent was obtained from

participants and the privacy and confidentiality of all informants maintained (Bogden & Biklin, 1998; Sieber, 1992). The researcher was aware of his privileged role as a guest in participant's private space (Stake, 1994) and was respectful of personal disclosure at all times. The personal nature of this case study meant that ethical considerations were underlain by a moral responsibility to the participants in the research.

The development of trust and identification in the research relationship, advocated by Punch (1994), was facilitated by the researcher's professional standing within the diocese. Participants were colleagues in the same diocese, although many were unknown to him before the research. The researcher, therefore, had general credibility as a fellow educator in the diocese. The researcher attempted to present himself in all dealings with participants as trustworthy, sincere and professional. Developing a positive trusting relationship between the researcher and participants enhanced the quality of the data (Sieber, 1992).

Developing trust was important for all participants, and of particular concern to those participants whose disclosure was sensitive in relation to their professional status. The researcher was aware on more than one occasion that he was privy to sensitive material. All data sources were disguised in ways that maintained the confidentiality of participants.

The research relationship with the SFT warrants particular mention since members of the SFT were key informants, and the relationship extended over a number of years. The longevity of this relationship itself raises ethical consent issues, since respondents forget they were part of a research process (Cassell, 1978). From the researcher's point of view, it was also necessary to maintain adequate research distance from them to ensure a capacity for "objectivity" thereby allowing the SFT perspective to be faithfully reported without bias (Goetz & Le Compte, 1984).

A key element in the relationship with the SFT was an understanding that the research set out to gain understanding rather than evaluate. This was

communicated to all participants who contributed to the research. Any detailed reflection on spiritual formation in the diocese naturally raises some apprehension and suspicion among those who have a responsibility in the area, namely the SFT. The trust that developed between the researcher and the SFT is reflected in the unhindered access given to documents and the availability of members of the SFT for interview.

Rich and voluminous amounts of data have emerged over time in this project, through the SFT, the documents, the survey and through interviews and participant observation. Deciding how to treat the data has been a central challenge. As the primary research instrument in this research, the researcher was in a critical position to decide what was important, how much weight to give to data, what to include or exclude in the analysis.

Respect for the integrity and truthfulness of the different perspectives is an ethical concern (Altheide & Johnson, 1994), and this researcher, therefore, attempted as far as possible to allow the data to "tell the story", while, at the same time, conceding that the authorial voice is rarely genuinely absent or even hidden" (Geertz, cited in Lincoln & Guba, 2000, p. 183).

The ability to critically reflect on the self as researcher, to develop a critical subjectivity or reflexivity is an essential part of the research design and research process. This case study has presented many opportunities for self-awareness, critical subjectivity and growth. Not only did the researcher bring a critical self to the field, the self was also developed in the field (Reinharz, 1992).

Section 3.7   Conclusion

The intentional use of multiple perspectives in this case study, as well as different data collection methods, has enhanced the authenticity and balance of the research. The interview was a primary data collection method, supported by surveys, observation and documentation.

In particular, the group interview was utilised to gain rich insights in the field of inquiry. The synergised effect of the group setting yielded data that might not have emerged in individual interviews. Supported by the other methods of data collection knowledge was constructed during the journey. The construction of knowledge was aided by the qualitative computer software NUDI*ST 4, which facilitated an inductive approach to the data analysis. Primary nodes were identified as major categories in the research. Under each primary node, secondary nodes were also identified. This data was presented as braches of a NUD*IST tree using an "Inspiration" display. Links between each of these branches and the primary node of "Leadership" were also identified and presented using "Inspiration".

Through multiple perspectives and methods, richer and deeper insights emerged. Among these perspectives the authorial voice was rarely absent and was the subject of ongoing critical reflection, in interactions with others in the field, and in data analysis. The development of trust in interviews and observation was vital and added to the authenticity of data.

A traditional limitation of the case study is its lack of generalisability. Within the assumptions underlying qualitative inquiry, however, the general can be located within the particular. What has been learnt in this case study, bounded within the Parramatta Diocese, may be generalised by readers to other settings in Catholic schools - the findings extend readers' memories to like experiences and happenings in their own settings.

CHAPTER FOUR

SPIRITUAL FORMATION IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Section 4.1:   Introduction

In this chapter, findings in relation to spiritual formation experiences will be presented. School based spiritual formation experiences are identified at the commencement of the chapter. Detailed teacher responses from "Wellsprings" will then be described. These responses reflect the significance of the program for many teachers, with implications for the school context. Diversity of life experience and background among teachers is then identified as a significant challenge in the spiritual formation of teachers in the school setting. The description of three different categories of teachers illustrates the different spiritual formation needs of teachers in Catholic schools. Gender is also introduced as a consideration in the spiritual formation of teachers. Throughout the chapter, the implications for the principal's leadership role in the spiritual formation of teachers will be identified and discussed.

Sources of data are identified by a lettering and number system in this research. All interviews are identified by the letter I, a different range of numbers allocated for "Wellsprings" groups and Principals groups and individual interviews. Survey data is identified as S; document analysis as D; participant observation as P; each followed by numbers which identify the individual source. Each source can be linked to a NUD*IST 4 document. The classification of sources is presented in Appendix 13.

Broad responses to a survey sent to all schools in the diocese are the starting point of the discussion. When asked to identify the types of school based experiences or programs valued as contributing to their personal or spiritual growth, teachers responded with a range of experiences. These responses appeared to divide into two broad categories, formal experiences and programs,

such as staff development days, and informal experiences such as regular staff prayer (S1).

Section 4.2 Formal experiences of spiritual formation within the school

Formal spiritual formation experiences within the school include staff reflection days, staff retreats, programs run at the school by outside facilitators (S1). These experiences were clearly represented among the valued responses of teachers in the survey and in focus group discussions with principals. Included in these formal experiences were programs such as "Seasons", a program offered to students, dealing with death and loss. The potential formational benefit to teachers, of programs run for students, is noteworthy.

Formal spiritual formation experiences for teachers can be described as the formal spiritual formation program of the school (Rogus & Wildenhaus, 2000). Responses in this research suggest that the formal spiritual formation programs of a school should offer a level of choice in order to cater for differences among teachers (D1).

Among the responses to the survey and confirmed in focus groups, were also responses associated with informal spiritual formation experiences such as staff prayer, experiences with students, teaching Religious Education (RE) and everyday events in the life of the school. These responses were of particular interest, because they referred to experiences within the everyday Catholic culture of the school.

Section 4.3 Informal experiences of spiritual formation

Catholicism has a strong symbolic tradition. Rituals of reflection and prayer, in particular, are common in Catholic school communities and on programs like "Wellsprings". These everyday rituals, focused on mission and purpose, present opportunities for the spiritual formation of teachers.

Section 4.3.1   Rituals of reflection and prayer

Reflective space and time were consistently reported as a valued dimension of the spiritual formation program "Wellsprings". As reported by one participant, reflective space and time allowed opportunities for teachers "to become centred and still and balance the busyness in life" (D3). Stillness and centring on "Wellsprings", for some, led to "the presence of God emanating from deep within" according to one focus group respondent (D4). The five days of "Wellsprings" provided the time and space for many reflective experiences.

A common reflective opportunity for teachers within the school environment is participation in daily or weekly staff prayer. These times provided opportunities for spiritual reflection. One principal in a focus group described her experience of weekly staff prayer this way:

> We have just re-introduced weekly staff prayer through an
> enthusiastic Religious Education Coordinator. It is becoming
> more reflective, like this morning, a reflection on Mother Teresa,
> 'I have no hands but yours', it was well received. (I34)

Some staff prayer provided an opportunity for deeper reflection on the Christian mystery, such as the example cited above. Staff prayer also varied in content and presentation. In many schools, it was prepared and led by different teachers, resulting in a variety of prayers. The range of prayer and reflection experiences provided by different teachers had communal benefits and allowed teachers opportunities to express a spiritual dimension of their life to their peers. One secondary principal in a focus group noted that these opportunities often revealed considerable spiritual depth among teachers, not otherwise apparent in the day-to-day routines of the school (I31).

The opportunity for self-expression, however, meant that staff prayer was sometimes a personal reflection, rather than a traditional Christian prayer, especially for teachers who were not confident within the Catholic tradition, or not used to public expression of belief. Assisting teachers in the preparation of

more creative ways of praying, especially in a style that expresses Catholic belief, was seen by one participant in a "Wellsprings" focus group (I27) as not only benefiting the individual teacher, but the staff as a whole. Staff prayer and reflection is an important ritual in Catholic schools - an opportunity for stillness and to add insight and perspectives from different teachers on core mission and purpose.

Programs of the SFT, such as "Wellsprings" have had an impact on prayer and ritual within a number of schools in the diocese. The creative use of art, symbol, story and music in a program such as "Wellsprings" was adopted by some teachers in their own schools, in staff prayer, and was clearly evident in prayer spaces, in school foyers and staff rooms (P3). "Wellsprings" type symbols, such as prayer tables with coloured cloth or banners, were evident to visitors in the foyer of the school. For some teachers, these symbolic artefacts were constant reminders of "Wellsprings". As one participant commented in a focus group, "My art is still hanging in my work area at school, it is a physical reminder of "Wellspring" (I20).

Rituals and symbols carry deeper meaning about a school community's mission and purpose, its beliefs and values (Deal & Peterson, 1999) and are important cultural influences in Catholic schools, and can engage teachers at a spiritual level (van Eyk, 1998, p. 53) . One significant Catholic ritual, the Eucharist, deserves special mention. As a high point of Christian worship, itself rich in symbol, the Eucharist held special meaning for participants on "Wellsprings". Eucharist was celebrated in a way that engaged participants.

The intimacy and richness of Eucharistic experiences during "Wellsprings" also highlighted for a few respondents the paucity of their own experiences within their parish. This was described by one "Wellsprings" respondent in a focus group in these terms:

> My soul often thirsts for real Eucharistic experiences- there
> seems to be a permanent famine of experience so often in

parish liturgy, so I am very grateful for the Eucharist experience
this week (D3).

The positive response to Eucharist on "Wellsprings" can partly be attributed to
an experience of fellowship and community that developed among participants
over the five days of "Wellsprings", generally reported in intensive group
situations (Scott Peck, 1987).

One principal in a focus group drew attention to the potential of shared
Eucharist within a whole staff context (I31), especially where teachers are
engaged in the celebration, have a part in the preparation and participate in the
readings and music. The centrality of the Eucharist to the Christian life (Wuerl &
Lawler, 1976), suggests that Eucharist be celebrated as an important ritual with
staff in a Catholic school.

Apart from rich experiences with colleagues, reflective rituals with students
provided another opportunity for the spiritual formation of teachers.

Section 4.3.2   Rituals with students

Some teachers were more comfortable developing and expressing their own
spirituality through students' involvement in school or class prayers,
sacramental preparation and liturgical rituals, than in direct involvement in
spiritual formation programs. An Easter liturgy prepared by students, for
example, clearly reflected the spirituality of the teacher who assisted the
students, as pointed out by one principal in a focus group (I34). Opportunities
for spiritual formation included meditations and reflective prayers with students
and retreat experiences in secondary schools.

Student retreats and leadership camps in secondary school are often reported
by students as one of the highlights of their school life (Flynn, 1993). Retreats
can also present opportunities for reflective time for teachers. When teachers
shared their own life journey and questions with students and other teachers on
retreat or provided input on Christian themes their own spirituality was

expressed, a theme discussed in one focus group of principals (I31). Sharing with senior students is facilitated by the location of the retreat, away from school, with time made available, an absence of formality and a small group structure that allowed for trust to be established over several days. These opportunities for personal reflection and dialogue at a deep level were potentially forming for teachers. Moreover, the educative value of deep sharing with students highlights the link between the spirituality of teachers and their role as educators (Groome, 1988; Palmer, 1998).

The spirituality of teachers is also potentially nourished by teaching. The deeper dimension of teaching was highlighted in chapter two, where the encounter between the teacher, learner and subject matter can result in the mystery of "unfolding personhood … in the presence of the holy" (Manning, 1992, p. 8). Within a broad Catholic curriculum, which applies to all subjects in the school, Religious Education has explicit potential in the spiritual formation of teachers.

Section 4.3.3   Teaching of Religious Education (RE)

The teaching of the diocesan RE program Sharing Our Story, provided teachers with opportunities for spiritual formation, described by one Principal in a focus group as, "A jumping off point" for the spiritual formation and religious development of teachers (I30). The same principal continued, "Somehow there is a connection between your own spiritual development … and the teaching of RE" (I30).

The revision of Sharing Our Story provided opportunities for teachers to reflect on content and presentation of topics. Apart from the reading and understanding required to present the content to students, teachers had opportunities to share teaching ideas as well as questions with colleagues, with grade partners in primary school or teachers in the same year in secondary school. The clarification of meaning and beliefs, the sharing of insights, allowed RE teachers opportunities to relate at a deeper level with other teachers.

The absence of any references in the data to teaching outside RE, however, is noteworthy. It is likely that teachers were seeing spiritual formation as connected only with explicitly religious programs, such as Sharing Our Story. This raises the possibility that some teachers were also missing the essence of the sacramental principle: that all the subjects have a religious dimension, and hold potential to discover the "meaning beyond" (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1988; Groome, 1996). The lack of reference to other subjects, or teaching itself, as spiritually formative, needs further clarification and research.

Apart from teaching, the experiences within the ordinary routine of the school also hold potential for the informal spiritual formation of teachers (Rogus & Wildenhaus, 2000)

Section 4.3.4   Experiences within the ordinary events of a school

Daily experiences within the staff community of a Catholic school included times of joy shared by all teachers and described by this principal in a focus group:

> We have had a spate of babies in our place lately and these are really spiritual opportunities. They (the mothers) are over the moon, a deeply spiritual event, they have changed (I31).

Care and support of colleagues was identified as a valued opportunity for personal and spiritual growth by teachers (S1). The importance of celebration, care and humour is important to a positive school climate (Saphier & King, 1985), and consistent with the communal nature of the Catholic school (McLaughlin, 1997). A climate of care (Starratt, 1996) and trust (Kouzes & Posner, 2000) is important to the spiritual formation of teachers and will be further addressed in Chapter 5.

On occasions, teachers also encountered times of tragedy. At these critical times, the sense of the spiritual is heightened and appropriate liturgies and prayer experiences were valued by teachers (I35). These were occasions of "common ground" for teachers who were all affected by tragedy. At these times, the rich liturgical tradition of Catholicism (Greeley, 1998) was a source of support (I35).

This discussion has highlighted experiences within the culture of the Catholic school that present opportunities for spiritual formation, including staff prayer and liturgy, reflective and liturgical experiences with students, teaching RE, experiences in the ordinary events of a school. As expressed by one principal in a survey of principals, these experiences, "Weave opportunities for spiritual formation into our professional lives" (D1

Identifying these experiences as opportunities for the spiritual formation of all teachers highlights the informal spiritual formation program within a Catholic school (Rogus & Wilderhaus, 2000). It also leads to a consideration of ways to strengthen the informal spiritual formation program through leadership.

Section 4.3.5   *Spiritual formation opportunities and leadership*

Schein (1997) highlights the role of leaders in using rituals and symbols to embed culture. Rituals of staff prayer present opportunities for individual expression and creativity that can engage teachers at deep levels. Symbols associated with "Wellsprings" were brought into the school environment, renewing the symbolic life of schools (Duncan, 1998; McLeod, 1987) and enhancing opportunities for the spiritual formation of teachers.

Rituals of celebration can also extend to important life events for teachers. By celebrating events within the staff community such as the birth of babies, the importance of the life world of teachers (Habermas, 1987) is emphasised by leaders. A life world emphasis is needed for the spiritual formation of teachers. Recognising life world experiences also connects the spirituality of the Catholic tradition with lived experiences.

Schein (1997) also notes how critical incidents or times of crisis are important times of culture building because of the heightened emotional involvement, and the increased intensity of learning. How the leader draws on the Catholic tradition at these times is important, as these times can also be heightened times of spiritual formation.

The role expectations for principals in the Parramatta Diocese coincide with these leadership actions. For example, in relation to the symbolic life of the school, the principal gives priority to prayer, ritual and the celebration of the Word (Catholic Education Office, Parramatta, 1998). In relation to emphasising life world experiences, principals are expected to promote the development of Christian community within the Catholic tradition and create a climate of care (Catholic Education Office, Parramatta, 1998). In relation to managing times of crisis within the Catholic tradition, the principal is expected to exercise leadership grounded in Catholic faith (Catholic Education Office, 1998). Leadership for the spiritual formation of teachers, therefore, is within the current role expectations of principals in the Parramatta Diocese.

As proposed in chapter two, teacher leaders also shape and strengthen Catholic culture. The presence of "Wellsprings" type symbols in school environments, for example, prayer tables in the school foyer, art banners (P3), is evidence of the work of teachers who participated in "Wellsprings" and then enriched the symbolism in their school.

In order to fully appreciate the leadership associated with the spiritual formation of teachers, whether lay principals or teacher leaders, it is important to gain a sense of how individual teachers responded to spiritual formation experiences. One way of gaining insight into the responses of individual teachers to spiritual formation is to explore teachers' response to "Wellsprings". Responses to different aspects of "Wellsprings" also highlight experiences which have potential application in the school context.

Section 4.4   Responses to "Wellsprings"

"Wellsprings" initiated new directions for some teachers, resulting in individuals seeking out ongoing opportunities for personal formation, as noted by this participant of a focus group:

> So it was my reintroduction to my faith. It was like a real
> relearning experience and since then I have gone on and done
> my postgrad, and I loved that Christology, because it recalled
> everything I did on Wellsprings…I have been continuing all
> those years since Wellsprings (I25).

The longer term impact of the program on some individuals was evident from this response by a "Wellsprings" participant in a focus group:

> After that week, I was on such a high. It had an impact on me to
> go and start some volunteer work. Bill said something to me and
> now four years later, it still has an impact. Then I did "Call to
> Leadership" (I23).

Some respondents discussed the impact of "Wellsprings" on their family life. Several respondents described feeling a bit lonely when returning home and finding it difficult to describe the experience to a spouse. As one respondent observed, "You go home and you have had this wonderful experience and you want to talk about it. And no-one understands" (I22).

Dual attendance by a teacher and his or her spouse is welcomed in some diocesan programs. These initiatives acknowledge a holistic approach to lay spiritual formation and the importance of shared spirituality between married partners. It is an area requiring further consideration within Catholic education.

For some teachers the spiritual impact of "Wellsprings" was short lived. One respondent in a focus group described her actions following the program, "I was promising myself … when I get back to school I am not going to get caught up in this rat-race. And I came back, I was floating around … but by the end of the first week back, I was running around [as usual]" (I28). Other respondents also mentioned how easy it was to lose the stillness encountered on "Wellsprings".

Some teachers did maintain the style of prayer and meditation used on "Wellsprings", highlighted by this comment from a respondent, "The biggest thing about "Wellsprings" was it taught me how to pray. The meditation and being still, I had read it all before but it wasn't until I had the experience…" (I27).

Another teacher in a focus group confirmed the lasting impact of this dimension of "Wellsprings" in her own life and in her teaching:

> "Wellsprings" has made me more aware of what I can do to get in touch with my spirituality. I don't think I'll ever lose that … we do a reflection every day because I believe in teaching the children that … time out, to sit very still and get in touch with yourself (I28).

Another teacher expressed how she had brought her own experiences of meditation on "Wellsprings" into the classroom and was confidently setting up meditations with students. By her modelling, it was possible other teachers were also influenced. As the teacher remarked in a focus group:

> I was very much an academic person even in teaching of RE, now setting up meditations with the children, the importance of that stillness in their own lives. Having experienced it myself I had the confidence to do it (I22).

Confidence in trying new approaches with students extended to more confidence in aspects of Catholicism expressed in the classroom and in discussion with other adults. For this focus group respondent, "Wellsprings" provided confidence to engage in conversation on contemporary religious matters:

> It is good to talk to other people about your beliefs. There is a little group I go to after school that some of the teachers are involved in. Because the group consists of two Catholics and three Protestants, we had a really interesting discussion about Christ and the role of the church, which I found interesting, stimulating. I probably would not have broached it if I had not been to the Wellsprings program (I20).

Greater confidence was also expressed by some teachers who became involved in areas not normally part of their lives. The variety of creative experiences on "Wellsprings" such as banner making and artistic expression meant that some individuals were challenged, and some threatened, by new experiences. The fact that some teachers embraced these experiences opened up personal growth opportunities, as mentioned by this focus group participant,

"I'm really glad that I did that creative stuff … it made me glad that I took some risks" (I20).

The theological input on "Wellsprings" was a highlight of the program for many. This focus group respondent reflected a significant perspective shift, and even some anger, at being so outdated in her thinking**:**

> So amazing. everything before was so black and white. When I
> came back from Wellsprings I was angry. I felt I had been left off
> the scene. I have since done a lot more reading. I've done the
> RE Certificate… I was sprung by Wellsprings (I27).

New insights and critical reflection were important in potentially allowing individuals to grow personally and spiritually. New perspectives provided opportunities to shape beliefs and see with new eyes. Critical reflection also moved individuals beyond a blind acceptance of everything conveyed by the parish priest, as intimated by another "Wellsprings" participant in the same group interview:

> Like you, I was angry … I was just this naïve little girl who
> believed everything. How silly of me to think like that … It's not
> all black and white. We go to Mass every Sunday. I got angry,
> because they only tell me what they want me to know (I27).

"Wellsprings" was an important program for many teachers. The strong symbolic emphasis in the program led to creative expression, rich liturgical experiences and new ways of praying for some. The theological content led to new knowledge and perspective. Responses from "Wellsprings" also suggest that some teachers became more confident in their teaching and as adults in the Church, and there was evidence that teachers were modelling new approaches in their classroom. There were also signs that "Wellsprings" contributed to teacher leadership in the school, a theme that will reoccur in later chapters.

Not all teachers responded positively to "Wellsprings". In focus group responses, a small number of individuals did not relate to the style and content

of the program, reflected by this response from a beginning teacher, "I don't mind listening and learning, but I just found I couldn't relate to what was said, or there was too much of it" (I26). Not all individuals were prepared for the depth of sharing that took place on "Wellsprings" (I26). Different responses to "Wellsprings" highlighted different life experiences, reflected by this participant's comment in a focus group, "I was able to listen because he was saying what I wanted to hear" (I26). One "Wellsprings" participant in another group described it this way, "With "Wellsprings", it depends on where you are in your own life … for me, mum had just died twelve months before. "Wellsprings" developed me, it did a lot for me spiritually" (I23).

Contrasting responses to "Wellsprings" suggest the relevance of life experiences to the readiness of teachers for this type of program. Extending individual consideration to teachers (Kouzes & Posner, 2000) also suggests that principals should be discerning in relation to the types of spiritual formation programs they promote to individual teachers. "One size does not fit all", in the words of one respondent in a survey conducted by personnel at the Catholic Education Office (D1).

The challenge of teacher diversity, illustrated with respect to "Wellsprings", has significant implications for principals in the school setting. Catering for the spiritual formation of individuals on the staff of a school was identified widely as a challenge by principals across all of the focus groups, and in the research survey.

Section 4.5 The challenge of teacher diversity in the school environment

The challenge of diversity becomes apparent when planning staff development days with a spiritual focus, according to this principal who was responding to the research survey:

> Probably the greatest challenge in providing staff with opportunities for spiritual and personal growth is finding the appropriate input to meet individual needs…as people are at different stages and have different needs and preferences. (S1)

The different needs and preferences of teachers can result in mixed responses to these days, "We've had a reflection day that upset some staff, but was enjoyed by others", noted one principal in the survey (S1). A negative reaction to a spiritual formation experience may be associated with the type of activity demanded of teachers, highlighted by this principal who responded to a survey, "Some teachers do not enjoy, or respond positively to creative movement, painting etc." (S1). Equally, some teachers, "Keep their spirituality under wraps" according to one principal in a focus group (I30) and they may resist activities that require personal disclosure.

As with different responses to "Wellsprings", teachers on staff development days also respond differently to the content of theological or spiritual themes, depending on the degree of connection with their own lived experience. As one principal observed in a focus group in the context of a whole staff reflection day, "I found the input tremendous, but I could see all these younger teachers just staring at the presenter, because they weren't there in their own lives" (I33).

The importance of teachers to the culture of the Catholic school warrants closer inquiry, through the data, of three representative groups of teachers likely to exist in Catholic schools: committed Catholic teachers; beginning teachers; teachers who appear resistant or negative toward spiritual formation experiences. Each group poses a different leadership challenge in relation to

spiritual formation, and each has potential to impact on the Catholic culture of the school in a different way.

Section 4.5.1   Committed Catholic teachers

As one measure of commitment to their Catholic faith, parish Mass attendance was discussed by principals in two focus groups (I32; I31). One experienced principal in a focus group described the varying levels of commitment to the parish among teachers generally in these terms:

> A lot of teachers are involved in their parish in different ways.
> You pick up along the way what they are doing…staff talking the
> other day about going to certain parishes, they are choosing
> where they are involved, re-evaluating their faith and their
> practice, it is disappointing that some of the younger ones have
> opted out and yet they are teaching in our schools (I32).

Teachers who attended Mass regularly represented an important group who were witnessing to their beliefs in the Catholic school and it might be expected that, from this group, teacher leaders would emerge to strengthen the Catholic culture of the school. In fact, the importance of a core group of committed Catholic teachers has been highlighted by Prest (1997) in his research in Catholic secondary schools in Victoria. According to Prest (1997), this group of committed, Catholic teachers, are effectively responsible for the Catholicity or Catholic identity of the school. This is, arguably, a limited perspective of Catholicity.

The description of Catholic culture in this research accommodates a range of teachers who contribute in different ways to Catholic culture, including non-Catholic teachers. It is proposed that wherever teachers act in ways consistent with core Catholic beliefs and values, or contribute to a positive professional climate, Catholic culture is strengthened.

Committed Catholic teachers, nevertheless, are a critical group, since teachers in this group are able to reflect a fuller and deeper understanding of the Catholic tradition. They also have specific spiritual formation needs. Catering for the

spiritual formation of these committed individuals who already have a, "Depth of spirituality" can be a challenge for principals, as noted by one principal in a focus group (I31). It was evident in this principal's response that the informal and formal spiritual formation programs offered by the school did not fully cater for some teachers in this group of committed teachers. Extending individual consideration to these teachers (Kouzes & Posner, 2000), through experiences outside of the school, is an appropriate response to their spiritual formation, and should be part of the formal spiritual formation plan of the school (Rogus & Wildenhaus, 2000). Importantly, these committed teachers should also have opportunities to demonstrate teacher leadership in shaping Catholic culture in the school

Committed teachers who are experienced in Catholic schools also have an important role with respect to the mentoring of beginning teachers. Beginning teachers have particular spiritual formation needs.

Section 4.5.2   Beginning teachers

Experiences in Parramatta suggested that beginning teachers required special consideration in relation to their spiritual formation. Responses by some beginning teachers and principals in focus group interviews, for example, indicated that the "Wellsprings" program did not adequately address their needs (I26; D1). Rather, "Wellsprings" was beneficial for people who have, "Experienced a bit down the line" and are able to take, "A reflective look back", noted one respondent in a focus group (I26).

The need for a system based spiritual formation program for beginning teachers was identified in focus groups and does exist in other dioceses (I26; I3). Like all system based programs of spiritual formation, however, "The challenge is in supporting this in an ongoing way at the school level" noted one principal in a survey response (D1). Beginning teachers, especially, have potential to bring new perspectives and enthusiasm to the school and contribute to Catholic culture. Utilising this potential is a leadership responsibility.

As part of the informal induction into a school, beginning teachers will be influenced by the school's culture including the influence of other teachers, a point made by one principal in a focus group, "Staff are very influenced by other staff, they tend to sway them. It has a lot to do with interpersonal relationships" (I32). "Wellsprings" data generally confirmed teacher to teacher influence in relation to participation in programs. Positive reports about the program in staff room conversations led to colleague interest (S2). The propensity for beginning teachers to be influenced by the existing culture highlights the importance of constructive interactions between beginning teachers and experienced, committed teachers.

Beginning teachers also encountered teachers in schools who appeared indifferent to the Catholic ethos of the school (I32). Understanding the source of this indifference, and even resistance, poses a different leadership challenge in the spiritual formation of teachers.

Section 4.5.3 Teachers who appear indifferent or resistant to spiritual formation

There are several reasons why teachers resisted spiritual formation initiatives and programs. Some teachers were not comfortable with activities associated with spiritual formation, either offered by the school or system, such as creative movement or personal disclosure. Equally, there were teachers who were not sufficiently aware of or committed to the Catholic ethos to perceive the need for their own formation (I32; S1).

Resistance can also relate to the style of delivery of a program. For example, the established programs offered by the SFT such as "Wellsprings" have a well defined structure and style that did not suit all teachers. Resistance among some secondary teachers to a program such as "Wellsprings" related to the style of program, according to comments by principals in two interviews (I6; I33).

Resistance may also derive from negative experiences associated with the Parramatta dicocesan system. Systemic change, such as restructuring, was a source of negativity among some teachers, a comment made by a principal in a focus group. The comment indicates that some teachers were harbouring unresolved hurt or disillusionment:

> People carrying hurt from previous schools, or the system, tend to bring these with them. There is no where they can get rid of the baggage and schools are passing people from one school to the next with a lot of baggage. You hear it in the staff room…hear it at staff meetings. There is no outlet…if they could only let go of the baggage. There are a lot of people like that (I32).

Teachers caught up in negativity were not receptive to spiritual formation opportunities, as pointed out by this principal in a focus group, "We are not getting further with them because they are caught up in that [negativity] … and they are not moving on from there" (I32). The impact on other teachers of individuals with negative feelings toward the school or system was also a threat generally to spiritual formation, "They don't realise what they are doing to the rest of the staff" (I32). The potential influence of individuals with negativity on a staff impacts on morale and positive climate and can diminish Catholic culture within the school.

Working with individual teachers in ways that resolve this negativity was perceived as a demanding leadership challenge according to this principal in a focus group, "I'm not sure how well we are developing our people … do we end up after twenty years having very disheartened and grumpy teachers, about the system, about things that have happened" (I32). The individual must desire to "move on" in their professional life and, unfortunately, some teachers, "Want to carry the baggage … they don't see any need for doing anything about it", noted the same principal (I32). Within a model of human life formation (Whelan, 1994), discussed in chapter two, these individuals confirm the reality that spiritual formation always falls short of the ideal.

This discussion of three categories of teachers highlights some of the complexities in the spiritual formation of teachers and invites careful consideration of the different needs of teachers at different stages and times in their professional lives. By way of illustration, the discussion raised the relevance of appropriate spiritual formation programs for beginning teachers as well as those teachers who already have "a depth of spirituality" and also explored some of the issues associated with teachers who resist spiritual formation initiatives and appear negative. Teachers within each category have potential to impact on Catholic culture in different ways

As another reflection of diversity, the difference between male and female spirituality was briefly discussed in this research.

Section 4.5.4   Gender

In one group (I30) a comment was made about a particularly evocative liturgy in the "ELIM" program which is run by the Catholic Education Office for experienced principals. The experience prompted discussion in the focus group about the liturgy being more female oriented. Subsequent discussion revolved around ways to develop a more male oriented liturgy. In another focus group (I33), a question was raised as to why there was a lower participation rate in "Wellsprings" among secondary teachers, where more males are represented, "Did it have anything to do with male spirituality?" speculated one respondent in the focus group (I33). Ranson (2002) argued that gender is a foundational context for spirituality and that there is "a specifically male way of entering into the life of the spirit" (Ranson, 2002, p. 308). The potential of gender to influence responses to spiritual formation suggests the need for further consideration of this theme.

Section 4.6   Conclusion

Spiritual formation opportunities for teachers exist within Catholic schools in the Parramatta Diocese. These opportunities exist in rituals with staff and students, in teaching RE, in everyday experiences of care, and in times of crisis. These opportunities can be enhanced by leadership which coincides with the current role descriptions for principals in the diocese. A strong Catholic culture is believed to enhance opportunities for the informal spiritual formation of teachers. There are signs that "Wellsprings" resulted in leadership actions by teachers who contributed to shaping aspects of Catholic culture in their schools.

Teacher diversity is a significant challenge in the provision of spiritual formation and was illustrated by a description of three categories of teachers. Because of the diversity of spiritual formation needs among teachers, the formal and informal spiritual formation program of the school is unlikely to fully cater for the spiritual formation needs of all teachers. Some teachers will benefit from involvement in intensive programs of spiritual formation, and consideration of the different needs of teachers at different stages and times in their professional lives in Catholic schools, is warranted. Attention was drawn to the needs of teachers in their beginning years. Gender was also discussed as part of diversity, and there was a suggestion that male spirituality may not be entirely catered for in present spiritual formation programs. This is an area that warrants further investigation. The formal spiritual formation program of the school should accommodate teacher diversity.

"Wellsprings" provided many teachers with a valued spiritual formation opportunity outside the environment of the Catholic school, and valued aspects of the program were explored, with implications for the school setting.

The program appeared to empower some teachers to make changes in their own lives and in their professional practices in schools. Responses to "Wellsprings" within the context of family were also discussed. The effect of "Wellsprings" also dissipated quickly for some teachers in schools, further highlighting the importance of the daily culture of the school to provide an ongoing formative environment for teachers

The following two chapters explore in more depth elements of culture that emerged as significant in the data, and which are relevant to the spiritual formation of teachers. The communal dynamic in spiritual formation is discussed in chapter five and the relevance of new knowledge in shaping of beliefs is discussed in chapter six.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE COMMUNAL DIMENSION OF SPIRITUAL FORMATION

Section 5.1   Introduction

Spiritual formation opportunities for teachers within the school environment were identified and discussed in chapter four. Regular rituals of staff prayer and reflection, community celebrations, times of crisis, highlight the existence of many experiences shared by teachers in a Catholic school. As discussed in chapter four, teachers also influence one another and are significant contributors to school culture. The relational or communal dynamic in spiritual formation is, therefore, a potentially important consideration in the spiritual formation of teachers and will be explored in this chapter. Whelan (1994) highlights the community dimension to spiritual formation, when he notes that all human life formation is dialogical- a person's identity is relational and implies both uniqueness and a communion-with-others at the same time. Moreover, the communal nature of the Catholic school is inherent to its nature, according to the Church documents on the Catholic school and related literature (Bryk, Lee & Holland, 1993; Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977, 1998; McLaughlin, 1997; 2000) and community is a prevailing characteristic of Catholicism (Groome,1996, 1998, 2002).

Four aspects of the communal dimension of the Catholic school for teachers will be explored in this chapter: climate; shared experiences; the significance of deep inter-personal dialogue; and the importance of witnesses and modelling. Insights from "Wellsprings" responses will be integrated into the discussion, and the leadership implications of the communal dimension of spiritual formation explored.

Section 5.2   Climate

A positive school climate was proposed in chapter two as an important milieu for the spiritual formation of teachers. Teachers' experience of care and trust, leads to openness to spiritual formation experiences. It was proposed that such an environment is more likely to emerge when the dominant metaphor for the school is community, rather than organisation (Sergiovanni, 1996, 2000). The experience of a positive climate within the communal dimension of "Wellsprings" was widely reported by respondents.

Focus group responses and written reflection extending over many years, suggest that the SFT contributed significantly to this climate of trust and care in "Wellsprings" by its openness, hospitality and acceptance of all individuals who attended programs. This was reflected in this comment from a "Wellsprings" participant, "Your support, encouragement and ability to be real has been overwhelming" (D20). An ethic of care (Starratt, 1996) was consistently modelled by the SFT in its programs in the Parramatta Diocese, based on responses in this research.

In relation to care in the school environment, one interview respondent noted that fundamental questions need to be asked of a staff community before it can even call itself a community or implement spiritual formation programs. The respondent remarked:

> Let's talk about how we want to live together. How do we want
> to celebrate, how do we deal with things that go wrong? What's
> happening in peoples' lives, that's the essential challenge?
> What does it mean to be a good human community? More
> deeply, what does it mean to be a good Christian community?
> One that is more profoundly human…As soon as you start
> talking about a Christian community people start saying, now I
> have to be something else (I10).

Unless these fundamental aspects of a staff community are addressed, according to the same respondent, then the relevance of spiritual formation can be questioned:

> We have to keep coming back to that question before we start
> talking about [spiritual formation] programs. I remember the
> story, you know you are taking a gift to the altar and on the way
> you remember you have wronged your brother…leave the gift
> and go and make up with your brother (I10).

This respondent put care within the staff community as a priority ahead of spiritual formation programs and also, in this next response, ahead of staff prayer:

> You don't talk about how we are going to pray together until you
> talk about how we are going to care for each other. We spend
> the whole week together, how do we want to be together, given
> the realities of the job we do? (I10)

When care is experienced daily in the context of the Catholic spiritual tradition and connection made with, for example, Jesus' radical care for the marginalised, then according to this respondent, teachers:

> …Suddenly discover what we are on about. No religious
> language [needed]. Helping people see that reaching out is a
> profoundly religious act. We don't need to have religious
> language. It is [already] profoundly religious (I10).

Care is a quality of a staff community that reflects and affirms the person centred character of the school, introduced in chapter two. According to Starratt (1996), an ethic of care requires a, "fidelity to persons, a willingness to acknowledge their right to be who they are, openness to encountering them in their authentic individuality, a loyalty to the relationship" (Starratt, 1996, p.161). Unconditional acceptance of the teacher as person is a foundational leadership quality in the spiritual formation of teachers, with implications for the principal's leadership role in the spiritual formation of teachers in the school environment. From the perspective of Catholic tradition, an ethic of care amounts to reverencing individual teachers as reflections of God, recognising the divine presence in each person (Groome, 2002), regardless of their level of religious practice, religious affiliation, or their spiritual background.

A climate of care and trust develops over time with an appropriate emphasis on the life- world of teachers and experiences of individual consideration, and authenticity (Kouzes & Posner, 2000). Establishing an appropriate balance with the systems-world (Habermas, 1987), however, is a demanding leadership challenge because of the intrinsically busy nature of schools.

The school environment was described by a number of respondents in ways that highlight the challenge of building genuine community. As one "Wellspring" respondent remarked in a focus group, "I found a terrific sense of relief in getting away from the demands, it is so un-relenting- school" (I20). Paucity of time for relationship building was described by one experienced teacher in a "Wellsprings" focus group, "The school environment is a situation of ships passing in the night. You can go through weeks of not speaking to someone on staff" (I22). One secondary principal described the school environment as, "The awful pragmatism…the doing of a million things that invade secondary schools" (I33). Despite these endemic characteristics of schools, there remains a clear mandate for principals to maintain an emphasis on the communal dimension of Catholic school culture (Catholic Education Office, Parramatta, 1998; Congregation for Catholic Education, 1998; Groome, 1996, 1998, 2002; McLaughlin, 1997).

One way of maintaining the communal dimension in Catholic school culture is to ritualise regular shared experiences for teachers, such as staff retreats, shared prayer and reflection times, and life/world events such as the birth of new babies, and birthdays, as well times of crisis (Cook, 2001). Appreciating the cultural significance of the experiences and needs of the staff community is relevant to the principal's leadership in the spiritual formation of teachers.

Section 5.3   Shared experiences

The staff community of a school is unique, and, also, share unique experiences. This uniqueness was highlighted by the SFT when reflecting on the many staff community's it has worked with over the years (I15). Programs that worked well in one school did not necessarily work as well in another. In describing her staff, one principal in a focus group commented, "This was a staff that had a lot of sorrow and trouble because of redeployments and hurt and unease and downsizing" (I34). An appreciation of the uniqueness and collective need of this particular staff community shaped the type of experiences made available to the teachers. The involvement of these teachers in different prayer experiences and expressions provided opportunities for them to express past hurts caused by restructuring and to "move on". The same principal continued, "I think they are starting to reach out. These sorts of [prayer] experiences have helped them" (I34).

Each "Wellsprings" group was also unique and together shared unique experiences. The bonding that occurred during a "Wellsprings" program was widely reported by respondents. Written responses from participant reflections at the end of "Wellsprings" and focus groups transcripts suggest that the extended contact time between participants, small group discussion, shared meals, formal and informal sharing between participants and shared prayers resulted in an experience of fellowship for many participants.

In describing this fellowship, the term "community" was sometimes used, illustrated by this teacher's written reflection following one of the programs offered by the SFT, "The highlight for me was the strong sense of community that developed between the participants and the feeling that I wasn't alone" (D30). The experience of Christian community in particular, was also evident in the responses, highlighted by this comment from a "Wellsprings" participant. The respondent was asked to describe what was valued in the program:

> [I valued a] sense of community, a sense of belonging. For so
> long I yearned to feel part of Christianity and I haven't, but

through "Wellsprings" I have become reconciled within myself
and I feel as though I am part of a community and I do matter
(D21).

The shared experiences of "Wellsprings" transformed the group from a mix of individuals at the beginning of the program into a community by the end. This transformation is a common phenomenon in groups, described by Scott Peck (1987).

Scott Peck (1987) identified stages of chaos and emptiness before a genuine experience of community emerges. This is described as a shift from rugged individualism, where individuals try to sway others, and differences are evident (the stage of chaos) to a phase of emptying oneself of barriers to communication such as preconceptions and expectations, prejudices, ideologies and theologies and a desire to convert or control others (the stage of emptiness). Following emptiness, the experience of community within the group is evident:

When its death has been completed, open and empty, the group
enters community. In this final stage a soft quietness descends.
It is a kind of peace…Then, quietly, a member begins to talk
about herself. She is being very vulnerable. She is speaking of
the deepest part of herself. The group hangs on each word. No
one realised she was capable of such eloquence (Scott Peck,
1987, p. 103).

The experience of community suggests the suspension of preconceptions and prejudices and the emergence of trust and acceptance where individuals are prepared to become vulnerable and "speak of the deepest part" of the self (Scott Peck, 1987). The transformation described by Scott Peck (1987) was reported by respondents in relation to "Wellsprings".

A number of participants in the "Wellsprings" focus groups discussed their own experience over the five days of the program, from hesitancy on the first day, to trust and confidence by the third or fourth day. As one focus group respondent noted:

> Even people on the first day who were quiet and reserved, by
> about the third day there was total involvement of everybody.
> People actually stepped out of their own roles…on the last day,
> we all broke into tears because we didn't want to leave each
> other (I25).

Another respondent in a different focus group spoke of her personal transformation from feeling uncomfortable, to becoming relaxed, "I was uncomfortable to begin with, especially with the touching, but once that community came into it … I felt really relaxed. It was just wonderful" (I28).

The transformation evident during "Wellsprings" spaced over one week as a result of shared experiences, can also apply to the staff community of a school, over a longer time period. Over time, trust and acceptance can grow in a positive climate and shared experiences, both positive and negative, unite and bond the staff. As illustrated earlier, the use of rituals can assist teachers in dealing with painful shared experiences. In the earlier discussion, regarding restructuring, the principal used prayer rituals to support and unite the staff, as well as assisting them to move on in their lives. In this case, the cultural sensitivity and leadership of the principal in recognising the significance of a shared experience was evident (Deal & Peterson, 1999; Schein, 1997).

Also important to the communal dimension of spiritual formation, is the opportunity teachers have to engage in inter-personal dialogue with other teachers on core beliefs and values. Teachers need to be able to question, and reflect with others on important beliefs.

Section 5.4   Inter-personal dialogue

Deep inter-personal dialogue related to core beliefs was facilitated by the small group structure of the "Wellsprings" program. The small group environment provided structured opportunities for individuals to listen to another's life story, including childhood experiences of spiritual development. An experienced principal in one "Wellsprings" focus group made the comment, "Just to have the opportunity to sit down with a group of adults and talk to them about your faith

and where you have been … that depth was there, because you had the time …
I looked at my faith from a different point of view" (I25). These times of shared
stories and experiences, and the forming of new perspectives, were
opportunities for spiritual formation. One focus group respondent referred
directly to the relevance of deep sharing with others they had encountered
during "Wellsprings":

> In coming to "Wellsprings" the importance of community in your
> spiritual journey [is acknowledged]. This stood out for me. No
> matter how many courses you do or books you read, it is
> sharing with other people that [makes you] you realise that we
> are the Body of Christ. I found that richness I had been
> searching for in community (I22).

Deep sharing was facilitated during "Wellsprings" by allocation of appropriate
time, by the small group structure, and by an environment of trust.

In the small groups, many individuals were candid about their own spirituality
and beliefs and encouraged to, "let down those masks" as described by one
"Wellsprings" respondent (I22). For some, this also meant sharing their
experiences of alienation and doubt, as observed by another "Wellsprings"
respondent in the same focus group:

> You know the people on the fringe of the Church, they have so
> much to offer, they just don't feel they fit in, in the structures of
> the institutional Church… it's a great experience in the small
> groups, the number of faith filled people in our own midst…the
> sharing of their stories is such a special time. There is a bonding
> that happens (I22).

The environment of trust and acceptance engendered in the small groups was
appreciated, as observed by this "Wellsprings" respondent, "In that
environment, I felt able to question, comfortable to say 'this is what I think, what
do you think" (I26). Another respondent made a similar comment, "Wellsprings
is a place where they can let down their masks and be themselves and tell their
stories, [and] somehow find support" (I22).

The opportunity to tell the story of one's spiritual journey, and listen to the spiritual journey of other teachers, was a valued experience during "Wellsprings". Teacher's spiritual stories formed a key part of a research project conducted by Queensland Catholic Education Commission (1997) on teacher faith development. In that project, sixty seven teachers and administrators in Catholic schools, divided across eight focus groups, described their spiritual journey from early childhood through to adulthood.

The research identified times of spiritual growth or formation (described in the research as faith maturity, see definitions, chapter one) that corresponded to times of joy such as the birth of a child, and loss, separation or breakdown of relationship. In the Queensland research, many teachers were able to recall a time when they began to see their relationship with God as a friendship. The research confirmed the life-long nature of spiritual formation and the value of inter-personal dialogue on beliefs and values. The Queensland research report also made a number of recommendations which support some of the findings in this research, including the need for reflective time with self and others. As well, the report recommended release time for teacher initiated reflection activities, at appropriate times in teachers' careers. Other recommendations from the Queensland research report will be integrated into the discussion in following chapters.

Structuring reflective space and time in the school environment, in order to facilitate inter-personal sharing on core beliefs and values, is challenged by the different priorities that compete for scarce time in a school. The busyness of schools reduces inter-personal contact of the kind required for deep sharing on beliefs and values. Apart from structured time allocated on staff development days, this research has also identified informal times where teachers have opportunities for inter-personal dialogue on core values and beliefs. Student retreat experiences, for example, was identified in chapter four, as times when teachers shared their own life journey and questions with students and other teachers on retreat, shared their own spirituality, and listened to the spiritual journey of others (I31).

Responses in the small group experiences on "Wellsprings", discussed earlier, highlight the importance of inter-personal dialogue among teachers on deep matters of beliefs and values in the school environment. Different life experiences and backgrounds among teachers, however, suggest that these opportunities need to be structured with sensitivity, and that some individual teachers may not be comfortable in this type of inter-personal exchange. A small number of respondents in the "Wellsprings" focus groups, for example, discussed how they were not ready for the types of disclosure in the small groups. One young teacher described her feelings in these terms:

> There were lots of people who had lots of issues and were getting upset and crying, and I was sort of thinking, I can't handle this, like I don't know all these people. They were really digging up private information (I26).

The response of this teacher illustrates some of the complexities in catering for individuals with different life experiences, either on "Wellsprings" or in the school environment and supports findings in chapter four about the different needs of teachers at different times in their lives. Not only does there need to be a trusting climate for this type of dialogue, and adequate time, there also needs to be a readiness among teachers to share at this level.

The final aspect to be discussed with relevance to the communal dimension of spiritual formation is the significance of witnesses or role models either within the staff community or associated with the staff community.

Section 5.5   Witnesses and role models

Some individuals in this research appear to have had a significant impact on teachers as witnesses to a radical way of living the Christian life. One presenter on "Wellsprings", for example, appears to have had a special impact on participants. As a member of a religious order, her work with street kids and homeless children was described as "mind blowing" by one participant in a focus group, "She brought one of the street kids with her and his story was just amazing" (I23). She was described by another respondent in a different group

as, "Like a saint…a real advocate for the poor and homeless. I felt very humbled by what she was able to do" (I25). Another respondent spoke of her impact in terms of a new perspective into social justice issues, "We had this Sister at the end who spoke about social justice issues and that made me think about issues…and had more of an impact than the …theological [input]" (I26). For many, this encounter with an individual committed to the poor, who reflected a deep spirituality, "like a saint", resulted in deeper insight and appreciation of social justice concerns.

Exposure to the spirituality and faith of significant others was identified in the Queensland Catholic Education Commission's (1997) research report on the faith development of teachers. The report recommended that teachers be offered the opportunity to work with others, outside of the school environment, whose daily actions witness to their Christian beliefs. The report also highlights the possibility that some teachers, especially younger teachers in Catholic schools, may not have yet encountered such a significant person, or Christian witness, in their own spiritual journey (QCEC, 1997, p 31).

Within the school environment, witnesses also play an important influencing role with other teachers, albeit in less radical ways. Insights into how teachers responded to "Wellsprings", for example, provide clues as to the significance of witnesses to core beliefs and values. The following comment from a senior teacher in a secondary school who had just participated in "Wellsprings" illustrates the impact of this teacher's witness on other teachers:

> I said I wanted to give a bit of a reflection on what happened at "Wellsprings". I said "remember I wasn't here for a week". Of course they all said "no". I talked about it and I got my painting out and I put it up on the wall and I talked to them about the Samaritan woman and I spoke about things like that, and I spoke about my own personal feelings and that was really the first time that I'd got up in front of our staff and spoken about anything about religion or my own feelings. I was looking around and, I've done lots of presentations to staff and they [usually react by thinking] 'is he finished yet?' [But this time] Everybody was watching and listening and a lot of people came up to me afterwards and talked about it (I21).

Being open about one's spirituality and sharing the experience of "Wellsprings" in the context of a staff community raised interest among other teachers. The seniority of this teacher within the school and the way he spoke about his own spiritual experience appeared influential. The essence of the leadership in this case was the courage to be open and to share at a deep level with colleagues. The data suggests that other teachers returning to the staff community following Wellsprings also shared their experience either with colleagues or the whole staff (I25).

As previously discussed and noted by one principal in a focus group, "Staff are very influenced by other staff, they tend to sway them" (I32). Another teacher returning to school from "Wellsprings" described how the program was a valuable resource of ideas and activities to involve teachers in the school environment:

> We were inundated with practical activities…to work with people in our own school…the symbolism, the prayer focus, the music and the stories, and the verse…themes to get people started in groups (I22).

"Wellsprings" has had an impact on staff communities in the Parramatta Diocese, especially through the witness and modelling of teachers like those just cited. In other schools, respondents' spoke of regular prayer experiences and meditations shared within a staff community as a consequence of experiences on "Wellsprings" (I28). One respondent described how the ideas and themes from "Wellsprings" could be used to, "Get people started in groups" (I22), implying a leadership role with teachers.

Section 5.6   Teacher leadership

Responses to "Wellsprings" suggest that the program cultivated leadership activity within the staff community in the school environment. Changed teaching practice, more confidence, implementation of new forms of prayer and introduction of richer symbolism was evidence of this leadership activity, also described in chapter four.

Some teachers returning from "Wellsprings", however, found it difficult to share their experiences in the context of a staff community, or to implement some of the ideas from "Wellsprings", as reflected in this comment from a "Wellsprings" respondent:

> Walking back into the school after that ["Wellsprings" experience] is, to put it mildly, deflating, because there is that feeling of wanting to do so much and to share, and the frustration…you know a big school and very busy (I22).

The unrealised potential for teacher leadership in this case was evident in this teacher's response. Facilitating teacher leadership is an important role for those with positional influence. Although teacher leadership can exist without principal support, where teacher leadership has flourished, principals have actively supported and encouraged it (Crowther et al, 2002). One of the ways in which principals nurture teacher leadership, is by making space for individual innovation (Crowther et al, 2002). In the example cited, this could have been achieved by the principal, or another individual with influence, encouraging and enabling the teacher to use her "Wellsprings" experience to innovate in the school setting for the benefit of the staff community, and giving this priority over other agendas, making space for new approaches. This opportunity appears to have been lost and the teacher, consequently, somewhat deflated. The respondent's comment about the size and busyness of the school has also been noted as a significant challenge to communal spirituality.

Section 5.7   Conclusion

Developing a positive climate, characterised by trust, acceptance and care was a priority of the SFT in its programs in the Parramatta Diocese, and created the appropriate milieu for the spiritual formation of teachers. Within the school environment, which is challenged by task intensification and an endemic busyness, an ethic of care is an important pre-condition for the spiritual formation of teachers within community. The principal's leadership role in the spiritual formation of teachers should be directed toward community building, which is

part of the current role description of principals in the Parramatta Diocese (Catholic Education Office, Parramatta, 1998).

Shared experiences build cohesion and unity among teachers in a staff community. They are part of the unique cultural identity of the school and include both positive and negative experiences. Re-structuring, for example, impacted on teachers in one school in painful ways and was addressed positively by the principal through prayer and ritual.

Providing opportunities for teachers to dialogue with each other about core values and beliefs is a critical dimension of spiritual formation in a Catholic school. Claiming time for this type of sharing among teachers is considered a priority. The research has also identified and discussed informal opportunities for inter-personal dialogue, such as student retreats and reflection days (see chapter four).

The spiritual formation of teachers is enhanced when teachers come in contact with role models or witnesses of the Christian way of life. One of the guest presenters on "Wellsprings" had a significant impact on teachers, suggesting that more teachers be given access to radical witnesses of the Gospel.

Programs such as "Wellsprings" appear to have led to leadership activity in the school. Teacher leadership needs to be encouraged and supported by the principal, however, making way for individual innovation and creative ideas adopted by teachers who have experienced outside programs, like "Wellsprings".

CHAPTER SIX

SHAPING BELIEFS - NEW KNOWLEDGE AND INSIGHT

Section 6.1　　　Introduction

Beliefs of teachers are strong cultural forces in schools (Deal & Peterson, 1999). Exploring the impact of new knowledge and insight on teachers' beliefs and values is the focus of this chapter. Enabling teachers to gain new knowledge and insight on the central beliefs of a Christian way of life, helps shape personal values and beliefs and provides opportunities for teacher spiritual formation within the Catholic tradition.

The chapter also includes a discussion on how teacher diversity and difference, evident in Catholic schools and introduced in chapter four, can be accommodated within Catholicism's beliefs and deep characteristics. Both "Wellsprings" data and responses from the school context will contribute to the discussion.

New knowledge and insights acquired in "Wellsprings" provided a shift in perspective for some individuals, illustrated by this response from a participant of a "Wellsprings" focus group, "So amazing. Everything before was so black and white" (I27). The consistency of "Wellsprings" responses regarding new knowledge and insight, both in written reflections after the program and in focus groups pointed to the potential of this theme for the spiritual formation of teachers. Theological input provided through the five days of "Wellsprings" was an important component of the program for many participants.

Section 6.2   Theology

One experienced teacher in a focus group said of the theological component, "It was what I wanted to hear anyway. It was how I was beginning to think. The challenge was in that area for me" (I26). Another participant, from a different focus group, described how the theology lectures were challenging and how they, "Opened up a whole area for me, which I would really like to follow through [with]" (I20). The theological input on "Wellsprings" centred on Jesus Christ (Christology). The lectures dealt with the human Jesus in his own setting and times, the scriptures that were written following him, the beliefs and practices relating to Jesus Christ in the early church, and his relevance to the contemporary world and to teachers.

Section 6.3   Christology

One respondent wrote in a reflection following the program, "[It was] the chance to come to know a 'human' Jesus" (D22). Another respondent wrote: "I have a much better understanding of the Gospels and the person of Jesus" (D21). The type of wisdom taught by Jesus is the wisdom of "the road less travelled" or a subversive and alternative wisdom which at times runs counter to conventional wisdom (Borg, 1994). Jesus used parables to:

> Invite his hearers to see in a radically new way. The appeal is to the imagination, to that place within us in which resides our images of reality and our images of life itself; the invitation is to a different way of seeing, to different images for shaping our understanding of life (Borg, 1994, p 74).

The data from "Wellsprings" identified the importance of new found insights into the person and life of Jesus. Responses confirm participants' appreciation of insights into the historical Jesus through interpretation of the New Testament scriptures. For some participants, this meant taking action for justice and a shift of perspective and priorities after "Wellsprings".

Many teachers in Catholic schools in the diocese are not familiar with the Jesus of the Gospel, according to one focus group respondent. This principal in a focus

group questioned whether teachers in schools actually knew the Jesus of the Gospels, "Do our staff know the Gospels, that's the essence of what we are doing. Do we know who Jesus is? (I30). Another principal in a different focus group also questioned whether for teachers, "The fire is still in the belly" in regard to teaching in a Catholic school:

> [For teachers to say] Is the fire still in my belly to go out there and minister in a Catholic school? [For them to say] I want to be here in a Catholic school because I think it is a good place to be. I want to walk with Jesus (I32).

Notwithstanding the religious diversity and varying degrees of Catholic practice among teachers discussed in chapter two, it can be argued that all teachers in Catholic schools should have an opportunity to appreciate the Jesus of the Gospels. As noted, "Wellsprings" provided "the chance to come to know a 'human' Jesus" (D22) and appropriate his teaching and values.

One of the school based themes used by the SFT in its work with schools in the diocese was, "Would Jesus be comfortable in my school?" (D8). Such a pointed question serves as a test of the authentically Catholic identity of any school in the diocese, though, as Furtado (2003) insightfully observes, Catholic educators need also to reflect on and discern "the kind of Jesus living in our hearts" (Furtado, 2003, p. 15) or, in this case, the kind of Jesus we invite into our schools.

The centrality of Jesus to the Christian way of life, and the strength of the "Wellsprings" responses, suggests serious consideration be given to developing ways of providing all teachers in Catholic schools in the diocese with opportunities to appreciate the Jesus of the Gospels and the type of wisdom he taught (Borg, 1994). From an appreciation of the historical Jesus and his special relationship with God, who he called "Abba", or "father", a deeper and intimate awareness of the same God is possible. In Catholic belief, this God is both transcendent and immanent, the primary attracting force drawing us to the fullness of life, the ground of our being, the bond uniting all people (Kelly, 2004). One part of the world which has come alive to this mystery is the Church.

Section 6.4   The Church

"Wellsprings" provided some participants with an entirely new experience of Church from their previous experiences in parish or elsewhere. This changed perspective and new found identification with the Church was summed up by one "Wellsprings" respondent who wrote in a reflection: "Now I feel I'm on the inside [rather than the outside, of the Church]" (D21). The focus in "Wellsprings", and in all programs run by the SFT in Parramatta Diocese, was on the person of the teacher as an adult member of the Church, participating fully in its life and at the same time being critically reflective about its limitations (Bracken, 1995).

Section 6.4.1   Perceptions of Church

The theological input appeared to make an impact in this regard, cultivating new perspectives on Church, as noted by these responses from a "Wellspring" focus group, "I felt like the weight of the world had been lifted off my shoulders", commented one respondent (I27). From the same focus group, another respondent said, "Before I felt guilty [when I questioned aspect of the Church], now I know its O.K to feel like that. It's not all black and white" (I27). "Wellsprings" appears to have enabled some teachers to see new opportunities within the Church, as observed by this respondent in a focus group:

> Before I was jaded with the Church, now I feel there is some really exciting stuff going on. I have just got to find out where it is (I20).

For some, who had limited experience of Church outside of parish, new knowledge and insight on "Wellsprings" aroused anger because of what was perceived as a controlled narrowness of their prior parish experience, "I got angry, because they only tell me what they wanted me to know. I felt left off the scene" (I27), observed one "Wellsprings" respondent in a focus group. This female respondent's disquiet was also increased by a perception of male domination in the Church. She further commented, "And as a woman [I think the Church is] a male domain" (I27). The "Wellsprings" experience, which can be

described as an experience of Church, brought to light for this respondent, the shortcomings of her prior experiences.

According to Kelly (2001), the uptake in the study of theology in the last two decades has increased the level of ecclesiological negativity. As Kelly (2001, p. 312) notes:

> The supposedly free spirit of faith is always being compromised by 'the structures', or the Curia, or this or that ecclesiastical policy or decision: the Church as obstacle and encumbrance.

Kelly (2001) believes that theology has moved in the direction of "a hermeneutics of suspicion" with regard to the Church, subjecting the ecclesial reality "to a form of sociological reduction which leaves it with only its most imperfect and limited institutional form" (p. 312). A theological view of Church in contrast is that it is a gift of the Holy Spirit which, in traditional ecclesiology, exists in, and for, the world (Kelly, 2001).

Different perceptions of Church were evident in some of the school responses and principals' focus groups. In one primary school, the principal described a spiritual formation day for teachers which looked at new possibilities in the Church. She commented:

> We didn't want to stay with what we had…we wanted to open teachers eyes to the possibility of a new church…they had an introduction to other possibilities in our church, which means in turn they can't share it with their parish priest…the presenter was a religious nun [who was] not encased in today's church [she was] wider looking (I34).

The description of "new church" suggests that the image of the existing Church held by the principal and teachers was in need of renewal. Perhaps a more appropriate title, and less controversial in relation to the parish priest, would have been "new ways of being Church".

Another principal in a focus group also advocated new ways of being Church, becoming informed about contemporary issues, not necessarily in experiences of "formal" church.

> [We should be] not always [be] on the official church line… when people in the CEO can talk about going and doing things that are not formal church, such as "Spirituality in the Pub", then you feel you have a shared mission. [We are] not encouraged to be thinking Catholics (I35).

Section 6.4.2   Critical reflection

Programs like "Wellsprings" did encourage teachers to become "thinking Catholics". Several respondents spoke of how new perspectives gleaned from "Wellsprings" taught them to be better thinkers, to read between the lines and to be broader minded, and this challenged individuals, noted one focus group respondent, "I have to think much more now" (I23). A more critical outlook also required letting go of past certainties with respect to the Church, when blind acceptance was more the norm, as noted by this respondent, "I suppose the people my age were taught to just blindly accept everything…there comes a time when that's just not alright" (I26).

New perspectives developed through new theological knowledge were part of what can be described as an educative process. To operate in an educative fashion is to make sense of things, to uncover meaning and see deeply (Pondy, cited in Smyth, 1989, p. 192). The educative process, according to Smyth (1989, p. 190) enables teachers to move from a situation of dependency and non-reflectivity to becoming critically reflective. Critical reflection is considered an essential dimension of spiritual formation. Without this capacity, teachers will not be as receptive to new perspectives and insights, and will be non-reflective about issues of moral concern.

Facilitating critical reflection presents an important role for the principal, who is expected to promote "Critical reflection and action in light of the Gospel" (Catholic Education Office, 1998, p. 3). Duncan (1998) highlights the need for principals to

be able to negotiate Catholic beliefs and values through the process of cultural politics and analyse situations from a Catholic moral perspective. In order to engage in critical reflection in light of the Gospel, principals require adequate knowledge of the Catholic perspective in relation to contemporary issues as well as an appreciation of their spiritual leadership role.

Letting go of past certainties and adopting a more critical outlook can be difficult, uncertain and confusing, as reflected in this comment by another focus group respondent, "Sometimes I don't know how to decipher [things]. So there is a sense of confusion in me as well" (I23). A capacity to see new perspectives and analyse situations from a moral perspective, was described in these terms by Groome (1998, p. 294):

> …social analysis should encourage us to question our cultural
> context and worldview, to recognise sins as well graces, to be open
> to perspectives other than our own.

New perspectives allowed for more informed choices and decision making according to this respondent, "I think the good thing was that you were educated as to what is the right thing … you could actually go back [to school] and make informed choices … sometimes you see things that are wrong" (I22). A capacity to identify "things that are wrong" and bring about change for the better, reflects an ethic of critique, and is the essence of moral leadership (Starratt, 1996).

A number of respondents commented on how personal decisions followed "Wellsprings" which resulted in new actions in the school or community, such as reaching out more to colleagues, being a better listener, a more trusting and confident teacher (I22). These comments support earlier evidence that participation on "Wellsprings" did contribute to leadership activity in the school environment by some teachers.

Section 6.4.3   Opportunities for critical reflection

The opportunity for teachers to freely 'ask questions", to critically reflect, to be authentic individually and collectively was not always available for some teachers and principals, according to this respondent in a principal's focus group, "There's no support in the system for asking questions [and] supporting each other in our 'spiritual' journey, because you are not allowed to say who you are" (I35). Being able "to say who you are", being authentic, either as a principal or a teacher is essential for spiritual formation as discussed in relation to the community dimension of spiritual formation. As noted by one respondent in an interview, "Artificiality and hypocrisy hurts everybody" (I10).

What is required at the school level according to one principal in a focus group is, "An open and honest forum of sharing … something which explores the misconceptions of faith in the Church, dispels myths" (I32). Experiences from "Wellsprings" suggest that new theological knowledge and insight was a catalyst for deeper reflection, dialogue and changed perspectives. Many teachers on "Wellsprings" were able to be honest, to "say who they are" and ask questions in a supportive environment, a theme discussed in chapter five. An "open and honest forum of sharing" (I32) not only requires new theological knowledge and insight as a catalyst for deeper reflection, but also requires a positive climate, characterised by trust and acceptance, and opportunities for inter-personal dialogue, where diversity and different life experiences among teachers is respected.

Section 6.4.4   Teacher diversity and Church

By their presence in a Catholic school, teachers perform a pastoral work of the Church (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1998). Whether this reality is understood and internalised by teachers, or emphasised adequately by principals and diocesan system personnel, is uncertain. One way of emphasising teachers' role within the Church, described in chapter two, is by describing teaching as a ministry, despite its general absence in official descriptions of the work of teachers (Bracken, 1995). Ultimately, what is important is teachers' personal

identification with Church, experiencing it from the inside, as agents and active participants (D21) rather than looking in from the outside. "Wellsprings" has made a contribution in this regard, continually inviting those teachers who appear to be on the fringes of the Church, into fuller communion, as described by this "Wellsprings" participant in a focus group:

> You know the people on the fringe of the Church, they have so much to offer, they just don't feel they fit in, in the structures of the institutional Church… it's a great experience in the small groups, the number of faith filled people in our own midst…the sharing of their stories is such a special time. There is a bonding that happens (I22).

Identification with Church in a Catholic school should not be impeded by teacher diversity, religious affiliation, or practice. While it might be true that only a modest percentage of teachers are members of a worshipping parish community, especially in a Catholic secondary school (I35), non-Catholic teachers or non-practicing Catholics can still align their contribution with the overall aims and values of the school and therefore identify with the pastoral work of the Church in education. This was described in the following way by one interview respondent:

> There are some staff that are practicing. Joe's an Anglican, Bill is Greek Orthodox. Then there are other people, they are great people, involved in every community cause [such as] Greenpeace…and they are not religious. We are not going to pretend they are religious. But when it is World Environment Day they will lead us in some great activities that we would hold up to our kids as commitment to the environment. When we reach that day, people will say "I can be myself" (I10).

The deep characteristics of Catholicism identified by Groome (1996, 1998, 2002), moreover, provide teachers with a number of connecting points with Catholic tradition.

Environmental responsibility and action alluded to in the above comment, for example, relates clearly to dimensions of Catholicism and the Catholic worldview. The sacramental character of Catholicism implies the hand of the Creator in nature; the person centred character of Catholicism suggests that degrading the environment eventually degrades people, especially those most vulnerable. Moreover, opportunities for spiritual formation for teachers are presented by

environmental involvement, where links are made between the environment and the creative mystery of God. Too narrow a religious focus in Catholic schools potentially limits the Catholic worldview. Stewardship of the environment has not always figured as a priority within the Catholic worldview (Treston, 2001).

Respecting individual differences among teachers in relation to religious observance and affiliation does not remove the importance of an appreciation by all teachers of fundamental beliefs of Catholicism. The centrality of Jesus to the Christian way of life, and the strength of the "Wellsprings" responses, suggests serious consideration be given to developing ways of providing all teachers in Catholic schools in the diocese with opportunities to appreciate the Jesus of the Gospels and the type of wisdom he taught (Borg, 1994). Like experiences on "Wellsprings", experiences for all teachers in a Catholic school should be one which invites each person, especially those "on the fringe" (I22) into greater communion, so that they see themselves as part of the Church, that is, as insiders (D21). A key role for the principal, therefore, is to include all teachers in the mission of the school so that each sees their role as part of the work of the Church.

The clearer teachers are about the purpose of the school, reflected in daily actions, the more likely they are to become committed to this purpose (Deal & Peterson, 1999) and participate in spiritual formation opportunities that influence their beliefs and values. Facilitating the flow of new insights and knowledge among teachers enhances opportunities for spiritual formation.

Section 6.5   Facilitators of new insights and knowledge

In the Parramatta Diocese, the principal, "Provides leadership which is rooted in the mission of the Church" and "The Christian leader thinks, speaks and acts in the name of Jesus" (Catholic Education Office, Parramatta, 1998, p. 1). In most schools, principals also call upon external facilitators to assist in the clarification of beliefs. The following discussion refers to the role of presenters, both in "Wellsprings" and in the school context.

Section 6.5.1 Facilitators and presenters

A number of respondents commented on the presenter of the "Wellsprings" lectures who had been a part of many "Wellsprings" programs over the years. In particular, respondents commented on the breadth of his theological knowledge and his capacity to clarify and draw out meaning and insights from the scriptures about Jesus and relate these to contemporary life experiences. As written by one respondent following a Wellsprings program, "[I gained] insights into a more meaningful interpretation of the scriptures, so that I can understand their meaning for me, and my resultant actions" (D21). Another respondent in a "Wellsprings" focus group described his own reaction to the presenter in these terms:

> Oh [I thought] here comes another theologian who is going to confuse the living day-lights out of me. He wasn't like that at all. He clarified things…It wasn't the doctrinal stuff with him, it was experiential…you never really thought about some aspects…these were the aspects brought out, they were just tucked away (I26).

Many respondents, however, did relate to the theological input, and to the lecturer, described in these terms by one focus group respondent: "[The presenter] was an absolute shot in the arm to me. [He was] such an eye opener" (I23). Written reflections also confirmed the impact of the theological input and its presentation. Asked to reflect on insights gained over the five days of "Wellsprings", this participant wrote that he gained new insights through, "The deeper meaning of the "word" as portrayed in the scriptures through the intellect and knowledge of the [presenter]" (D21). Another respondent wrote, '[the presenter] is a man who has the effect of altering another's life by his simple sharing of his knowledge and wisdom" (D20). These comments confirm the educative role of presenters in the acquisition of new knowledge and insight by teachers.

Several schools in the diocese have used theologians for staff development days with the intent of imparting new knowledge and insight to teachers. Focus group

responses from principals in these schools suggest these days were not always successful, "We tried using a big name facilitator to provide some input. He just spoke down at the staff…and so it wasn't popular" (I31) noted one principal in a focus group. From the same focus group, another principal stated, "The presenter for the day [had] great knowledge, [but] it was pitched over the heads of a lot of people" (I31).

Using a presenter for a one-off staff development day without prior collaborative planning, follow up or continuity has been questioned (I10), mainly because of the difficulty of catering for diversity on a staff community with one presenter who does not know the staff. One secondary school used the same facilitator for several years because he had the [rare] ability to tap into a range of needs across a staff. It was noted by the principal, however, that those teachers who already had a depth of spirituality were not fully catered for on such days (I31). Offering choice on these days was more likely to cater for a variety of interests, a suggestion made by several principals in the focus groups.

Rather than rely entirely on outside presenters for the acquisition of new theological knowledge and insight, teachers who had participated in "Wellsprings", for example, influenced other teachers with new knowledge, an observation made by principals and teachers in focus groups.

Section 6.5.2 Teacher leaders

Teachers within the staff who were involved in theological study also brought insights and new knowledge into the school (S1). The role of the Religious Education Coordinator, in particular, was noted in the research. The potential of teacher leaders to bring new insights and theological knowledge among the staff challenges the myth that new theological knowledge can only be acquired through experts. According to one interviewee, "We have unreal expectations of the person capable of doing spiritual formation, [the myth needs to be challenged that] its got to be a holy guru" (I10). Encouraging and empowering teacher leaders to share new theological knowledge and insight are important leadership functions for the principal in the spiritual formation of teachers. As noted earlier,

teacher leadership flourishes when it is actively encouraged and facilitated by principals (Crowther et al., 2002).

Diversity of background and life experience among participants, discussed in an earlier chapter, meant that not everyone found the content and style of presentation appealing on "Wellsprings". For a few individuals, the lectures were not appreciated, as suggested by this respondent of a "Wellsprings" group: "It was too deep for me" (I23). To another "Wellsprings" participant, the content of the lectures were clearly at odds with the person's beliefs: "I wasn't happy with him at all. I said, 'I don't believe you'. I didn't want to accept it" (I23).

Sensitivity to life experience and different backgrounds of teachers is an important consideration in the provision of new theological knowledge, both on "Wellsprings" and in the school setting.

Section 6.6   Conclusion

This chapter explored how the acquisition of new knowledge and insights can be important in the spiritual formation of teachers. "Wellsprings" appears to have influenced the perspectives and beliefs of many teachers, especially in relation to the Jesus of the Gospels and their experience of Church. For some teachers "Wellsprings" provided their first experience of feeling on the inside of the Church, as active agents. This suggests the need to develop ways of increasing teacher awareness of their role in a genuine pastoral work and ministry within the Church. "Wellsprings" continually invited those teachers who appeared to be on the fringes of the Church, into fuller communion.

The evangelising role of the "Wellsprings" program should be acknowledged. In the same way, identification with Church in a Catholic school should not be impeded by teacher diversity, religious affiliation, or practice. Non-Catholic teachers or non-practicing Catholics can align their contribution with the overall aims and values of the school and thereby identify with the pastoral work of the Church in education. Like "Wellsprings", an experience of authentic Catholic community in a Catholic school should invite and draw those teachers "on the fringes" into greater communion within the Church. The deep characteristics of Catholicism identified by Groome (1996, 1998, 2002), moreover, provide teachers with a number of connecting points with Catholic tradition.

Beliefs and values appear to have been influenced by new knowledge and insights on "Wellsprings". The role of the presenters and facilitators in providing new insights and knowledge was noted by many respondents. External presenters in the school environment can be facilitators of new knowledge, however, sensitivity to the diversity of life experiences and background should be appreciated in the school context. The potential of teachers to bring new insights and theological knowledge among the staff from programs like "Wellsprings" should be acknowledged. Teacher leaders challenge the myth that new theological knowledge can only be acquired through outside experts.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL IN THE SPIRITUAL FORMATION OF TEACHERS

Section 7.1   Introduction

A rationale for this research was a perceived need to bring definition to the principal's leadership role in the spiritual formation of teachers in Catholic schools in the Parramatta Diocese. The current role expectation in this area was believed to lack clarity and direction for principals. Experiences in the Parramatta Diocese (Bracken, 1995), also raised concerns about principal's own awareness of their role in the spiritual formation of teachers. Given the investment by the diocese in the spiritual formation of teachers, through the SFT, recognition of the role of principals in the spiritual formation of teachers appeared inadequate.

Earlier chapters included discussion of spiritual formation opportunities within the school environment and the principal's leadership role within current role expectations (Catholic Education Office, Parramatta, 1998). Responses to "Wellsprings" were also discussed in chapters four, five and six, as well as the potential for leadership of some teachers returning to the school after the program. Findings from the discussion in those chapters will be synthesised in the final chapter.

The principal's role in the spiritual formation of teachers will be explored in more depth in this chapter, thereby addressing the last of the contributing research questions, "What is the role of the principal in the spiritual formation of teachers?" The discussion will include consideration of principals' perception of their role in the spiritual formation of teachers, the shared responsibility for spiritual formation within the diocese, and a diocesan perspective of spiritual formation. Consideration will also be given to the current preparation and formation of Catholic school principals and the importance of a spiritual base to

the principalship. Data emerging from the principals' focus groups, interviews with key personnel in the CEO, diocesan documentation relating to the role of the principal and relevant literature, form the sources of data for this discussion.

Section 7.2   Principals' perception of their role in the spiritual formation of teachers

Most of the principals who participated in this research perceived some responsibility for the spiritual formation of teachers, illustrated by this comment from one principal in a focus group: "[I feel] responsible for the spiritual development of the people on our staff" (I30). Only one primary principal thought that the spiritual formation of teachers was not the domain of the principal, but rather, the role of the parish priest (I30).

There was, however, some uncertainty about how far responsibility for the spiritual formation of teachers should extend. The following comment from one principal in a focus group illustrates this tentativeness, "How responsible can you be for another's actual development in that way?" (I30). One principal in a different focus group asked, "How far can you intrude in people's lives in this area?"(I34). As observed by another principal, "While many in a Catholic school would be quite committed, there is a sense that, this is my private life" (I33). Another principal identified the challenge this way, "I often find [the spiritual formation of teachers] difficult. Some people are fine. Some you are never really sure where they are at [in their lives]" (I30). What was recognised was the challenge spiritual formation presented, especially in relation to people who are, "Reluctant or negative", as noted by one principal in a focus group, "How do you deal with that?" the principal commented (I30). As predicted in chapter one, these comments confirm a degree of uncertainty, among these principals at least, in relation their role in the spiritual formation of teachers.

As adults, teachers are ultimately responsible for their own spiritual formation, as noted in chapter one, with respect to their personal autonomy (Whelan, 1994). That is, the spiritual formation of teachers involves self-formation. This

principle suggests that pastoral responsibility for formation (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977) extends only to ensuring the availability of opportunities for spiritual formation for all teachers, and offering appropriate access to these opportunities. This was described by one principal in a focus group in this way: "Our responsibility is to put things in front of people" (I30).

A theme of this research has been the identification of opportunities for spiritual formation within the Catholic culture of the school. Teachers' experience of a positive, supportive climate and experience of care within community, provides an appropriate environment for spiritual formation; teachers' beliefs and values, associated with mission and purpose, can be shaped by inter-personal dialogue and by critical reflection and new knowledge in the school environment; teachers' participation in the symbolic life of the school, through prayers, reflective times and liturgies with staff and students are opportunities for spiritual formation. Thus, the informal spiritual formation program of a Catholic school provides all teachers, potentially, with ongoing opportunities for spiritual formation, highlighting a critical leadership role for principals. Importantly, these opportunities are generally non-intrusive for teachers, and are accepted as part of the culture of the school. The responsibility, "To put things in front of people", described by one principal (I30), refers most fundamentally to the day-to-day experiences of teachers.

Seen in this light, the principal's primary responsibility for the spiritual formation of teachers is achieved by shaping and nurturing a strong Catholic culture, as defined within the current role description for principals in the diocese.

A parallel responsibility for principals in the spiritual formation of teachers is to cater for the different needs of individual teachers. Discussion in chapter four reported that diversity among teachers was perceived by principals as a significant challenge in the spiritual formation of teachers. The examples chosen in chapter four illustrated the challenges associated with the needs of teachers at different stages in their career, for example, the beginning teacher and committed Catholic teacher. It was recommended that choice and differentiation of experiences should exist in recognition of the different life

stages, religious background and professional experiences of teachers in Catholic schools. The formal spiritual formation plan of the school should include provision for diversity and should cater to the different needs of individual teachers.

The pastoral responsibility for the spiritual formation of teachers, in both the informal and formal domains, does not rest entirely with the principal, as some of the principal respondents implied by their responses, above, and conveyed implicitly in the group interviews. If teachers' do undertake a ministry in the name of the Catholic Church, as stated in diocesan documents describing the role of teachers (Catholic Education Office, Parramatta, 1999), then the pastoral responsibility for the spiritual formation of teachers in a Catholic school, is also shared with others in the diocese.

Section 7.3 Spiritual formation of teachers- a shared responsibility

The principal's alliance with priests, SFT, other personnel from the Catholic Education Office, Area Administrators (school consultant), broadens spiritual formation opportunities for teachers. Developing external alliances and networks is identified as one strategy employed by principals in successful, reforming schools (Crowther et al., 2002).

Section 7.3.1 Priest and principal

Catholic systemic schools exist as part of one or more parish communities and are co-operative ventures involving the Catholic community, parents, students, teachers, priests and principals. The priest and principal both have leadership roles which are distinct yet complementary. According to documentation in the Parramatta Diocese, it is intended that a partnership between priests and principal exists in the ministry of Catholic schooling (Catholic Education Office, Parramatta, 2001).

The potential contribution of priests to teachers' theological knowledge and spirituality is illustrated in a comment by this principal in a focus group. The response also suggests that, at least in this situation, a collaborative relationship was established between the principal, teachers and priests associated with the school:

> We had one priest who specialised in spirituality and spiritual direction and [we also had] the parish priest. They worked together and we had a few staff development days with them that were very good. The topic of these days was spiritual experience. We had one day and the next year we followed it up and moved on further into that. I have also invited the parish priest to staff meetings to speak on things like the Church and the sacraments, particularly Reconciliation and Eucharist, and that deepened the teachers understanding and also their appreciation of the sacraments. That's been more of an interaction with input, but also questions. In an atmosphere where they know the priest, that worked quite well (I35).

Because the teachers knew the priest in this case, they appear to have been comfortable in asking questions about the sacraments, and clarifying their own beliefs and understandings. In a climate of trust and acceptance, with access to new knowledge and insight, opportunities for the spiritual formation of teachers are enhanced. Not all relationships between priests and principals are collaborative (Tinsey, 1998) implied in this comment by another principal, who had planned a staff development day on the "new church" and said, "They [the staff] had an introduction to other possibilities in our Church, which means in turn, they can't share it with the parish priest" (I34). The diocesan vision for greater partnership between priests and principals is clear. The principles included in the document "Catholic Education: Pastors and principals in partnership" (Catholic Education Office, Parramatta, 2001) highlights the importance of clear and regular communication, recognition of appropriate roles, and mutual respect. A number of dioceses, including Parramatta, have found regular meetings between bishop, priests and principals, valuable forums for clarifying core purpose and improving communication (Turkington, 2000). There is scope for more contact between priests and teachers in areas of theology and Catholic belief in the Parramatta Diocese, though for this dialogue

to be honest and open, where teachers feel able to seek clarification and ask questions, positive, trusting relationships need to be established, where there is an "atmosphere where they know the priest" (I34), described by the principal in the example cited, above.

Section 7.3.2   The Spiritual Formation Team (SFT)

Many principals have worked closely with the SFT, in school-based spiritual formation programs and in programs such as "Wellsprings". Several of the "Wellsprings" focus groups conducted in this research included principals who had participated in the program. Positive relationships between a number of principals and the SFT have facilitated teacher participation in many spiritual formation initiatives. As one principal noted in relation to the work of the SFT over many years in the diocese:

> My experience has been that the vast majority of teachers have
> been very positive about, and keen to be involved in,
> opportunities for spiritual development (D1).

One principal in a focus group described how the SFT was used as a resource. The SFT worked with teachers in the school, and listened to their needs, then prepared a one day program:

> People had input into the sort of day they would like. The SFT
> went away and brought in a lot of thought provoking ideas,
> [including] time for themselves, and sharing opportunities (I34).

Other principals have used the SFT as a resource over several years, and then moved to other presenters. A number of principals, however, have had little or no contact with the SFT. It was partly this observation that initiated an interest in this research, as discussed in chapter one. Some secondary principals did not perceive the structure of the SFT programs as fitting in with the needs of secondary teachers (D1). According to one interviewee, some principals would be reluctant to develop a closer alliance with the SFT:

It's a long way from where [some] principals are. [Some] principals would be sceptical about meeting at all [with the SFT]. They would say 'they want something from me. I don't want to talk about what we are doing here [in spiritual formation] because I don't feel confident about that'. To win the trust of principals [is the challenge] (I10).

The importance of trust in relationships and alliances has been discussed in chapter five, with respect to the communal dimension of spiritual formation. Any perception that the SFT has had a supervisory role, to audit spiritual formation of teachers in schools on behalf of the Catholic Education Office, is not supported from the data in this research. Accompanying and supporting principals as they work with teachers is also clearly recognised by the SFT, summed up by this comment from one member of the team, "Being with and walking with principals [is necessary]" (I10). The only appropriate role for the SFT is one of genuine collaboration with principals, existing as one resource in the shared responsibility of spiritual formation.

Section 7.3.3   SFT - a future role

Informal opportunities for spiritual formation within the school environment open up new possibilities for the SFT as a resource for principals. While the offering of spiritual formation programs outside of the school will remain important within the diocese, a future role for the SFT may also include closer collaboration with principals and school communities as a resource in strengthening Catholic culture. Such a role would require working alongside principals and teachers for a period of time, rather than visiting as outside experts or consultants: working with teams of teachers in clarifying Catholic belief and values in curriculum development projects, across all subjects; collaborating with key personnel to re-invigorate the symbolic life of the school; working with teachers in planning liturgical activities for students, or participating in retreat experiences for secondary students. Indirectly, all of these initiatives would contribute to the spiritual formation of teachers.

This expanded role would be particularly effective in secondary schools, where many teachers are not directly involved in the religious education curriculum, may not be Catholic, and are less likely to attend spiritual formation programs outside of the school (D1). (Secondary teachers have participated in and benefited from "Wellsprings" since the program began in the diocese in 1991 but are generally under-represented in programs run by the SFT when compared to primary teachers. Apart from the greater diversity among secondary teachers, mentioned above, secondary schools are structured differently, with the pressures of the HSC making it more difficult for secondary teachers to commit to a week out of school to attend "Wellsprings".)

The need for a re-focusing of the SFT was reported in the data (D1). One interviewee suggested that, in order to increase credibility and transparency, principals themselves could be included as part of the SFT but, he noted, "You need to find principals who are willing to go into that role" (I10). The same respondent suggested that principals could be seconded for a period of their own formation after which they would join the SFT for a year or two and then return to principalship. This would provide, "An opportunity for the renewal of principals … and a commitment to spiritual formation … having been involved you then go back to school with an absolute priority to it" (I10). Secondment has already been tried by the SFT and was an integral part of the earlier experiences of the SFT in the diocese, and did include one principal (Bracken, 1995).

A broadened field of spiritual formation opportunities, within the Catholic culture of the school, invites consideration of the contribution of other personnel in the Catholic Education Office to the spiritual formation of teachers, such as curriculum and religious education advisors. Curriculum officers supporting principals and teachers in subjects other than Religious Education are also, potentially, facilitators of spiritual formation among teachers (I30).

Section 7.3.4   ***A broadened field of spiritual formation***

Teaching itself was discussed in chapter two as an opportunity for spiritual formation, where the encounter between the teacher, learner and subject matter results in the mystery of, "Unfolding personhood … in the presence of the holy" (Manning, 1992, p.8). Recent writings within the diocese on teacher development include a focus on "Reclaiming Spirit" in teaching (Pallisier, 2002, p.130). Citing Palmer, Pallisier notes the importance of asking - "How does the quality of my selfhood form or deform the way I relate to my students, my subject, my colleagues, my world?" (Pallisier, 2002, p.127). Different subjects also lend themselves to a reflection on the "meaning beyond" or the sacramental principle (Groome, 1996), as discussed in chapter two. Science, for example, provides teachers with an opportunity to appreciate the Creator's wisdom and power in all of creation from distant galaxies to infinitely small sub-atomic particles (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1988). CEO personnel in curriculum areas are well placed to draw out and strengthen these opportunities for teacher spiritual formation.

There is a compelling argument that the spiritual formation of teachers should underpin all the work carried out by Catholic Education Office personnel in their contact with teachers. Inadvertently, the terminology "Spiritual Formation Team" may have reduced understandings of spiritual formation only to the activities of a specialised group, and narrowed awareness of the scope and breadth of spiritual formation, which is properly a shared pastoral responsibility among all who work in Catholic Education on behalf of the Church, especially among those who carry out a ministry of service to teachers in Catholic schools.

The pastoral role of the schools consultant, known as the Area Administrator in the Parramatta Diocese, with respect to the principal, is of particular relevance to the research focus. In systemic primary and secondary schools in the Parramatta Diocese, the Area Administrator works closely with the principal of the school, and is a link between the Catholic Education Office and the school, with responsibilities both to principals and to senior executive personnel at the Catholic Education Office.

Section 7.3.5   Area Administrators

In this research, several principals made positive reference to their Area Administrator in focus groups, without identifying their names, and in the context of their own experience of the support they received as principal. One principal was not positive about the support received by the Area Administrator.

The following discussion contrasts the experiences of two principals in a focus group regarding their respective Area Administrators (AAs). The first principal was not positive about the support he received from the AA:

> We support the staff, but who supports the principal? At the moment the AAs are involved in processes and in the meantime the staff are saying 'Oh! Not another process: school development process, appraisal process, programming, process driven.' Yes we have to do those things but we risk neglecting the personal side of what is necessary to run our Catholic schools. (I32)

This comment is at odds with research of Whelan (2000) into the relationship between Catholic school consultants and principals in NSW systemic schools, which found that a majority of the 370 principals in the study ranked the interpersonal support they received from Consultants as very good. As Whelan (2000, p. 182), noted regarding the qualitative data, "Principals frequently used the metaphor of sounding board to describe the relationship". The above comment in this research highlights the potential for an over emphasis on processes, at the expense of relationships.

Within his study, Whelan (2000, p. 192), also found that the interpersonal relationship with the Consultant was more positive when principals saw the Consultant as credible and caring, rather than exercising personal power. One principal in the research by Whelan (2000) described the Consultant as a "Critical friend, professional supporter and spiritual navigator" (Whelan, 2000, p. 190). The second principal in the same focus group in this research responded to the earlier comment in the following way:

Can I just say…that is not my experience with my own AA. Most of this term we have spent time working on relationships and my AA has spent a fair bit of time working with me and the Executive on the very things you are saying (I32).

By "working on relationships" with the principal, in this response, the Area Administrator not only provided personal support to the principal but, indirectly, contributed to the development of a positive school climate. As well as a strong relational dimension to the working relationship between principal and Consultant, Whelan (2000) identified the importance of a shared Catholic mindset between principal and Consultant.

The most significant contribution of the Area Administrator to the spiritual formation of teachers is, arguably, the support provided to the principal in his or her shaping of Catholic culture in the school. Teachers' experience of a strong Catholic culture provides opportunities for their spiritual formation.

This discussion proposed that responsibility for the spiritual formation of teachers should not rest entirely with the Catholic school principal. Because teachers undertake a ministry in the name of the Catholic Church, as stated in diocesan documents describing the role of teachers (Catholic Education Office, Parramatta, 1997), the pastoral responsibility for the spiritual formation of teachers in a Catholic school is also shared with priests, the SFT, other officers from the Catholic Education Office, and Area Administrators. Building alliances of trust with individuals who contribute, directly or indirectly, to the spiritual formation of teachers is an important role for the principal in the spiritual formation of teachers.

The involvement of others in the spiritual formation of teachers, in a shared responsibility, leads to the consideration of a diocesan perspective to the spiritual formation of teachers. As proposed, the spiritual formation of teachers should be an underpinning theme across all diocesan initiatives with respect to teachers.

Section 7.3.6   ***A diocesan perspective to the spiritual formation of***
                                   teachers

A diocesan perspective to spiritual formation recognises the importance of spiritual formation opportunities and experiences in any one school, while also acknowledging that the spiritual formation of the individual teacher is a long term undertaking, involving professional experiences in several schools in the diocese. The following comment from one principal in a focus group reflects this longer term, diocesan perspective, when commenting on a teacher going to another school, who had experienced "Wellsprings", "I know they have taken their personal experience and the experience of that whole program to their other school" (I32). Adopting a diocesan perspective can also be difficult for principals, who may have invested school resources into supporting teachers in their spiritual formation, as reflected in this comment by another principal, "If you are going to send staff [to a spiritual formation program such as "Wellsprings"] you can send one or two and they begin to work on their spirituality and then they move school the next year" (I31). Teachers move schools for a variety of reasons, sometimes because of a promotional position. Supporting and promoting talented and committed teachers as they move from school to school relies on the stewardship of principals who act on behalf of the teacher, the school and the diocese.

Section 7.3.7   ***Stewardship of principals***

Stewardship is described by Block (1993) as something held in trust for another. Teachers are the most valuable educational resources in the Parramatta Diocese, and in a sense, each teacher is "held in trust" for the whole diocese. The image of a steward, gleaned from the Christian tradition in the New Testament (Luke 12), is the authoritative servant. This is a useful image for the principal in his or her role in the spiritual formation of teachers, who exercises power with service. A reference to stewardship is made in the Parramatta documents relating to leadership, "The principal exercises a leadership which provides effective stewardship of human and material resources" (Catholic Education Office, Parramatta, 1998, p. 2). The principal

exercises stewardship over the spiritual formation of a teacher, as a valuable human resource, in a service to the teacher, the school, and the diocese.

The challenge of stewardship in the spiritual formation of teachers has been highlighted in this research. Not all teachers were receptive to spiritual formation opportunities. In the discussion of diversity in chapter four, the presence of teachers who appeared negative or resistant was mentioned as presenting a challenge for principals. Chapter five included a discussion of teachers who had been affected by restructuring. For a variety of reasons, some teachers harboured disillusionment and hurt, as suggested by this focus group respondent:

> People [are] carrying hurt from previous schools, or the system, [and] tend to bring these with them. There is no where they can get rid of the baggage and schools are passing people from one school to the next with a lot of baggage. You hear it in the staff room…hear it at staff meetings. There is no outlet…if they could only let go of the baggage. There are a lot of people like that (I32).

Whether there are "a lot of people like that", as predicted in this comment, cannot be substantiated in this research. The comment does raise a question, however, about pastoral responsibilities of principals, Area Administrators and executive staff at the Catholic Education Office, to minimise the "hurt from previous schools, or the system" and to identify and provide support to such individuals, wherever possible. A diocesan perspective of spiritual formation would suggest some intervention in the case of these individuals rather than, "passing people from one school to the next" (I32).

Some teachers also needed to be challenged in honest and sensitive ways about their support of the ethos of the Catholic school, as noted in this response by one principal in a survey response:

> We also need to find ways in our spirituality and Catholic sensitivity to challenge honestly those who enjoy the culture and ethos of Catholic schools (an inheritance derived from a spirit of great sincerity, service and self sacrifice) but who are different in actively supporting [this ethos](D1).

Integrity and honesty between principals in teacher employment should prevent teachers "being passed from one school to the next" (I32), and help identify individuals who need support, counselling, career advice or, to be sensitively challenged about their commitment to the ethos of the Catholic school.

Section 7.3.8 Integrity between principals regarding teachers

The following comment from one principal in a focus group did raise questions, however, about his experience of the level of honesty between some principals regarding teacher employment:

> I'm not sure how well we are developing our people. We pass people from one school to the next. [We are told by the former principal] A fantastic teacher. [Then] We'll take them on. [But] We are not being true to each other (I32).

A diocesan perspective of spiritual formation, based on the principles of stewardship discussed earlier, would also require the full involvement and participation of principals, in order for them to adopt a broader perspective to the spiritual formation of teachers, beyond an immediate focus on the teachers in their own schools. In recent years, there has been significant consultation with principals on the directions of spiritual formation for the diocese (D1), and the data suggests the need for ongoing consultation with principals. One principal in a survey also hinted at the need for common understanding and language among principals in the following comment, "I have a problem with all these [SFT] programs and "kits"- they may miss the mark. What is needed is grounded research. Are we confusing religion and spirituality?" (D1). As proposed in chapter two, any consultation with principals, priests and Catholic Education personnel would be assisted by using a common language, with shared meanings and understandings, for example, about the role of teaching as a ministry (as described in diocesan publications), and the meaning of spiritual formation for teachers.

The present discussion has focused on a broader, diocesan understanding of spiritual formation and the stewardship role of principals in relation to teachers who, as proposed, are "held in trust" within a school, for their own benefit, as well as the school and diocese. A diocesan perspective highlights the shared responsibility toward the spiritual formation of teachers who carry out "a ministry of teaching in this diocese" (Catholic Education Office, 1998, p. 3) in an important pastoral work of the Church (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1998). The capacity of the principal to make use of this shared responsibility within the diocese through external networks and alliances (Crowther et al., 2002), especially with priests, the SFT, CEO personnel, Area Administrators, and peer principals will have effects on the spiritual formation of teachers within the school, and the diocese. A facilitating role in the spiritual formation of teachers was identified by principals in the focus groups (I30) and survey (S1). Collaboration broadens formative opportunities for teachers and is more likely to provide for the needs of individual teachers who otherwise cannot be fully catered for within the school's spiritual formation program. Willingness to establish alliances and collaborate with others, therefore, is an important leadership attribute of principals in the spiritual formation of teachers.

Openness and willingness to collaborate regarding spiritual formation suggests that principals see the spiritual formation of teachers as important. Their own experiences of spiritual formation, moreover, will influence their pre-disposition toward the spiritual formation of others. The following discussion, therefore, deals with a central issue in this research, the spiritual formation of principals themselves.

Section 7.4 The spiritual formation of principals

This theme includes discussion associated with both spiritual formation opportunities prior to principalship and formation opportunities in the role.

Like teachers, principals were at different stages in their own spiritual formation, as noted by one interview respondent, "Even principals are at all different

points" (I10). Moreover, lay principals who participated in this research had different experiences of formation compared to principals who belonged to a religious order.

Section 7.4.1   *Lay and religious formation*

A principal who is a member of a religious order stated:

> And let me say this, too, I'm speaking for all of us [religious principals]. We have had many years of experience as a religious. I have had lots of opportunities as part of my own religious formation. I have to try and look at it and say "I don't want everybody to be like me (I32).

The depth and duration of spiritual preparation assumed of a principal within a religious order is not available to most principals in Catholic schools. While lay principals may have had experiences of spiritual formation prior to becoming principal, including experiences such as "Wellsprings", these may have been "ad hoc", superficial or incomplete, as inferred in this comment from one principal in a focus group, "I'm wondering about the optional nature of formation [for lay principals], given that we are leading Catholic schools" (I30).

There is usually an expectation that principals have qualifications and experience in religious education, though one principal questioned whether this, alone, was adequate for the role:

> I really do believe that just as one prerequisite for leadership in our system has been RE background, I also think there should be evidence that people have taken an interest in spirituality (I33).

Another principal made a similar observation about the current lack of spiritual formation for lay principals compared to the strong formational programs that existed in religious orders:

> The development of the Catholic school system was in the hands of the religious who had strong formational programs in their early training…[now we are] not all necessarily formed for

this job [as principal] in a way we need to be…real formation [is required] before we can offer to our communities what is needed (I30).

The need to focus on the formation of lay principals has been recognised for some time internationally. The creation of the Association of Catholic Leadership Programs in 1983 and the many formation programs initiated by Catholic higher education faculty and diocesan officials in North America (Schuttloffel, 2002), reflects this awareness. The three volume formation series published by the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops (Ciriello, 1994) was intended to support lay principals in their own spiritual formation and in their spiritual leadership role. More recent publications in this area include the leadership monograph series (Cook, 2001; Jacobs, 1997; Schuttloffel, 1999) as well as Campbell (2002).

Despite an increase in formation programs for lay principals in North America, Wallace (2000) argued that the formation challenge has yet to be adequately addressed. He pointed to a lack of formation and preparation for the role among many principals, especially with regard to knowledge of Church teachings, documents and history, in the North American context. Wallace (2000) questioned whether the whole Catholic Education system [in North America] was ill-prepared for the transition from vowed religious to lay persons.

Grace (2002) argued that there has been a loss of spiritual capital with the decline of religious orders in English Catholic schools, and that lay head teachers do not appear, currently, to be filling this spiritual void. While articulate on educational matters, they are, according to Grace: "relatively inarticulate about the spiritual purposes of Catholic schools" (Grace, 2002, p. 237).

Formation for principals in the Parramatta Diocese is also a critical and ongoing challenge.

Section 7.4.2   *Spiritual formation programs for principals in Parramatta Diocese*

The diocese offers the course "ELIM" to experienced principals. As noted by one principal in a focus group in relation to "ELIM", the program was, "An excellent mix of the personal, educational and spiritual…to have people [principals] there who are going to be supportive" (I30). Principals sharing their spirituality and life experiences with other principals, in environments of trust and acceptance, were opportunities for spiritual formation. Of all the items mentioned as meeting principals' needs on "ELIM", new learning and intellectual stimulation/ professional input received the strongest response (Bezzina, 2003, p. 43), supporting the findings from "Wellsprings" of the importance of new knowledge and insight, reported in this research. Responses from "ELIM" and "Wellsprings" support an integrated style of program which combines experiences of community life, reflective time, rich liturgical and symbolic experiences, challenging input and opportunities for shared reflection.

While "ELIM" has made a significant contribution to the ongoing formation of experienced principals, there is, as yet, no formation program for those aspiring to the role, or a program for the newly appointed principal, at least in systemic schools. The earlier leadership development programs and Executive Teams programs offered by the Spiritual Formation Team made a contribution in this regard, but wider acceptance of the importance of spiritual formation for leadership among all key stakeholders within the Catholic Education Office is needed (I10).

While there will always be many pathways leading to the role of principal, and multiple skills and competencies required, a spiritual base to leadership formation is critical.

Section 7.4.3   Spiritual foundation to leadership

The importance of a spiritual foundation to principalship in a Catholic school was discussed in this research, and described quite directly by one principal, "If our leaders don't have a spiritual base, we are cactus" (I33). A spiritual base to leadership provides principals with the inner resources and intrinsic motivation to discern Catholic values within the shifting priorities and influences that impact on the school (Grace, 1996; 2002; Leavey et al., 1992).

Spirituality is critical to authenticity in leadership according to Duignan & Bhindi (1998). Whitehead & Whitehead (1991) argued that authentic leaders are spiritual leaders because they help people find meaning in their own lives. They lead with soul (Bolman & Deal, 1995) and "breathe new zest and buoyancy into life" (p. 6). As defined in chapter one (definitions), spirituality refers to a higher intensity of aliveness. Rather than being about keeping rules, spirituality is about delighting in the wonders of life, about the fullness of life (Smith, 1996). Catholic school communities are founded on the life-giving promise of Jesus in the Gospel, "I have come so that you may have life-life to the full" (John 10: 10). A spiritual base to leadership is life-giving for the members of a school community. Indeed, Jesus modeled a life-giving spiritual base to his own leadership (Edwards, 1989; Neidhart, 1998).

A spiritual base to one's own leadership allows leaders to see individuals in the school community as whole persons with a spiritual dimension. A spiritual base to leadership also gives a sense of meaning by an appreciation of interconnectedness with others in the school community, and connectedness to something greater than self (Duignan & Bhindi, 1998). It also leads to a conviction about leadership as service, as observed by Duignan (2003). That is:

> A deeper understanding of personal values and a passionate
> conviction about one's capability to make a difference in the
> lives of all who are connected with them (Duignan, 2003, p. 22).

Nurturing a spiritual base to leadership is an important responsibility for principals, as well as system personnel. A number of principals spoke of their own spiritual journey with respect to their leadership. One principal described the importance of finding reflective time on principal reflection days and retreats, "In the busyness of what you do, you don't have the opportunity to have time out like that. It says something, I think, to our parents" (I34). Giving priority and attention to reflective time was recognized by this principal as something of value in a Catholic school which should be modeled by the principal (Kouzes & Posner, 2000) and communicated to parents.

The importance of spiritual renewal and reflection is, therefore, critical to the principalship. Vaill (1998, p. 217) noted, "We cannot afford the luxury of silence about the spiritual condition of our leaders". Starratt (2003, p. 243) highlighted the importance of educational leaders taking account of themselves "on the inside". Educational leaders need to ask questions about their deepest convictions, about their truest values, and about their own ongoing learning in the role,"… learning how and when to let go, as well as how and when to take a stand" (Starratt, 2003, p. 243).

Moreover, the inner life of leaders affects their outer work (Moxley, 2000). The organizational cost of the unexamined inner life of a leader can have a negative impact when projected onto others- leaders' fears, insecurities, their shadow side, can become pervasive and it can be toxic to all in the organization (Moxley, 2000, p. 130). In a large educational system, like the Parramatta Diocese, the negative impact of unreflective leadership, where it exists, would be experienced by members of the school community, especially by teachers. The whole culture of a school can be adversely affected by the projection of a leader's fears and insecurities. For teachers, such leadership can be life-depleting rather than life-giving and the spiritual formation of teachers seriously undermined by a negative climate and prevailing distrust.

Palmer (1998) identified the "monsters" that exist within the shadow of leaders, and which need to be faced for spiritual growth. Drawing on Palmer (1998), Moxley (2000, p. 140) observed, "Learning to embrace our shadow is a journey down and in that inevitably leads to a meeting with a new part of ourselves". Moxley (2000) identified a number of reflective disciplines such as silence, meditation, prayer journaling, as well as active disciplines such as deep listening, sharing of personal life stories, as well as

work itself, that can assist in the inner journey. Opportunities for stillness and centering were an important part of "Wellsprings" (D4). Some 'Wellsprings" respondents maintained daily, reflective disciplines, following the program (I22, I27, I28).

These comments highlight the type of preparation needed for principalship. Rather than thinking about principal preparation only in terms of training in skills and competencies, Duignan & Marks (2003) suggested that it would be more useful to focus on the overall formation of principals as capable human beings. Scott (1994) noted that the prevailing view of leadership in our modern culture is doing, acting and performing with little emphasis on spirit. Leadership development programs are more geared to concrete outcomes. Starratt (1995) commented on the lack of a mature handling of spirituality in administrator preparation programs generally, pointing to the fact that education is considered an applied social science, which does not easily admit the language of spirituality.

If spirit and soul are at the core of leadership (Bolman & Deal, 1995; Vaill, 1998), preparation for principalship should focus more explicitly on spiritual formation, especially in Catholic educational systems which draw upon a rich spiritual tradition.

Section 7.4.4 *Spiritual foundation to the principal's leadership in Catholic schools*

The public role of the principal in a Catholic school requires both an authentic spirituality and faithfulness to Catholic tradition, as implied in this response from an interviewee:

> I'm not saying you have to be a saint to be a principal. But in the
> end, if its just the words that sound nice, in the end if you are
> not sure [then it will be evident]. As soon as I take up the
> agenda of praying, leading someone else, setting something up
> for other people, I engage that in myself (I10).

Principals face tensions and challenges in balancing their public religious role with their personal spiritual journey and convictions. As lay Catholics, principals may struggle with official Church teaching in areas such as priestly celibacy, female priesthood, artificial birth control and exhibiting a tolerant view of Catholicism (McLaughlin, 1996). They may privately adopt what Hansen (2000, p. 32) described as, "positions of loyal dissent on some moral, ecclesiological and gender related issues within the Church". The public role principals occupy, as suggested, requires that this dissent is largely kept private, as illustrated by this comment from an interview respondent, "[Principals need to] keep up the shop front, if only to shut up at the right moments" (I10).

Duncan (1998) highlighted the need for principals to be able to negotiate Catholic beliefs and values through the process of cultural politics and analyse situations from a Catholic moral perspective. Therefore, knowledge of the historical perspective of Catholic education, of the basic principles of Catholic moral theology and Church teaching is necessary in the role (Wallace, 2000). An appreciation of the ecclesial dimension of teaching, as a pastoral ministry within the Church, is also a foundational issue for principals, as discussed in chapter two.

The principal's spirituality will also be shaped and formed in community, in interaction and dialogue with others, including radical witnesses of the Gospel message (I25) in environments of trust and care, where respect for the innate dignity of each person is apparent. The principal's spirituality will also be enlivened by rich symbolic experiences and new theological knowledge and insights, and by a capacity for critical reflection. In the Parramatta Diocese, the success of "ELIM" as an integrated program of formation for experienced principals provides a possible model of formation for aspiring principals or those newly appointed to the role.

Formation models for principals should embrace all aspects of the tradition, especially a primary focus on developing a spiritual base to leadership. Within the Catholic tradition, this involves opportunities for deepening an inner awareness and experience of a transcendent and immanent God, and an

appreciation of the Jesus of the Gospels. For one principal in a focus group, Jesus provided, "The fire in the belly" (I32) to minister in a Catholic school. The principal further commented, "I want to be here in a Catholic school because I think it is a good place to be. I want to walk with Jesus" (I32).

The preparation and spiritual formation of lay principals, and those aspiring to the role, is an important undertaking and a challenge not yet fully addressed in the Parramatta Diocese, or in Catholic Education generally (Grace, 2002; Wallace, 2000).

Section 7.5   Conclusion

This chapter explored the principal's role in the spiritual formation of teachers. Most principals in the research accepted a role in the spiritual formation of teachers, though there was hesitancy among some as to the extent of this responsibility. A primary focus for principals in the spiritual formation of teachers exists within the current role description, and involves strengthening the informal spiritual formation program of a Catholic school through cultural leadership. A secondary focus is to cater for individual teachers through the formal spiritual formation plan of the school. In both the informal and formal domains of spiritual formation, the principal is supported by significant others within the diocese who share a pastoral responsibility for the spiritual formation of teachers (priests, SFT, CEO curriculum personnel, Area Administrators). A capacity to collaborate with others widens spiritual formation opportunities for teachers, and is a key leadership attribute for principals. It also strengthens a diocesan perspective of spiritual formation.

A diocesan perspective of spiritual formation requires an appreciation by principals of the long term nature of spiritual formation, beyond any one school experience, and principals' role as stewards. In a sense, teachers are "held in trust" in any one school, for the benefit of the teacher, school community and the diocese. This is an important insight for leadership succession planning in the diocese.

A central issue in this research is the spiritual formation of lay principals, which has yet to be adequately addressed in Catholic education generally, and specifically in the Parramatta Diocese, especially for aspiring principals and those newly appointed to the role. "ELIM" is a successful program for experienced principal in the diocese, and a possible model for other formation programs. A spiritual base to leadership includes a capacity for reflection and inner awareness, considered an essential quality in the principal's leadership role. Within the Catholic tradition, the principal's spirituality is enlivened and enriched by Catholic beliefs and experiences.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE PRINCIPAL'S LEADERSHIP ROLE IN THE SPIRITUAL FORMATION OF TEACHERS: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Section 8.1   Introduction

This study was designed to clarify and define the principal's leadership role in the spiritual formation of teachers in Catholic schools in the Parramatta Diocese, a diocese situated on the western edge of Sydney. The research sought to identify spiritual formation experiences and opportunities valued by teachers, then to describe the link between these opportunities and the current role description for principals in the diocese, and finally, to identify ways the principal's leadership can strengthen spiritual formation opportunities for teachers.

Section 8.2   Overview of the study

The study arose out of the experiences of the Spiritual Formation Team (SFT) in the Parramatta Diocese (1991-2004), and an earlier report on the SFT programs and teacher responses (Bracken, 1995). Based on findings in the report by Bracken (1995), and considering the large investment by the Catholic Education Office, Parramatta in the spiritual formation of teachers, recognition of the importance of the role of principals in the spiritual formation of teachers appeared inadequate. Principals were not widely consulted in the development of SFT programs, and the principal's role expectation in relation to the spiritual formation of teachers remains broad and ill defined.

The spiritual formation of teachers refers to the growth of inner consciousness, awareness, and, ultimately, love of God, expressed in teachers' lives and work in a Catholic school, in a ministry of spiritual leadership within the Church, enlivened by experiences of Catholic tradition and culture, through the Spirit, in

dialogue and communion with others (Catholic Education Office, Parramatta, 1997; Congregation for Catholic Education, 1998; Kelly, 2001; 2004).

The importance of the spiritual formation of teachers to the identity and vitality of Catholic schools (Bezzina, 1994; Dance, 1989; Feheney, 1998) signalled the need to clearly define the principal's leadership role in the spiritual formation of teachers The benefits of spiritual formation to the individual teacher as person, and the pastoral responsibility of principals in this regard (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977) underlines the importance of the research. The rapid transition to lay leadership of Catholic schools, diversity of needs among teachers, the cluttered agenda in schools, and the impact of market driven secular values (Bezzina, 2000; Grace, 1996, 2002) add to the challenges in this area of Catholic education.

The research utilised a case study approach to explore the principal's leadership role in the spiritual formation of teachers in Catholic schools in the Parramatta Diocese. Four contributing questions guided the research which identified spiritual formation experiences valued by teachers; the nature of these experiences and the responses of teachers; the challenges in the provision of spiritual formation opportunities; and the role of the principal in the spiritual formation of teachers.

Multiple methods of data collection were used including individual and group interviews; document analysis; survey; direct observation. Participants in this research included teacher participants of the SFT program, "Wellsprings"; teachers and executive staff in schools; primary and secondary principals in the diocese; Catholic Education Office personnel; and members of the Spiritual Formation Team. The data was managed using the qualitative software tool, NUD*IST 4 (QSR, 1997).

Five areas of relevance to the principal's leadership role in the spiritual formation of teachers were identified in chapter two which was proposed as a theoretical framework for the research. The following proposals were made in that chapter: firstly, that a fundamental issues for principals in this area is

related to consensus on the teacher's role within the Church, as well as a common understanding of the meaning and implications of spiritual formation within the diocese. Secondly, that the long running spiritual formation program, "Wellsprings" could be a source of learning about the spiritual formation of teachers, with implications for other spiritual formation programs in the diocese and the formal spiritual formation program for teachers within a school. Thirdly, that the culture of the Catholic school could influence the informal spiritual formation of teachers; fourthly, that the principal's role in the spiritual formation of teachers was primarily one of shaping Catholic culture in ways that strengthen opportunities for the informal spiritual formation of teachers, and that this role was defined in existing role descriptions for principals; finally, that teacher leaders could act in parallel with the principal, in co-leadership, and contribute to Catholic culture and the spiritual formation of teachers.

In addressing each of these five areas, the following discussion and conclusions will centre on the research focus, and the research question, "What is the principal's leadership role in the spiritual formation of teachers in Catholic schools?"

Section 8.3   Conclusions

Section 8.3.1   *The role of the teacher in the Catholic school in the Parramatta Diocese*

The importance of teachers in communicating a transforming vision of life to students in Catholic schools is conveyed by Chittister (2003, p. 29):

> What you are, your students will be. What you have the courage
> to question, they will learn to question, too. Spiritual leadership
> demands, in other words, that you yourself take them where
> there are no roads and leave a path.

According to official documentation, teachers perform a pastoral work of the Church in Catholic education (National Catholic Education Commission, 2003).

By their presence in a Catholic school, they have a spiritual leadership role (Chittister, 2003) in the ministry of teaching in the Parramatta Diocese (Catholic Education Office, Parramatta, 1991, 1997).

This research has raised questions as to whether these important statements about the leadership role of teachers in Catholic schools, are fully appreciated by teachers and principals. Responses from "Wellsprings" suggested that numbers of teachers, prior to the program, did not see themselves as active participants in the Church, and some perceived that they were "on the fringes of the Church" (I22, I25, I27). Perceptions of Church among some "Wellsprings" respondents appear to accord with observations by Kelly (2001), that for some teachers at least, the ecclesial reality of the Church has undergone, "A form of sociological reduction which leaves it with only it's most imperfect and limited institutional form" (Kelly, 2001, p. 312). Less formal expressions of Church were identified as important to teachers in this regard, such as "Spirituality in the Pub" (I35), and some principals explored new expressions of Church on reflection days with teachers (I34).

Teachers are also at different points in their own spiritual formation. Diversity and difference among teachers was noted by principals in the research as a foremost challenge in the spiritual formation of teachers (S1, I30, I33). A core of teachers were committed Catholics and members of a parish community (Prest, 1997; I31), and, therefore, potentially important in helping to shape the Catholic culture of the school. Some non-Catholic teachers or "un-churched Catholics" also aligned their contribution with the overall aims and values of the school, thereby identifying with the pastoral work of the Church in education (I10, I31). Catholicism's deep characteristics, identified by Groome (1996, 1998, 2002, 2003), and discussed in chapter two, provided all teachers with a number of connecting points with Catholic tradition. In fact, too narrow a religious focus in Catholic schools arguably limited the Catholic worldview.

Within the range of differences among teachers, the research identified some teachers who appeared negative and resistant to spiritual formation. As suggested in chapter four, resistance to spiritual formation may relate to the type of experiences being offered to teachers (I6, I33). Equally, in the perception of some principals, there were also teachers who were not sufficiently aware or committed to the Catholic ethos to perceive the need for their own formation (I32; S1). These teachers needed to be challenged in honest and sensitive ways about their support of the ethos of the Catholic school, as noted in this response by one principal in a survey response:

> We also need to find ways in our spirituality and Catholic
> sensitivity to challenge honestly those who enjoy the culture and
> ethos of Catholic schools (an inheritance derived from a spirit of
> great sincerity, service and self sacrifice) but who are indifferent
> in actively supporting [this ethos] (D1).

There was also a reference to integrity between principals in the employment of teachers (I32), so that these teachers were not "passed from one school to the next", as noted by one principal (I32), instead of their issues being addressed. Spiritual formation experiences should enable all teachers to align their values and beliefs more closely with the mission and purpose of the school.

The spiritual leadership role of the teacher in the Catholic school, in a ministry of the Church (Catholic Education Office, Parramatta, 1997) is a foundational issue for principals in this research. Without clear definition and consensus among principals regarding the role of the teacher in schools in the diocese, there is not likely to be consensus on the importance and priority of teacher spiritual formation in the diocese.

Section 8.3.2   *The spiritual formation of teachers in the Parramatta*
                                    Diocese

The spiritual formation of teachers was a term first used by the Spiritual
Formation Team (SFT) in its work with teachers in the Parramatta Diocese,
commencing in 1991. It has been applied to this research because of the
historical origins of the term and the importance of the work of the SFT over
more than a decade. The commentary accompanying the definitions in chapter
one signalled potential ambiguities, both with "spirituality" as a term and
"formation" as a term. The definition presented at the beginning of this chapter
identified the intrinsically spiritual nature of human beings and the human
search for the transcendent. It also located spiritual formation within the
Catholic tradition by recognising the potential for divine initiative through the
work of the Holy Spirit, the enculturation process within the Catholic faith
tradition, and a growth in awareness of the spiritual leadership role of the
teacher in a ministry of the Church. As suggested earlier, "encouraging the
heart" of teachers with respect to their spiritual leadership role, is a key
leadership challenge.

Because teachers are involved in a ministry in the name of the Catholic Church
within the Parramatta Diocese (Catholic Education Office, Parramatta, 1997),
there is a pastoral responsibility to provide opportunities for their ongoing
formation (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977) which benefits the
teacher as person as well as the students they teach. There is evidence to
suggest that spiritual formation programs such as "Wellsprings", to be
discussed below, have made a difference to the personal and professional lives
of teachers (P3, I22, I28, I27).

The principal's pastoral responsibility for the spiritual formation of teachers in a
Catholic school is also shared with others, such as priests, the SFT, other
officers from the Catholic Education Office, and Area Administrators. Building
collaborative alliances (Crowther et al., 2002) with individuals who contribute,
directly or indirectly, to the spiritual formation of teachers is an important role for

the principal in the spiritual formation of teachers. The shared responsibility of spiritual formation, leads to the consideration of a diocesan perspective to the spiritual formation of teachers.

A diocesan perspective to spiritual formation suggests that the spiritual formation of teachers should underpin all the work carried out by Catholic Education Office personnel in their contact with teachers, rather than spiritual formation being the specific role of the SFT. A number of existing programs, offered outside the programs of the SFT have a strong spiritual formation component. Equally, there is a spiritual formation dimension to all teaching, and implications for a Catholic worldview in all subjects, suggesting the need for all curriculum officers, not just personnel in Religious Education (I30) to be attuned to opportunities for teacher spiritual formation. Inadvertently, the terminology "Spiritual Formation Team" may have reduced perceptions of spiritual formation to the activities of a specialised group, and narrowed awareness of the scope and breadth of spiritual formation (D1), which is properly a shared pastoral responsibility among all who work in Catholic Education, on behalf of the Church. A diocesan wide perspective to spiritual formation also recognises the need for the spiritual formation of all who work within the diocese, and the mutuality of influence that exists in all interactions between teachers and personnel at the Catholic Education Office.

The spiritual formation of teachers in the Parramatta Diocese would be well served by a diocesan perspective to spiritual formation, one which widely acknowledges the importance of the spiritual leadership role of the teacher, who is "held in trust" in any one school within the diocese.

Another of the elements of the framework proposed in Chapter two was the SFT program, "Wellsprings". "Wellsprings" has been offered by the SFT in Parramatta Diocese in the same five day residential format since 1991, and has catered for over a thousand teachers since it was introduced.

Section 8.3.3   "Wellsprings"

The name "Wellsprings" derives from the scripture passage in the Gospel of John which described Jesus' encounter with the woman at the well (Jn 4: 14): "… the water I shall give will turn into a spring inside him, welling up to eternal life". The format and structure of "Wellsprings" is divided into four main themes: "Christology", which explores the question of the person of Jesus and his teaching; "Ministry" which provides a basic orientation to the meaning of ministry within the context of Australian society and the contemporary Church; "Art and the Environment", which provided time and opportunity for integration, reflection and creative expression; "Liturgy and Life", which opens up new ways to express spirituality through symbol and ritual. Each of these themes is connected through participants' experiences of shared meals and community life (Bracken, 1995).

Experiences of care, acceptance and the development of trusting relationships, built up over the five days of the "Wellsprings" program gave insight into experiences of community with potential relevance to the school environment (D20, I28, I22, I25). Deep, inter-personal dialogue in small groups was reported where teachers felt free to "… let down the masks", as reported by one respondent in a focus group (I22), to share experiences, and explore deep questions about their own spirituality and beliefs (I26). The theological input provided during "Wellsprings" especially in relation to the Jesus of the Gospels, provided participants with new insights and an opportunity "… to come to know a human Jesus" as reported in a written response by one teacher (D22). The strength of the "Wellsprings" responses suggests the importance of this theme to all teachers in Catholic schools. Respondents in the research spoke of "Wellsprings" as making them better thinkers, more critically reflective (I23). New ways of praying, experiences of creative expression through art, and the use of rich symbols broadened many teachers' experiences of Christian worship (I20; I27) and enriched the symbolic life in some schools. Some teachers spoke of the direct impact of "Wellsprings" on their teaching; the program also

encouraged some teachers into community service and volunteer work; and it led some to further study in theology.

Perhaps the most significant contribution of "Wellsprings" has been the invitation presented to teachers to a fuller appreciation of their place in the Church, in fuller communion with the central mysteries of the Catholic faith, and their importance as adults sharing in a pastoral work of the Church in education. The program has "encouraged the heart" of hundreds of teachers (Kouzes & Posner, 2000) as suggested by this respondent, in a focus group:

> You know the people on the fringe of the Church, they have so much to offer, they just don't feel they fit in, in the structures of the institutional Church… it's a great experience in the small groups, the number of faith filled people in our own midst…the sharing of their stories is such a special time. There is a bonding that happens (I22).

"Wellsprings" appears to have enabled some teachers to see new opportunities within the Church, as observed by this respondent in a focus group, "Now I feel there is some really exciting stuff going on. I have just got to find out where it is" (I20).

"Wellsprings" data also highlighted a need for individual consideration of each teacher (Kouzes & Posner, 2000), in his or her involvement in formal spiritual formation programs. Not all teachers responded positively to "Wellsprings". In focus group responses, a small number of individuals did not relate to the style and content of the program, reflected by this response from a beginning teacher, "I don't mind listening and learning, but I just found I couldn't relate to what was said, or there was too much of it" (I26). Not all individuals were prepared for the depth of sharing that took place on "Wellsprings" (I26). Different responses to "Wellsprings" highlighted different life experiences, reflected by this participant's comment in a focus group, "With "Wellsprings", it depends on where you are in your own life … for me, mum had just died twelve months before. "Wellsprings" developed me. It did a lot for me spiritually …"

(I23). Sensitivity to a teacher's life experience, background and professional experience in Catholic schools is an important consideration in spiritual formation programs. Responses by some beginning teachers and principals in focus group interviews, for example, indicated that the "Wellsprings" program did not adequately address their needs (I26; D1). Rather, "Wellsprings" was beneficial for people who have "… experienced a bit down the line" and are able to take "a reflective look back", noted one respondent in a focus group (I26). The formal spiritual formation program of a school should accommodate diversity of needs and life experiences.

The need for a system based spiritual formation program for beginning teachers was identified in focus groups and does exist in other dioceses (I26, I3). Like all system based programs of spiritual formation, however, "the challenge is in supporting this in an ongoing way at the school level" noted one principal in a survey response (D1).

The immediate impact or emotional "high" of "Wellsprings" dissipated quickly in the routines and busyness of school and family life. Those teachers who did maintain prayers and meditation styles from "Wellsprings", either personally, or with their students, spoke of setting aside regular reflective time (I28) highlighting the discipline required for active engagement with one's spiritual life (Moxley, 2000; Palmer, 1998).

Some teachers spoke of their experiences in sharing and implementing "Wellsprings" ideas with other teachers on returning to the school environment. In a number of schools, "Wellsprings" type symbols such as banners and prayer tables were evident in school foyers or staff areas (P3) suggesting that "Wellsprings" type symbols had been adapted to the local school environment. The potential of a spiritual formation program, like "Wellsprings" to have potential impact within the Catholic culture of the school for all teachers, through the initiative and leadership of teacher participants, highlights another benefit of structured spiritual formation programs.

Section 8.3.4   The Catholic culture of the school

It was proposed in chapter two that the every-day experiences of teachers within the culture of a Catholic school presents opportunities for spiritual formation. Rogus and Wildenhaus (2000) described these opportunities as constituting the informal spiritual formation program for teachers in a school. Drawing on Schein (1997) and Deal and Petersen (1999), three areas of culture were considered particularly relevant to the informal spiritual formation of teachers in this research, namely, climate, mission and purpose, and symbols and rituals.

Section 8.3.4.1   Climate

A positive climate among teachers is engendered in a supportive environment, where the predominant metaphor for the school is "community" rather than "organisation" (Sergiovanni, 1994, 2000). The communal nature of the Catholic school is inherent to its nature, according to the Church documents on the Catholic school (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977, 1998) and is a prevailing characteristic of Catholicism (Bryk, Lee & Holland, 1993; Groome, 1996, 1998, 2002; McLaughlin, 1997, 2000). Several aspects of the communal experience within the culture of the school were identified in this research, as relevant to the spiritual formation of teachers.

Section 8.3.4.1.1   An ethic of care

An ethic of care (Starratt, 1996) was a characteristic of "Wellsprings", and was modelled by the SFT (I20, I22, I23). Individuals were accepted for who they were (I22, I30) and there was "… a willingness to encounter them in their authentic individuality" (Starratt, 1996, p. 161). The importance of care in the school environment, in relation to spiritual formation, was reflected in this comment in an interview, "You don't talk about how we are going to pray

together, until you talk about how we are going to care for one another" (I10). Care and support of colleagues was identified as a valued opportunity for personal and spiritual growth by teachers (S1). Unconditional acceptance and care of the teacher as person is a foundational leadership quality in the spiritual formation of teachers, with implications for the principal's leadership role. From the perspective of Catholic tradition, an ethic of care amounts to reverencing individual teachers as reflections of God, recognising the divine presence in each person (Groome, 2002), regardless of their level of religious practice, religious affiliation, or their spiritual background.

Shared experience was another dimension of the communal experience relevant to spiritual formation.

Section 8.3.4.1.2   Shared experiences

In describing her staff, one principal in a focus group commented, "This was a staff that had a lot of sorrow and trouble because of redeployments and hurt and unease and downsizing" (I34). An appreciation of the uniqueness and collective need of a staff community shaped the type of experiences made available to teachers. The involvement of teachers in different prayer experiences and expressions provided opportunities for them to express past hurts and to "move on". The same principal continued, "I think they are starting to reach out. These sorts of [prayer] experiences have helped them" (I34). This principal identified a common experience and collective response among the teachers.

Opportunity for deep inter-personal dialogue was another aspect of the communal experience relevant to the spiritual formation of teachers.

Section 8.3.4.1.3   Inter-personal dialogue

"Wellsprings" provided many teachers with opportunity for inter-personal dialogue. As one focus group respondent mentioned, "In that environment, I felt able to question, comfortable to say this is what I think, what do you think" (I26). Another focus group respondent made a similar comment, "Wellsprings is a place where they can let down their masks and be themselves and tell their stories, [and] somehow find support" (I22). The opportunity to be authentic, to be oneself, without having to put on masks or be in role, required a climate of care and trust, as well the time and opportunity to dialogue with other teachers.

Structuring reflective space and time in the school environment, in order to facilitate inter-personal sharing on core beliefs and values, is challenged by all of the priorities that compete for scarce time in a school. The busyness of schools often reduces inter-personal contact of the kind required for deep sharing on beliefs and values. Paucity of time for relationship building was described by one experienced teacher in a "Wellsprings" focus group: "The school environment is a situation of ships passing in the night. You can go through weeks of not speaking to someone on staff" (I22). One secondary principal described the school environment as, "The awful pragmatism…the doing of a million things that invade secondary schools" (I33). Apart from structured time for sharing, this research has also identified informal times where teachers have opportunities for inter-personal dialogue on core values and beliefs. Student retreat experiences, for example, are times when teachers shared their own life journey and questions with students and other teachers on retreat, shared their own spirituality, and listened to the spiritual journey of others (I31). The potential of genuine inter-personal dialogue to enhance spiritual formation opportunities suggests that structuring such opportunities receive priority in the busy schedules of schools.

Witnesses and role models within the community experience were also identified as potentially important in the spiritual formation of teachers.

Section 8.3.4.1.4   Witnesses and role models

One presenter on "Wellsprings" made a significant impact on teachers. As a member of a religious order, her work with street kids and homeless children was described as "mind blowing"(I23) by one participant in a focus group, "She brought one of the street kids with her and his story was just amazing" (I23). Exposure to the spirituality and faith of significant others was identified in the Queensland Catholic Education Commission's (1997) research report on the faith development of teachers. The report recommended that teachers be offered the opportunity outside of the school environment, to work with others whose daily actions witnessed to their Christian beliefs.

Teachers returning from "Wellsprings" influenced other teachers, as noted by one respondent in a focus group: "… staff are very influenced by other staff, they tend to sway them" (I32). One senior teacher in a focus group described the impact of his presentation to the staff of a large secondary school, following his participation at "Wellsprings", "I've done lots of presentations to staff and they [usually react by thinking] 'is he finished yet?' [But this time] everybody was watching and listening and a lot of people came up to me afterwards and talked about it" (I21).

Another cultural element relevant to the spiritual formation of teachers in Catholic schools, introduced in chapter two, was mission and purpose.

Section 8.3.4.2   Mission and purpose

Mission and purpose is often reflected in the beliefs and values, espoused and evident, among teachers. Beliefs among teachers are powerful cultural forces, according to Deal and Peterson (1999) because they represent core understandings about teaching, about learning and, in a Catholic school, about the religious purpose of the school.

The spiritual formation of teachers involves opportunities for teachers to refine and shape their beliefs and values as a result of new knowledge and insight.

Section 8.3.4.2.1   Spiritual formation- shaping beliefs and values

New knowledge and insight provided on "Wellsprings', in relation to the Jesus of the Gospels, was reported by participants in written reflections (D22) and focus groups (I25, I30, I28). New theological knowledge and perspectives in the school environment was facilitated through guest presenters on staff development days (I30, I31) through contact with local priests who had established positive relationships with teachers in the school (I35) and through teachers sharing new knowledge and insights. New perspectives,formed through new theological knowledge, were part of an educative process.

Section 8.3.4.2.2   Critical reflection

Some participants of "Wellspring" described how the program taught them to be better thinkers (I23) to appreciate that not everything is black and white (I26), to make sense of things, to uncover meaning and see deeply (Pondy, cited in Smyth, 1989, p. 192). This educative process, according to Smyth (1989, p. 190) enables teachers to move from a situation of dependency and non-reflectivity to becoming critically reflective. A capacity for critical reflection is essential for spiritual formation.

Section 8.3.4.2.3   Teaching in a Catholic school

The teaching of the diocesan Religious Education program "Sharing Our Story", provided teachers with opportunities to shape beliefs and values, described by one principal in a focus group as, "A jumping off point" for the spiritual formation and religious development of teachers (I30), an observation supported by comments in other focus groups.

The same principal continued, "Somehow there is a connection between your own spiritual development … and the teaching of RE" (I30). The absence of

any references in the data to teaching in other subjects however, is noteworthy. It is likely that teachers were seeing spiritual formation as connected only with explicitly religious programs, such as Sharing Our Story. The lack of reference to other subjects, or teaching itself, as spiritually formative, needs further clarification.

Beliefs about teaching are important cultural influences in the Catholic school. According to Harris (1987), a philosophy of teaching is needed that explores the dimensions of depth in teaching, a philosophy that begins not with technique but with the majesty and the mystery involved in teaching (Harris, 1987, p. 24). Teaching and learning are infused with possibilities of spiritual leadership in Catholic schools, derived from a Christian view of life. Such a view of teaching and learning contests the prescriptive nature of some curriculum in schools, which can render teachers passive and non-reflective about aspects of content and values. Equally, an overemphasis on achievement in tests inhibits the transforming potential of education (Starratt, 2004) both for students and teachers.

In relation to subject matter in a Catholic curriculum, a sacramental consciousness leads to a capacity to use reason, memory and imagination to see through the content to the deeper mystery, where each life question is eventually a religious one and all truth is grounded in Divine truth (Groome, 1998). Nurturing and encouraging a sacramental consciousness in teachers allows them to see the deeper meaning in the subjects they teach, to see the mystery beyond, and to see the religious dimension of all subjects (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1988).

If teachers are called to be spiritual leaders in Catholic schools of the twenty-first century (Chittister, 2003) and are challenged to lead students, "… where there are no roads and leave a path" (Chittister, 2003, p. 29), teaching and learning should be an important focus of spiritual formation in a Catholic school and a priority within the formal spiritual formation program of the school. The data in this research suggests a need for clarification and attention to this

critical area in Catholic schools, in subjects other than Religious Education, building on existing literature in this area (D'Orsa, 1993). As a core activity in schools, with potential to present a transforming vision for students (Kelly, 1990), this deeper potential of teaching in a Catholic school should be acknowledged and emphasised as a leadership priority.

The third cultural element of relevance to the spiritual formation of teachers was the presence of symbols and rituals in the every-day experiences of teachers.

Section 8.3.4.3   Symbols and Rituals

Rituals and symbols carry deeper meaning about a school community's core beliefs and values (Deal & Peterson, 1999, p. 32). Religious ritual can be utilised widely within the school to convey religious and spiritual beliefs and to engage participants (van Eyk, 1998, p. 53). The participation of teachers in prayer and liturgy, with their own students or with other teachers, presents opportunities for engagement at a deeper level, in the realm of the spiritual (van Eyk, 1998, p. 53) and has potential to influence the informal spiritual formation of teachers.

The availability of reflective rituals on "Wellsprings" was valued by respondents. These times allowed individuals to become, "… centred and still and balance the busyness of life" as reported by one respondent (D3). In the school environment, rituals of staff prayer were valued by teachers. These times invariably revealed the spirituality of some teachers not otherwise evident in the daily routines of the school (I31). For some teachers, rituals with students were another means of spiritual expression and formation (I34). Student retreats and camps in the secondary school also provided opportunities for teachers to participate in reflective rituals with students and engage in deep inter-personal dialogue with other teachers and senior students (I31). Rituals within the life world of teachers were also identified as opportunities for spiritual formation, such the birth of a baby (I31) or times of tragedy (I35).

The symbolic is sometimes dismissed as "soft" in favour of the rational, or it is added as an after thought (Deal & Peterson, 1999). The rich liturgical and symbolic tradition within Catholicism can enrich the culture of the school. In fact, it is often the symbolic dimension of a school that communicates most clearly the school community's core purpose (Deal & Peterson, 1999).

Principals can utilise rituals and symbols to embed culture (Schein, 1997). Rituals of staff prayer presented opportunities for individual expression and creativity that engaged teachers at deep levels. Rituals of celebration also extended to important life events for teachers. By celebrating events within the staff community such as the birth of babies (I31), the importance of the life world of teachers (Habermas, 1987) was emphasised by leaders. Critical incidents or times of crisis are important times of culture building where the heightened emotional involvement, and the increased intensity of learning (Schein, 1997) were opportunities for spiritual formation.

There was a strong symbolic tradition within the SFT programs in Parramatta, and experiences on "Wellsprings" showed the relevance of the symbolic in the spiritual formation of teachers. Symbols associated with "Wellsprings" were brought into the school environment, renewing the symbolic life of schools (Duncan, 1998; McLeod, 1987) enhancing opportunities for the spiritual formation of teachers. The symbolism associated with the religious orders in Parramatta Diocese, while not specifically discussed in the data in this research, was potentially another source of spiritual formation opportunities for teachers in secondary schools in the diocese.

Three elements of Catholic culture identified in this discussion influenced the spiritual formation of teachers in Catholic schools. A positive climate for teachers, underpinned by an ethic of care and trusting relationships provided the right milieu for spiritual formation. Clarity of purpose, opportunities for critical reflection, and the acquisition of new knowledge helped shape beliefs and values. Rich symbolic experiences engaged teachers at deeper levels.

While each of these elements of culture had potential to enrich both the overall Catholic culture of the school, and informal opportunities for spiritual formation, each element was also challenged by counter influences.

Section 8.3.4.4   Threats to Catholic culture

In some schools it was evident that the school environment was perceived as dominated by tasks (Hargreaves, 1994), with little time for meaningful contact and teacher interaction, described by one focus group respondent as "… like ships passing in the night. You can go through weeks of not speaking to someone on staff" (I22). In these circumstances "school as community" (Sergiovanni, 1996, 2000) did not appear to be realised as the guiding metaphor for the school, in the experience of some teachers. Rather than the life-world of teachers determining system world priorities, the systems world appeared to dominate the life-world of some teachers (Habermas, 1987; Sergiovanni, 2000), eroding climate and reducing the milieu for spiritual formation. Rationalist influences within curriculum areas potentially diminished the transforming potential of teaching and learning in some schools, reducing the spiritual leadership role of the teacher. Values associated with the educational market place appear to have influenced some school communities and possibly compromised core values, such as an option for the poor (Bezzina, 2000; Grace, 1996, 2002). In some schools, symbols and rituals had lost some of their potency and meaning, and become just part of the school tradition (P3).

In the face of these contemporary challenges to Catholic culture and identity in school communities, the leadership influence of principals is critical to shaping and strengthening Catholic culture in schools, thereby enhancing informal spiritual formation opportunities for teachers. The importance of cultural leadership of the principal is summed up by Schein, cited in Deal and Peterson (1999) when he noted that creating and managing culture is the only thing of real importance done by leaders. This introduces the fourth area of the framework proposed in Chapter 2.

Section 8.3.5   ***The principal's role responsibility- links with the***
                            spiritual formation of teachers

This research identified and described a link between spiritual formation
opportunities for teachers and the current role description for principals in the
Parramatta Diocese.

Section 8.3.5.1   Role responsibilities linked to spiritual formation

A primary focus of the principal's leadership in the spiritual formation of
teachers should be directed toward shaping and strengthening experiences of
Catholic culture for teachers, through building a positive climate, through clarity
of mission and purpose, through rich symbolic experiences. The current role
expectations for principals in the Parramatta Diocese coincide with these
leadership actions

Section 8.3.5.2   Building a positive climate

In relation to building a positive climate, principals are expected to promote the
development of Christian community within the Catholic tradition and create a
climate of care (Catholic Education Office, Parramatta, 1998). This research
explored dimensions of the community experience, relevant to the spiritual
formation of teachers (establishing an ethic of care and trust, shared
experiences of teachers, inter-personal dialogue, and the importance of
witnesses and role models).

Section 8.3.5.3   Clarifying mission and purpose

In relation to mission and purpose, the principal is expected to create learning
and teaching practices which promote the integration of Christian values across
the curriculum, and critical reflection and action in light of Gospel values. The
principal is also expected to ensure that the preferential option for the poor is

exercised in the school, and that there is a distinctive Catholic identity (Catholic Education Office, Parramatta, 1998, pp. 2, 3). This research explored the importance of critical reflection and new knowledge to the shaping of new perspectives, beliefs and values of teachers associated with mission and purpose. It also identified the centrality of an appreciation of the Jesus of the Gospels for all teachers in Catholic schools, in order to "ignite the fire" (I32) associated with teaching in a Catholic school. The Jesus of the Gospel should provide for teachers, "The fire in the belly to minister in a Catholic school" (I32), as one principal commented in a focus group.

Section 8.3.5.4   Priority to ritual and symbol

In relation to the symbolic life of the school, according to the role statement for principals, the principal gives priority to prayer, ritual and the celebration of the Word (Catholic Education Office, Parramatta, 1998). This research identified the potency of ritual and symbols for engaging teachers at deep levels. The research suggested ways that principals could re-invigorate ritual and symbol in the school, for example, through the adoption of "Wellsprings" type symbols. Times of celebration and tragedy were noted as unifying events among teachers (Schein, 1997) where the liturgical richness of Catholicism was appreciated (I31, I35).

The principal's leadership role in the spiritual formation of teachers is primarily addressed through cultural leadership within the existing role description for principals in the diocese. This research also identified further leadership roles for principals in the spiritual formation of teachers (Catholic Education Office, Parramatta, 1998).

Section 8.3.6   ***Leadership for the spiritual formation of teachers-***
                                          beyond the role description

The following leadership roles for principals in the spiritual formation of teachers were further identified in this research.

Section 8.3.6.1   Encouraging the heart

The need to draw more teachers into greater awareness and confidence about their role in Catholic schools in a pastoral work of the Church has been identified. Teachers need to feel "on the inside of the Church", as reported by one respondent at the end of "Wellsprings" (D21). A contemporary appreciation of the mystery of Church, as a gift of the Holy Spirit, in and for the world (Kelly, 2001) needs to be enhanced among teachers. The spiritual formation of teachers in Catholic schools should result in a growing awareness and appreciation of teachers' spiritual leadership role with students, and their ecclesial role within the Church. The principal's role in the spiritual formation of teachers, therefore, is one of encouragement and empowerment of individuals.

Section 8.3.6.2   Extending individual consideration to teachers

Diversity of background and experiences among teachers creates the need for individual consideration (Kouzes & Posner, 2000) with respect to the spiritual formation of teachers. Because spiritual formation is closely connected to the life world of teachers (Habermas, 1987), awareness of the life world circumstances of individual teachers allows appropriate responses and opportunities for their spiritual formation. A formal plan of spiritual formation which accommodates diversity provides a broad framework which allows for individual consideration to teachers.

**Section 8.3.6.3   Strategic planning for the spiritual formation of
                     teachers**

A formal plan for the spiritual formation of teachers (Rogus & Wildenhaus,
2000) includes school based programs derived from identified needs and
preferences of teachers, using both external and internal facilitators. These
programs should incorporate an element of choice to cater for different needs
and preferences. The research also identified a range of potential sources of
spiritual formation including formal study in theology and programs such as
"Seasons" run by teachers for students, as well as spiritual formation
opportunities through experiences which explore the deeper meaning of
teaching, and the transforming potential of the curriculum in a Catholic school
(D'Orsa, 1993). Spiritual formation programs and opportunities provided by the
diocese, where these are appropriate to individual need, would also be included
as part of a formal plan of spiritual formation. Linkage with diocesan
opportunities for spiritual formation is a critical dimension of a spiritual formation
plan for teachers. The principal has an important role in facilitating these
opportunities for teachers.

Section 8.3.6.4   Establishing collaborative alliances

A diocesan perspective to spiritual formation, discussed earlier, highlights the
shared responsibility toward the spiritual formation of teachers. The capacity of
the principal to make use of this shared responsibility within the diocese through
external networks and alliances (Crowther et al., 2002), especially with priests,
the SFT, CEO personnel, Area Administrators, and peer principals will have
effects on the spiritual formation of teachers within the school, and the diocese.
A facilitating role in the spiritual formation of teachers was identified by
principals in the focus groups (I30) and survey (S1). Collaboration broadens
formative opportunities for teachers and is more likely to provide for the needs
of individual teachers who otherwise cannot be fully catered for within the
school's spiritual formation program. Establishing alliances and collaborating

with others, therefore, is an important leadership role for principals in the spiritual formation of teachers.

A diocesan perspective of spiritual formation also acknowledges that teachers may move from school to school and that each teacher's spiritual formation is ongoing and long term. This requires a capacity for principals' themselves to adopt a diocesan perspective to the formation of teachers and see their role as one of stewardship in relation to the spiritual formation of teachers.

Section 8.3.6.5   A stewardship role in the spiritual formation of teachers

Stewardship is described by Block (1993) as something held in trust for another. Teachers are the most valuable educational resources in the Parramatta Diocese, and in a sense, each teacher is "held in trust" for the whole diocese. A reference to stewardship is made in the Parramatta documents relating to leadership: "The principal exercises a leadership which provides effective stewardship of human and material resources" (Catholic Education Office, Parramatta, 1998, p. 2). The principal's stewardship over the spiritual formation of teachers, in a shared responsibility with others, is therefore a service to teachers, the school, and the diocese. A stewardship role for principals in relation to the spiritual formation of teachers, moreover, is consistent with a broad and long term framework for leadership succession in the diocese (Dorman & d'Arbon, 2003).

Another role for principals linked to the spiritual formation of teachers which needs elaboration, is the expectation that principal's exercise a "… spiritual and prophetic leadership" (Catholic Education Office, Parramatta, 1998, p. 2). The spirituality of principals themselves was discussed in chapter seven as central to this research.

Section 8.3.7   The spiritual leadership of the principal

A spiritual foundation to principalship in a Catholic school was described in direct language by one principal, "If our leaders don't have a spiritual base, we are cactus" (I33). A spiritual base to the principal's leadership leads to interconnectedness with others in the community and connectedness to something greater than self (Duignan & Bhindi, 1998). A spiritual base to leadership leads to:

> A deeper understanding of personal values and a passionate
> conviction about one's capability to make a difference in the
> lives of all who are connected with them (Duignan, 2003, p. 22).

The spiritual life of principals in Catholic schools is inextricably linked to their leadership, highlighting the importance of nurturing the inner life (Moxley, 2000). As Moxley, (2000, p. 130) warns, the organisational cost of the unexamined inner life of principals can have a serious negative impact when projected onto others - their fears, insecurities, their shadow side, can become pervasive and toxic to all in the school, undermining the school community's Catholic identity.

The public role of the principal in a Catholic school also requires authenticity and an appreciation of Catholic tradition, as implied in this response from an interviewee:

> I'm not saying you have to be a saint to be a principal … [But]
> as soon as I take up the agenda of praying, leading someone
> else, setting something up for other people, I engage that in
> myself (I10).

A capacity for the principal to model the way (Kouzes & Posner, 2000) is an important leadership role. If spiritual leadership is expected of teachers, as proposed, principals themselves will need the courage and capability, to lead teachers "… where there are no roads and leave a path" (Chittister, 2003, p. 29).

For one respondent, the Jesus of the Gospel provided: "The fire in the belly" (I32) to minister in a Catholic school. The principal commented, "I want to be here in a Catholic school because I think it is a good place to be. I want to walk with Jesus" (I32). Duncan (1998) also highlights the need for principals to be able to negotiate Catholic beliefs and values through the process of cultural politics in schools (Bolman & Deal, 1997) and analyse situations from a Catholic moral perspective.

This research identified the importance of spiritual formation for principals, noting the contrast between the formation experiences provided to vowed religious principals and current lay principals (I10). While the diocese offers the course "ELIM" to experienced principals, described by one principal as: "An excellent mix of the personal, educational and spiritual …" (I30), there is a need for structured experiences of spiritual formation for those aspiring to the principal's role and those newly appointed. Integrated programs which combine experiences of community life, reflective time, rich liturgical and symbolic experiences, intellectually challenging input, new theological perspectives for shared reflection, have a demonstrated appeal (Bezzina, 2003; I30).

The spiritual formation of principals is critical to their leadership in the formation of teachers- their own experiences influence their pre-disposition toward the spiritual formation of others, and the priority given to spiritual formation within the school. Collaborative alliances with priests, SFT, CEO personnel including Area Administrators expand opportunities for spiritual formation. As discussed in chapters four, five, six and seven, other teachers within the school also contribute to the spiritual formation of teachers. They help shape Catholic culture and strengthen informal opportunities for spiritual formation as well as contributing to structured experiences of spiritual formation.

The fifth element in the theoretical framework proposed in chapter two, therefore, was co-leadership. Co-leadership was a term initiated by the original members of the SFT in the Parramatta Diocese in 1991 to emphasise the scriptural emphasis that Jesus sent his disciples out in pairs, not alone (Nouwen, 1989). The leadership programs of the SFT in the early 1990s

emphasised the work of co-leaders in Catholic schools who initiated spiritual formation experiences for others (Appendix 11).

The potential of teacher leaders to contribute to the spiritual formation of teachers in Catholic schools introduces another leadership role for principals in the spiritual formation of teachers, namely, fostering co-leadership.

Section 8.3.8 Fostering Co-leadership

Based on the literature associated with teacher leadership and parallel leadership (Andrews & Crowther, 2002; Crowther et al., 2002; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 1996) the actions of teacher leaders exercising leadership in parallel with the principal were broadly equivalent to the parallel or joint leadership of teachers understood as co-leadership in the Parramatta Diocese. Co-leadership in this research refers to the joint leadership activity of teachers in Catholic schools in the Parramatta Diocese, who helped shape Catholic culture through their actions, and created opportunities for the spiritual formation of teachers.

Co-leadership or teacher leadership were not terms referred to directly in this research, however, there was indirect evidence that teacher leaders were involved in co-leadership activity following "Wellsprings" which strengthened opportunities for the informal spiritual formation of teachers. Responses from "Wellsprings" suggest that the program resulted in some teachers changing aspects of their teaching, and possibly influencing colleagues. As well, some spoke of more confidence in trying different ways of praying with students (I22), and in their own prayer life (I27). Some spoke of more confidence about their role within the Church (I20; I27). As a result of the program, the symbolic life of some schools was enriched as teachers brought ideas from "Wellsprings" into the school such as prayer tables, banners and other art work (P3). Different forms of prayer and new ideas were used in leading staff groups. In these schools, it appeared that principals encouraged the co-leadership actions of teachers (Crowther et al., 2002).

Some teachers returning from "Wellsprings" found it difficult to share their experiences with other teachers, or to implement ideas from "Wellsprings", reflected in this comment from a "Wellsprings" respondent:

> Walking back into the school after that ["Wellsprings" experience] is, to put it mildly, deflating, because there is that feeling of wanting to do so much and to share, and the frustration…you know a big school and very busy (I22).

Crowther et al (2002) observe that the principal's role is pivotal in order for parallel leadership to thrive in a school. The authors identify seven challenges for principals in nurturing teacher leadership (Crowther et al., 2002, p. 51-64).

Deal and Peterson (1999) add weight to the importance of co-leadership in culture building, since teachers' experience of a strong Catholic culture provides opportunity for spiritual formation. Deal and Peterson (1999) note that it is potentially the leadership of everyone that continuously reshapes culture. Fostering co-leadership is important to culture building and, therefore, to the principal's leadership role in the spiritual formation of teachers.

The discussion in this chapter has responded to each of the five elements of the theoretical framework proposed in chapter two. Findings in each of the five elements within the proposed theoretical framework contribute insights into the principal's leadership role in the spiritual formation of teachers, which is the focus of the research.

Section 8.3.9   ***The principal's leadership role in the spiritual formation of teachers - responding to the research question***

Research findings across chapters four, five, six and seven, as well as the discussion in this chapter suggest multiple leadership roles for principals in the spiritual formation of teachers. A summary of the principal's leadership roles in the spiritual formation of teachers can now be presented.

The principal's leadership roles in the spiritual formation of teachers include the capacity to:

1. Nurture a spiritual base to one's own leadership as principal.

2. Shape Catholic school culture. In particular, foster a positive climate among teachers underpinned by an ethic of care and experiences of genuine community; provide opportunities for teachers to shape their beliefs and values based on new theological knowledge and insight within the Catholic tradition; strengthen symbols and rituals which engage teachers and point to deeper realities.

3. Encourage the heart. Empower all teachers to a deeper appreciation of their spiritual leadership role with students, and ecclesial role in a pastoral work of the Church.

4. Promote and foster co-leadership among teachers within the school.

5.   Extend individual consideration. Recognise each teacher as an adult with unique spiritual formation needs.

6.   Plan strategically toward a spiritual formation program that caters for diversity of needs and links with diocesan spiritual formation programs.

7.   Cultivate a diocesan perspective of spiritual formation. In particular, develop an appreciation of a stewardship role with respect to the spiritual formation of teachers in any one school, and a shared responsibility for spiritual formation with other principals and personnel from the Catholic Education Office.

8.   Collaborate with diocesan personnel in alliances that broaden opportunities for the spiritual formation of teachers (priests, SFT, curriculum officers, Area Administrators).

The principal's leadership in the spiritual formation of teachers is conceptualised in Figure 2.

FIGURE 2

Principal's leadership roles in the
spiritual formation of teachers
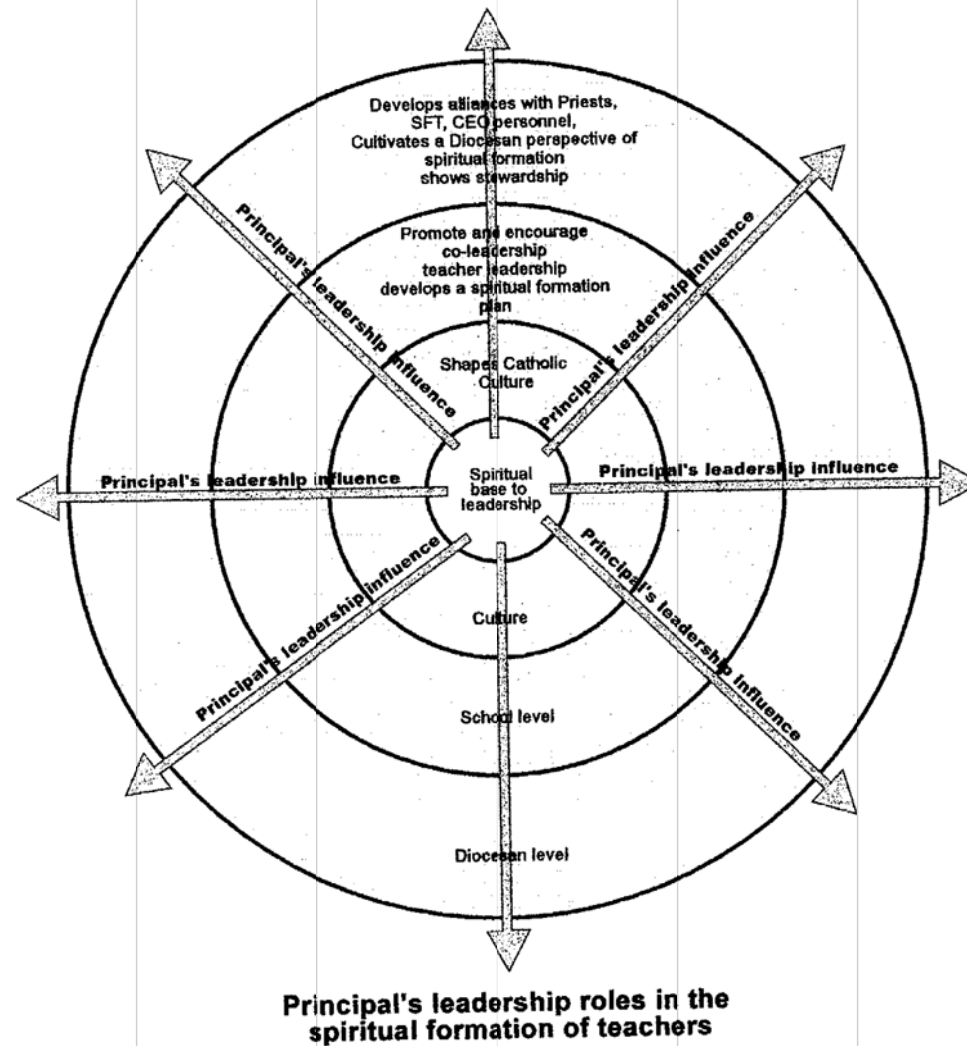
The principal's leadership in the spiritual formation of teachers, as represented, is evident at the daily level of cultural experiences, at the whole school level, and at the diocesan level. Exercising leadership at these different levels broadens opportunities for the spiritual formation of teachers. The individual teacher, consequently, benefits from spiritual formation influences at the diocesan, school and day-to-day level of cultural experience. For the teacher, spiritual formation includes consideration of a range of possible variables discussed in this research, such as life experiences, religious background, age, stage of career, family context and gender, professional experiences within the diocese.

A conceptual model for the spiritual formation of teachers within Catholic schools in the Parramatta Diocese, is presented in Figure 3.

FIGURE 3

TEACHER FACTOR
Confidence
New Perspectives
Greater meaning in work
Changes in teaching
Spiritual leadership
Active agents in Church

Spiritual Formation

PRINCIPAL FACTOR
(refer to Figure 2)

Principal's Leadership
Roles:

Teacher Variables
- life experiences
- career stage
- professional
  experiences
- religious background
- gender
- primary /
  secondary
- family
  background

Teacher

ethic of care
rich spiritual symbols
trust
new theological knowledge
community

Principal shapes
Catholic culture

Catholic Culture

individual consideration
co-leadership
spiritual formation plan linked to Diocesan initiatives

Principal fosters
co-leadership,
develops a
spiritual formation
plan, extends
individual
consideration to
teachers

School Strategies

Stewardship of Principals
SFT and programs (eg Wellsprings)
Area Administrators
Personnel from Catholic Education Office
Priests

Principal
develops
collaborative
alliances with
SFT, priests,
personnel from
CEO, Area
Administrators.
Principal
exercises
stewardship
in relation to
the spiritual
formation of
teachers.

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Section 8.4   Implications for theory

Genuine acknowledgement of the spiritual leadership and ecclesial role of teachers will require a significant re-imagining of Catholic schools for the twenty first century (Chittister, 2003) and places priority on the ongoing spiritual formation of teachers.

A focus on teachers extends to teacher leadership, which is described within the literature as "the sleeping giant" within schools (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 1996), and there is evidence of teacher's initiating change in school environments following "Wellsprings" in this research. Teacher leadership has implications for the way leadership is envisaged in Catholic schools in the Parramatta Diocese. The research proposed co-leadership as a term already in use in the diocese, with a theoretical basis in literature describing parallel leadership. The co-leadership of teachers has potential within Catholic schools to strengthen and shape Catholic culture. For co-leadership to flourish, however, current roles for principals need re-definition.

A spiritual base to the principal's leadership has been identified as critical to leadership for the spiritual formation of teachers, with implications for the principal's leadership generally. A spiritual base to leadership challenges leadership paradigms which over-emphasise competencies and professional skills with little or no acknowledgement of the importance of nurturing the inner life of leaders (Moxley, 2000). This has implications for the principal's leadership across all educational sectors (Duignan, 2004) and challenges existing theory.

This research has been located within a Catholic diocese and relates to teachers in Catholic schools, however, teacher leaders potentially shape school culture in all educational settings with implications for teacher development in all schools (Crowther et al., 2002).

Sections 8.5   Implications for policy and practice

The model proposed for the spiritual formation in the Parramatta Diocese is teacher centred and non-hierarchical. For the model to be effective, multiple levels of influence contribute to the spiritual formation of teachers, from the daily culture of the school, to school wide strategic planning, to diocesan wide alliances, as represented. In all interactions between individuals, the model acknowledges a mutuality of influence (Duignan, 2003) between the teacher and the other person. That is, inter-personal dialogue and influence at all levels leads to the possibility of spiritual formation for all persons.

The multiple leadership roles identified for principals in the spiritual formation of teachers expands and elaborates the existing role description for principals (Catholic Education Office, Parramatta, 1998). These leadership roles include a significant emphasis on culture building and encouraging the heart of teachers (Kouzes & Posner, 2000), as well as strategic planning, establishing alliances within the diocese, stewardship, and fostering co-leadership, as mentioned. For these roles to be realised in schools, however, it will be necessary for all diocesan personnel to re-allocate priorities so that principals' time is preserved for this core work, and not absorbed by administrative tasks emanating from system expectations.

Section 8.6   Implications for further research

The lack of recognition in this research of spiritual formation opportunities within teaching, in subjects other than Religious Education, suggests the need for further clarification and research. There is a need to clarify and communicate a Catholic educational philosophy in relation to teaching and learning.

Gender as an issue in the spiritual formation of teachers was discussed in the research. There is a need to further explore gender difference and, given the lower participation rates of males in SFT programs, establish any relationship between the type of program and male participation. Research is needed to

identify preferred experiences which cater for both male and female spiritual formation.

Spirituality and family life was also discussed in "Wellsprings" responses. There is a need for further inquiry into ways that lay educators can more effectively share spiritual formation experiences with spouses and integrate personal and professional spiritual formation.

Finally, the potential for teacher leadership to strengthen the identity and distinctiveness of Catholic schools suggests the need for research within the diocese on the work of teacher leaders, and consequently, roles for principals in fostering teacher leadership.

Section 8.7   Recommendations for the diocese

The following diocesan recommendations are made in light of this research. There is a need to:

1. Clarify and affirm the spiritual leadership role of teachers in Catholic schools in the diocese, and their ecclesial role in a pastoral work of the Church. Provide scope for all teachers to identify with the Church in their work in a Catholic school.

2. Develop greater clarity and consensus as to the meaning of spiritual formation within the Catholic tradition in the Parramatta Diocese.

3. Broaden understanding of spiritual formation as underpinning all the work carried out by Catholic Education Office personnel in their contact with teachers.

4. Re-found the SFT as a resource for school communities, to collaborate with teachers in culture building within schools: strengthening climate, contributing new insights and theological knowledge, re-invigorating rituals and symbols.

5. Assist school communities to plan strategically for the spiritual formation of teachers, allowing for diversity, and linking in with spiritual formation programs offered by the diocese.

6. Continue to make available spiritual formation programs for teachers, and expand these initiatives to programs for teachers in their early years of teaching.

7. Include principals in any diocesan planning in the spiritual formation of teachers. Establish strong collaborative alliances with principals.

8. Develop a spiritual formation framework for aspiring principals and those newly appointed to the role, drawing on experiences from "ELIM", and emphasising a spiritual base to leadership.

9. Redefine the role of the Catholic school principal to recognise the importance of the principal's core work of shaping and strengthening Catholic culture; fostering co-leadership, and encouraging the heart of teachers.

Section 8.8   Concluding remarks

This chapter discussed each of the five elements proposed in the theoretical framework in chapter two, drawing relevant insight from each area regarding the principal's leadership role in the spiritual formation of teachers.

This research has clarified and defined the principal's leadership role in the spiritual formation of teachers in Catholic schools in the Parramatta Diocese and answered the research question posed in chapter one. The model proposed for the spiritual formation of teachers in the diocese (Figure 3) is premised on a firm belief that teachers are the key to the distinctiveness of Catholic schools (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977). This research should make a contribution to the achievement of the diocesan priority in Parramatta that schools be "authentically Catholic" (Catholic Education Office, Parramatta, 2000, p. 1).

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APPENDIX 1

The name of the research project

"Fanning the Flame"

was inspired by this logo,
used by the Catholic Education Office, Parramatta Diocese

APPENDIX 2
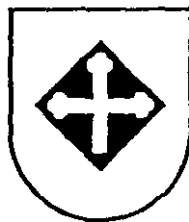
Letter of informed consent

Doctor of Education research topic:

The spirituality and formation of teachers in Catholic Schools. A critical study in the Diocese of Parramatta in the 1990's.

Investigator: Tony Bracken

Participant's name:

This study involves research into the spirituality of teachers in Catholic schools, the impact of spiritual formation initiatives in the Parramatta Diocese, the context and reality of their personal and professional lives.

It is intended to conduct a focus group study which explores the impact of the programme from the perspective of participants.

This research addresses a vital area of teacher development. In a period of change in the Church and in education, the reality of teachers' lives, the personal and spiritual well being of teachers is critical in their work in Catholic schools. A better understanding of these realities and the impact of formation initiatives in the Diocese of Parramatta should inform future directions and planning in the area of teacher development and support.

This research deals with your personal and professional life. The highest degree of sensitivity, respect and confidentiality will be extended to you. The level of personal disclosure is entirely up to you. Your participation in this project is entirely voluntary and it is clearly understood that you are free to withdraw your consent from participation in the research at any time without penalty and no reason need be given.

Any questions regarding the project 'The spirituality and formation of teachers in Catholic schools' should be directed to:

Mr Tony Bracken
8 Carrabai Place
Baulkham Hills 2153 ph: 9639 8872
within the School of Educational Leadership, Australian Catholic University, Albert Rd, Strathfield.

This study has been approved by the Research Projects Ethics Committee of the Australian Catholic University. Should you have any questions about this research please write to:

The Chair
Research Projects Ethics Committee
Secretariat NSW Division
179 Albert Rd
Strathfield NSW 2135

Signed Statement of Consent

I _____ have read and understand the information above and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this activity, realising that I can withdraw at any time. I agree that research data collected for the study may be published or provided to other researchers in a form that does not identify me in any way.

Name of Participant: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name of Investigator: ___Tony Bracken_____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX 3

11 August 1998

«NAME»
Principal
«SCHOOL»
«ADDRESS»

Dear «SALUTATION»,

The Parramatta CEO has commissioned independent research in the area of staff spiritual development in order to better inform future system support for schools and individuals in the diocese.

The research is designed to identify:

i)   existing initiatives and experiences which are valued by staff, both at
     school level and outside the school
ii) the challenges in meeting the diverse needs of staff in this area, and
iii) ways in which the resources of the CEO can support schools and individuals

I invite you to participate in the *'Fanning the Flame'* project.

The research will involve participation in one focus group, with a small number of «SECONDARY» principals. The duration of each group will be approximately 1 hour and will follow normal research protocols of confidentiality. The groups are scheduled over the two days of 8/9 September with 2 possible sessions each day (morning and afternoon) and a choice of venues (Mt Druitt/Pennant Hills/St Mary's).

Enclosed is a one page questionnaire which you may find useful in your own school as a discussion starter with the school's executive and/or a way of gathering information from staff prior to the focus group should you decide to participate in the project.

I have arranged to speak briefly about this research at the beginning of the next Principals' Association meeting on «DATE» August and will follow up this note with a fax containing details of times and venues.

With best wishes,

Yours faithfully,

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Tony Bracken

APPENDIX 4

"Fanning the Flame" *Tony Bracken*
Staff Spiritual Development *GPO Box 397*
Research Project *Castle Hill 2154*
Parramatta Diocese *96802311 (phone)*
98995314 (fax)

{DATE}

{NAME}
Principal
{SCHOOL}
{ADDRESS}

Dear {SALUTATION}

Thank you for accepting an invitation to participate in this research.

This fax confirms that you will be part of a small focus group:

Date: **9 September**

Time: **1.30 pm – 3.00 pm**

Venue: **Mt St Benedict's Centre, Pennant Hills**

I have enclosed another copy of the questionnaire which will be discussed in the focus groups.

Please contact Paula Ringland on 9680 2311 if you have any further enquiries about the focus group.

Yours sincerely,

Tony Bracken

APPENDIX 5

'FANNING THE FLAME'
STAFF SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT
RESEARCH PROJECT

One of the priorities at both school and system level, is opportunities for the **personal and spiritual development** of staff in Catholic schools. The Parramatta CEO has commissioned independent research in this area to better inform planning of future system initiatives to support individuals and schools. Focus group research is scheduled for early September. This brief questionnaire may illuminate some of the areas to be discussed in the groups which will be conducted with principals.

1   **What experiences/programs have you valued as contributing to your personal and spiritual growth?**

      a   **School-based experiences and programs** (please specify)

      b   **CEO supported programs** (please specify, eg Wellsprings etc)

      c   **Other experiences of adult formation** (please specify, eg parish programs, congregational programs)

2   **What are some of the challenges in providing opportunities for the personal and spiritual development of staff in Catholic schools?** (from observation or personal experience)

3   **In what ways could the resources of the Parramatta CEO be utilised to support individuals and schools in this area?** (eg programs, personnel)

APPENDIX 6

TO ALL STAFF:

Could you please complete and return to the Principal by {date}.

'FANNING THE FLAME'
STAFF SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT
RESEARCH PROJECT

One of the priorities at both school and system level, is opportunities for the **personal and spiritual development** of staff in Catholic schools. The Parramatta CEO has commissioned independent research in this area to better inform planning of future system initiatives to support individuals and schools. Focus group research is scheduled for early September. This brief questionnaire may illuminate some of the areas to be discussed in the groups which will be conducted with principals.

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        a   **School-based experiences and programs** (please specify)

        b   **CEO supported programs** (please specify, eg Wellsprings etc)

        c   **Other experiences of adult formation** (please specify, eg parish programs, congregational programs)

2   **What are some of the challenges in providing opportunities for the personal and spiritual development of staff in Catholic schools?** (from observation or personal experience)

3   **In what ways could the resources of the Parramatta CEO be utilised to support individuals and schools in this area?** (eg programs, personnel)

APPENDIX 7

One of the priorities at both school and system level is opportunities for the **personal and spiritual development** of staff in Catholic schools. The Parramatta CEO has commissioned independent research in this area to better inform planning of future system initiatives to support individuals and schools. Focus group research is scheduled for early September. This brief questionnaire may illuminate some of the areas to be discussed in the groups which will be conducted with principals.

1.	*What experiences/programs have you valued as contributing to your personal and spiritual growth"*

(a) *School-based experiences and programs* (please specify)

- Staff Reflection
- Staff Development Day – Spirituality day (once a year)
- Beginning of the year School Mass/Prayer Services

- Some Year 12 Retreats
- Some Staff Development Days on Spirituality

- Staff Development on Scripture, Liturgy, Spirituality

- Seasons – as adults --
- Staff Prayer
- Staff Reflection Days
- Christine Carlton

- Reflection Days
- Selective RE Days

- Staff Prayer
- Prayer Group
- Group Discussions

- Staff Retreats
- School Liturgies
- School Retreats

- Staff Retreats each year

- Staff Reflection Days
- Julia Atkins Seminars

- School/Class Based Liturgy
- Staff Prayer (Briefing)

- Two Staff Development Retreat Days (Fr Kevin Bates)
- One Staff Development Retreat Day (Fr Kevin Bates and Caroline Jones)

- N/A

- Emmaus Day Mass
- Staff members support and friendship

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(a) *School–based experiences and programs* (please specify)

- Workshops with Julia Atkins – personal growth

- Father Kevin Bates/Caroline Jones

- Many Staff Development, Spiritual and Personal Development Days

- Staff Prayer
- Staff Reflection Days
- Class liturgies/masses

- School Prayer opportunities e.g. Weekly Prayer, Lenten Prayer Groups, Twilight programs I have participated/organised in schools over the years

- Staff Prayer
- School Based Reconciliation and Eucharist Programs – Kevin Bates/Trish Watts

- Staff Development Days – Kevin Bates/Trish Watts
- Preparation of Liturgies and Staff Prayers

- Programs like Wellsprings calls on the adult learning model of formation

- Staff Development Days – Trish Watts/Kevin Bates
- Weekly Staff Prayer
- School Masses/Liturgies

- School Prayer
- Preparing Liturgies
- Teaching Religious Education
- Staff Development Days
- Working with children in RE and Sacramental Programs has been enormously beneficial for me.

- Staff Prayer
- Staff Reflection Days
- Whole school prayer time

- Staff Development Days – with reflection themes
- Staff Prayer
- School masses
- Principals Reflection Days
- Class prayer

- Seasons for Growth program – Christine Carlton
- Trish Watts – Cathy Scott
  Staff Development Day for whole staff working with Cathy and previous REC in preparing Grade–based Sharing Our Story units to include all creative aspects of PRAXIS
- Lenten Program, 1996, 1997, 1998
- School–based Spiritual Reflection Days

- A number of staff have attended Wellsprings and have been very positive about the program
- Two staff members upgraded their RE qualifications with the RE Diploma Course at Aquinas Academy. They found that the input and the follow–up reading not only helped them professionally, but also spiritually,

-

- A reflection Day at Mary MacKellop Centre was one that all staff responded to very positively – for some the best day they have had.

- A Myers–Briggs Workshop received mixed reactions. Most people were positive and some purchased books for follow up reading. A few didn't like being put into categories.
- Days led by the Carmelite priests of our parish on Spiritual Experience were helpful to staff.

- Also inviting the Parish Priest to staff meetings to speak on the Church and the sacraments: Reconciliation and Eucharist gave them both understanding and appreciation.
- Personally I found many of the Courses in the Graduate Diploma in RE and the Masters spiritually enriching, particularly those on Scripture and Christology. Using the suggested readings after the course was completed was also enriching.
- Teachers taking part in Rainbows and Seasons training days found them difficult and challenging, but very worthwhile.
-

(b) *CEO supported programs* (please specify e.g. Wellsprings etc)

- Wellsprings·
- Return to the Well·
- Revision of 'Sharing Our Story' by RECs

- Some Principals' Conferences

- Wellsprings

- Inservice for teachers new to the Diocese or Beginning Teachers
- Inservice for RECs

- Sharing Our Story Teaching programs.
- Counselling services – Access – Bill Tarrant
- Wellsprings
- Return to the Well

- Connections Groups

- Have not attended any of these.

- Wellsprings
- Units in my Masters

- KAIROS
- Diocesan/Association Spirituality Days

- Certificate of Religious Education

- None

- Executive Spiritual Development Program

- N/A

- Nil – I don't believe I have attended any CEO supported programs

- Journey

- Wellsprings
- Return to the Well, Leadership program

- Wellsprings
- AP Conferences

- Leadership Formation Program
- Wellsprings
- Journey Experience

- Seasons for Growth

- Seasons for Growth

- Education of formation.
- Clear Understanding of the gospels
- Who is Jesus
- How does it impact on ministry, impact liturgy

- Wellsprings
- Leadership Program
- Seasons Training
- Education Mass
- Masters Leadership Program ACU

- Secretaries, RECs, A.P. & Principal's Reflection days
- Covey Course – activity based sessions
- Leadership Course – meditating, prayer based activities; good reflective sessions; some activity sessions

- Wellsprings
- Intensive RE Program/Dundas
- ELIM
- Carey Landry
- Sharing Our Story
- Planning Liturgies for School Community

- Wellsprings
- Return to the Well
- Seasons
- Call to Leadership

- Journey Experience
- Secretaries Reflection Day
- KAIROS – Enneagram

- Intensive RE Course 1993
- Wellsprings
- Journey Experience

(c)   *Other experience of adult formation* (please specify e.g. parish programs, congregational programs)

- R.E. Courses
- Reflection Days for Principals, Assistant Principals, RECs and Co–ordinators

- Parish 2000 wasn't had.

- Graduate Diploma in RE

- Research (Qld based program)
- Liturgy – Kevin Bates
- Programs through WATEC
- Spirituality in the Pub
- Professional reading e.g. The Mix

- Counselling Institute
- M.B.T.I. Training
- Reiki Programs

(c)   *Other experience of adult formation* (please specify e.g. parish programs, congregational programs)

- Planning/Running Parish Sacramental programs with an element of Spiritual Development

- I belong to a Christian Covenant Community

- None

- Parish Based Reflection Days

- Congregational – Renewal Program – Assumption Institute Melbourne
- Parish Program – A Lenten Scripturally Based Program

- N/A

- Nil

- Parish 2000
- Parish Development
- Lenten Program

- Parish Council – Reflection Days
- Study of Vat. II documents – theological implications
- Courses included in M.Ed/P. Grad. RE

- As part of Parish "Renew" Programs, Facilitator in RCIA programs (2 seasons) member of a discussion home group, Retreat Days as a Eucharistic Minister.

- Children's Sacramental Preparation at Parish

- Visiting speakers in the parish
- Adult information from rights for sacramental programs within the parish

- Celebrates –time
- Radical Understanding

- Spirituality in the Pub
- Parish Sacramental Nights – Kevin Bates/Kees Bijman

- Augustinian Youth Ministry & 1998 Festival – Joan Chittester
- Spirituality in the Pub
- Robert Grant [congregational/Sexual Abuse issues]
- "Renew" – diocesan program a few years ago
- Eucharistic Minister's Course [Teachers]
- Parish–based preparation for the Sacraments
- Baptismal Program for Parents

- Study of R.E. Theology units as part of degree course

- Lenten groups
- Spirituality in the Pub

- R.C.I.A. program
- Academic study in R.E. (Masters), B. Th.
- Marriage Encounter

- Courses in Scripture and Christology in Grad. Dip. and Masters programs
- Parish Enneagram
- Biblical Spirituality – C.T.U. Chicago

2.	*What are some of the challenges in providing opportunities for the personal and spiritual development of staff in Catholic schools? (from observation or personal experience)*

- The intensive aspect in relation to each person's spirituality development.
- Some people don't see a need for spiritual development OR have their own ways of dealing with this.

- Place and Time available for programs. Staff at different levels and dimensions of spirituality.

- The different levels of each individuals growth in RE makes it difficult to find suitable presenters.

- Release time
- Resources
- Availability of Spiritual Formation Team
- Amount to engage facilitators

- Parents away from home for long periods of time.
- Courses to suit the Needs of each Principal.

- Develop the link between the Spiritual and Social Justice aspects of our society.

- Time.
- Non–Catholic Influence on staff.
- Helping staff to see it as a apriority.
- Giving spirituality a school focus.

- Time constraints.
- Variety in degree and type of religious conviction

- Time.
- The opportunity to share experiences with colleagues.

- Encouraging people to "slow down" and see inherent value in investing time in your own spirituality.
- People need to see a reverence to their lives or role.

- Providing a program to meet the needs of staff with varying spiritualities e.g. on a whole Staff Development Day. (It can be done in a general way but maybe at times a more in depth experience can be shared by the RE staff/those interested).

- The hectic nature of school life.

- Differences in how staff view prayer time and spirituality.

- Making them suitable to all – and we are all at different stages.

- Each individual has a different need in this area.

- Actually getting staff to 'walk the walk' and not just 'talk the talk' in personal life – to live out the Gospel not just preach it.

- Budget constraints.
- Taking teachers away from classroom
- Diversity of needs/identifying the needs.
- Balancing spiritual/curriculum development.
- School timetable versus chaplain's timetable (when school–parish are separated).

- Perhaps financial obstacles e.g. Wellsprings – perhaps offer some 4.00–9.00 p.m. sessions for people (these sessions would not need be aligned with Wellsprings)
- These opportunities should be followed up. I attended Wellsprings last year and have not yet been contacted re follow up small groups.

- Financial.
- Meeting needs of people in all ages in parish.

- Funding a common ground as a starting point and a non–threatening environment.

- Credible personnel to new programs
- Seen as a high priority
- Funding
- Release
- At school level leaders can talk about these programs
- System must be made aware of the formation model needed

- Challenge always
- Formative Model
- Do we want more than is happening now?
- How do we keep this going
- Destruction
- Education in faith
- Spirituality and Methodology
- Clear on formative experiences – Whitehead

- Perceived credibility of the Church vs reality of peoples lives
- The staff are at different stages in their journey and not everyone is open or willing to participate in programs

- One of the greatest challenges seems to be in recognising the diversity of spiritual depth and experiences within a Staff
- Meeting these needs is the second
- The third is targeting those it may benefit and the fourth competing with all the other Inservice experiences that Staff need these days for the other components of the Curriculum
- We've had a reflection day that upset some Staff, but were enjoyed by others. Some Teachers do not enjoy, or respond positively to creative movement, painting, modelling etc. and are not stimulated by them, but enjoy the Children experiencing them fully

- Motivating staff to take part in liturgies, prayer experience, reflection etc. "You can lead a horse to water ....."

- People's different levels of spirituality and differing needs of faith development

- Continuing to provide experiences like Wellsprings and allocation to schools for staff days that cater for renewal and reflection.
- Wellsprings for school staffs!!

- Probably the greatest challenge in providing the staff with opportunities for spiritual and personal growth is finding the appropriate input to meet individual needs. This is particularly the case when organising a Staff Development Day as people are at different stages and have different needs and preferences.
- Another challenge is providing release days for teachers to take part in programs. If it is seen as a priority the school has to be prepared to fund release days.

3.	*In what ways could the resources of the Parramatta CEO be utilised to support individuals and schools in this area?* (e.g. programs, personnel)

- The Spirituality Team to continue their great work with teachers

- Money and personnel for overnight programs. A day program barely touches the surface

- Central registry of facilitators for RE together with a brief statement on their area of expertise, Phone and fax numbers
- Registry of Venues

- Continue to distribute advertisements for courses
- Recommend professional reading
- Allocation of days
- Recommend facilitators who are available and challenging

- Ask the staff what they need
- Have appropriate choices that come highly recommended
- Encourage all to attend such courses

- Focus on above
- Encourage Action
- Develop programs that link the Spiritual to our Core Task "Teaching"
- Time
- Allow flexibility to choose personnel from across the State to help facilitate

- Relief Time
- Better promotion of programs

- Some practically based courses which benefit classroom teacher with some input for self spiritual renewal

- More information about programs available and personnel specialised in different areas. How are the latter able to assist? (Lecturing/Providing or suggesting resources?/Assisting on Staff Days?)

- More scheduled reflection time

- Inservices for staff in how to more creatively deal with students during Pastoral Care lessons

- All staff to be aware of what is available in terms of support
- I can't use what I am not aware of

- Perhaps a list of current, suitable providers e.g. Kevin Bates etc. could be developed along with school 'references' to the input received

- Young teachers, after 3–4 years in the classroom, may benefit from a program which would facilitate their reflection on the spiritual aspect of their development. Questions that could be asked – "Has my spiritual development kept pace with my professional development?" "Can I share and give witness to my story?"

- Ideas kits for Group/Personal spiritual development e.g. An outline of a Twilight prayer gathering – people are happy to be involved in planning this sort of activity but become more motivated if they have some ideas
- To continue to advertise the various opportunities for spiritual development being offered in various venues of the Diocese in the "About Schools"? brochure. Perhaps such opportunities that are available in other Dioceses could be advertised, as well – people are prepared to travel to the right places
-
- Inform schools of opportunities for Retreats/retreat venues available in and around Sydney – could be in form of a glossy covered brochure – cost, amenities available, etc.
- Lists of good resources for personal reflection e.g. study, Journeying etc.
- Always ensure all Inservice Days are commenced with a good quality program
  ·
- Advertising what is available
- Sending out kits to teachers with ideas

- Do we want more than is happening now.
- How do we keep this going:
  Distinction
  Education in faith
  Spirituality and Methodology
- Clear on formative experiences – Whitehead

- Individual schools-could propose their own program for Spiritual
- Development. The CEO could provide funding/days to support the school

- Personnel could visit schools on a more regular basis to support with programming
- CEO to make available resources that are located in Parramatta (make schools aware of what is available)
- Offer shorter programs like Journey Experience to staffs as a whole. Money needs to be spent to release people to take time to pursue personal/spiritual reflections

- What resources?

- Sometimes we don't know what we need/want
- Contact list of a variety of reflection day presenters for Staff Development Days
- Sharing Our Story being revisited should provide some good input.
- Shorter style Wellsprings???

- Prayer Days
- One, two or three day programs with a special focus e.g. a Gospel some Old or New Testament theme, the Sacraments of Initiation or Reconciliation. The day/s could include input and reflection time

/rf
October 7, 1998

APPENDIX 8

IEU Principals Working Conditions Survey 2001

Further to decisions of the IEU Executive and Principals' Branch, the union conducted a survey of Principals in systemic schools in Term 3. Survey forms and covering letters were sent to 455 Principals in NSW and the ACT. Data from 138 returns from primary and secondary schools across NSW/ACT indicated a range of significant issues and concerns about Principals' roles and workloads.

Details of the surveys returned are shown below :

Armidale	primary	6	secondary	1	=	7
Bathurst	primary	3	secondary	2		
	central	1			=	6
Broken Bay	primary	5			=	5
Canberra/Goulburn	primary	2	secondary	1	=	
	central	4			=	7
Lismore	primary	4	secondary	2	=	6
Newcastle/Maitland	primary	14	secondary	2	=	16
Parramatta	primary	14	secondary	3	=	17
Sydney	primary	27	secondary	9	=	36
Wagga	primary	6			=	6
Wilcannia/Forbes	primary	7			=	7
Wollongong	primary	12	secondary	3	=	15
Anonymous/unspecified					=	6
Phone calls/e-mails (too busy to complete survey form)					=	4
Total					=	138

Major issues raised in the survey responses include:

- excessive number, frequency and duration of meetings, often with early morning starts and extending into the evening, weekends and holidays.
- increasing CEO and Government demands for data collection and accountability; Principals complained about "more time testing and reporting then actually teaching".
- child protection legislation requirements - many Principals find it very difficult to balance the needs of students, parents and staff when dealing with allegations.
- new legislative provisions such as chemical safety and privacy laws place demands upon Principals without adequate training or support.
- students with special needs and families with a wide range of problems are a source of significant stress; family law disputes are seen as being particularly stressful.
- requirements that Principals be "site managers" with increasing responsibilities for plant and equipment.

Principals in primary schools, especially in rural areas, also cited the challenges related to the expectations of the Parish Priest and the local community. Many said: "I feel as though I am on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week". Others said "No wonder succession is a concern when teachers see tired, stressed Principals in their own schools".

APPENDIX 9

MEETING OF PRINCIPALS AND CEO SENIOR STAFF
27 JULY 2000

I) A RESPONSE TO THE RESEARCH.... COMMENTS, QUESTIONS

FILE COPY

SMALL GROUPS OF TWO CONVERSATION PARTNERS

I)   A RESPONSE TO THESE PROPOSALS

1. That greater strategic thinking be applied to provision of opportunities for spiritual formation for Principals, executives, teachers at Diocesan and school levels e.g. mapping and longer term planning with Principals of opportunities for spiritual formation in schools.

   S. AGREE   OOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO   S.DISAGREE

2. That the Spiritual Formation Team, as well as providing programs for staff, expand its brief to include formal professional development of staff to promote *the spiritual formation of* students through retreats, liturgy, groups such as YCS, St Vincent de Paul.

   S. AGREE   OOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO   S.DISAGREE

3. That the Spiritual Formation Team seek to establish a network of associates to resource and enhance the work of the Team, including Principals, CEO staff, and others working in spiritual formation.

   S. AGREE   OOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO   S.DISAGREE

   Please turn over Please turn over Please turn over Please turn over

4. That the Team continue work begun in adapting programs such as AFFIRMS to train leaders and provide school based resources to support Principals and executives in providing for school based spiritual formation and formation as Catholic educators.

   S. AGREE   OOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO   S.DISAGREE

5. That the Team develop a greater range of programs in terms of their format, focus and processes to respond to the diversity of teachers' needs in spiritual formation.

   S. AGREE   OOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO   S.DISAGREE

6. That the team explore how Information Technology can be used to support Principals and executives in their leadership.

   S. AGREE   OOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO   S.DISAGREE

II)   SOME FURTHER SUGGESTIONS

If you would like to discuss any aspect of today's meeting further, please write your name so we can arrange a time to meet.

Name: (Optional) _____

APPENDIX 10

Wellsprings

March 10 – 14, 1997

"We must draw inward, before we can reach outward"

❖   *What changes have been effected in me through the experiences of these days?*

- Have been able to look with the eyes of my soul on things I have been struggling with for years and now seem to be surfacing with more peace – God is really there with me – in my tears – crying with me – allowing me to be truly ME. I am who I am because of my past experiences and am now more able to reconcile myself with them. I have begun to share more openly my experiences and also to truly LISTEN to the other and see the beauty within.

  - That I can use other people to understand who I am and guide me. To see things in life with a sharper focus. Appreciate that problems in my own life are only minor compared to other peoples.

- It has been a time of gaining perspectives;
  perspective on myself – inner and my place in my world; perspective on others – gaining insights through hearing and sharing other's stories. This has been positive both in a humbling way – my 'life obstacles' are crumbs compared with those of some others; and in enabling me to see deeper into some others that I may have turned from. perspectives on the broader world.

  - I have truly been inspired to be more ready to serve others and know that to do this I must allow myself time, time to reflect, prayer and 'be'.

- a slowing down, a stronger realisation of our relational God; a readiness to 'float with' God's spirit, stronger awareness of God's presence in all that happens, even the smallest things that can occur through the day.

  - PEACEFULNESS – SERENITY – AWARENESS
    of the need to focus on God in every moment, to see Jesus in every person, everyone is a child of God, gift time, talent to others, change happens slowly – never give up.

- How important each and everyone of us are.

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- I have touched an inner peace – I know it will be there even when routine and life surmount it. It gives me confidence to open myself to others – to share my journey in knowing God joyfully with others in living my everyday life as His.

  - I have found a gentle peace from within. I have found a way to draw in the strength of God and the breath of the Spirit. I have finally shed some old wounds from the past.

- I came with many blockages and barriers – emotional, spiritual, creative. These walls have been broken down and allowed me to be renewed and watered from the well filled with a refreshed spirit of God.

  - Given my self permission to reflect, to 'slow down' and 'take in the moment'.

- It has taken me much longer this week to be still than I ever imagined. I think I value much more the opportunities I have been given to develop my understanding of Christology, mission, ministry and the importance of being still and giving myself time – time in the moment and time for reflection. I know too, that I now have a greater understanding of my call to be Christ for others in the ordinary events of life.

  - I have become calmer and more peaceful. In having given myself time for reflection and inner searching I have found Christ alive within me. I have seen and been touched by others in the group whose struggles in their daily lives make my own seem insignificant. My own self involvement with work or family needs to be moved towards the needs of others.

- That Jesus is in me, I am good, very good, with this encounter I can see Jesus in those around me, God is 'done' – I'm going to try to do God. My ministry is to show others Jesus by my doing. I am more peaceful (inner peace). Have renewed faith in people – realise it was not them but me who lacked the faith.

❖ *A call to ACTION*
where to from here?

- Am determined to take the responsibility for time for ME. There is a lot of "stuff" that needs to be looked at and let go – so now is the time! Will also go back to my ministry with a clearer sense of God and Me working together and sharing the experiences of my life. Will endeavour to be more sensitive and yet challenging to others.248

- To use the strategies that you used in the classroom – i.e. the importance of including all – talk to a new person. Slow down and take time out in order to find inner peace. Set out with dreams that go further than a horizon with them so I don't have unused life.

  - The action I feel compelled to is one of gentle empowerment rather than frenetic powerlessness which I felt. Where perhaps I might have agitated for action, I will try to unnerve by my firm calm and resolve. Sound a bit impossible for those who know me but maybe that's where the message will come from – the change.

- My hopes from this week are that I will be more able to live like Jesus because of what I have learnt about them and myself. I have been inspired to become more vocal and involved in issues of injustice that surround me and know that I can make a difference. I've also realized that I don't have to be aggressive to do this, just aware and true.

  - Add to richness of staff experiences of prayer, take the day more slowly, not let my mind race ahead.

- Justice.
  Responsibility to be aware of the oppressed, underprivileged to start by *helping those closeby. Bring parishes alive by focussing on* community Eucharist. The real Sunday obligation is to be there for others and then to a celebration of Eucharist.

  - Live Every Breath that is given.
    To Love my child with more awareness.
    To Love my parents with more awareness.
    To Love my Extended Family with more awareness.
    To Love my Friends with more awareness.
    To Love my Community with more awareness.

- To be more outreaching and less protective of the me I have found hard to share with others. To be the best wife and mother I can – to be there for them by being at peace with myself. Not to avoid the path less travelled – to share with the one.

  - To pass on that gentle peace to others. To show the change in me by becoming a better listener.

- Take up my ministry to others with a passion. Look after me.

  - Listen; involve one other person. Dare to be free and easy. Have the courage to speak up for the "least of my brethren".

- My call is to be more reflective and to respond through action to others. To be more proactive in my response to issues of justice, so that Eucharist can be fully lived and shared with others. Knowing that my helping one I can make a difference is vitally important. I realise too that my own family is where I need to spend more valuable time where we can be together.

  - My concern for others, wellbeing needs to be put more into action. I need more patience and understanding in my relationship with my own children. Time for quiet personal reflection must be taken each week, and my family needs to understand everyone's need for "time out" – to get in touch with the person inside us/Christ within us. To be more open to the differences in each child in my class, and to be more welcoming to "strangers" we encounter in our school community i.e. relief teachers and encourage other staff members to be also.

- I have to be patient – raise my voice only once a day then once every two days etc. To be understanding – to make understanding statements not judgemental ones – think judgementally only – say understanding things (or nothing). Then – think with understanding too – look for the good i.e. for Jesus in those I meet. I have one person in particular in mind.

❖ *Any other comments?*

- This week has been a wonderful time for me. Filled with a mixture of deeply felt emotions. Thank you for the opportunity to have the quiet time – to begin to realize more the responsibility that is mine. The way the sessions were conducted was so "prayerful" and alive. The central focus was powerful and challenging. An experience I will truly treasure. Thanks for the simplicity and"genuine–ness" of your own lives.

  - I can see why each member has been chosen to be a part of Wellsprings because you all have your own unique talents. The first day I arrived I felt so welcome and then relaxed. Thank you. The program was varied, challenging and non threatening. See you soon.

- I'm really grateful I had the opportunity to take part in Wellsprings and the wait has made it all the more precious. The true value and impact did not 'hit' until Thursday afternoon – not that I wasn't happy up till then, but a certain peace and acceptance seemed to come over me then. Our group has been especially dynamic because of our diversity. I am so glad to have been part of a broader slice of life. I'm looking forward to the Twilight session.

- The gentleness and serenity shown to me through the team have helped me to 'relax', 'refresh', 're–evaluate', 're–everything' my life. (These were my hopes on Monday morning). Thank you for the opportunity to come to know myself more fully. Your leadership, knowledge and insights are something I hope to take with me. Thank you for the opportunity to come to know myself more fully. There is one quote that stands out in my mind as particularly relevant "Living Life is more than just a mere existence". This is something I intend to make real in my life.

- Thank you all.

- I have felt the need for something like this for some time – I want to grow beyond the blossoming buds – how can I nurture this – through reading/studying/life experiences. Lord help me to assimilate all this with each moment of each day.

- During those sleepless nights, God revealed so many insights into what I needed, what I needed to do. Revived, through 'tears of joy' something I had put aside (the well had become dry).

- Alone – shocked – surprised – confused – awareness – understanding – fulfilment – but still a long way to go but this is the moment, I'll get there eventually with a better understanding and with one other.

- Many thanks for the opportunities that we have experienced this week. I know that this program entails much preparation and commitment from you all, especially in the time you give away from your own families and communities. For this I am most appreciative – you have given so much.

I repeat: it's worth doing nothing and having a rest.

Wellsprings

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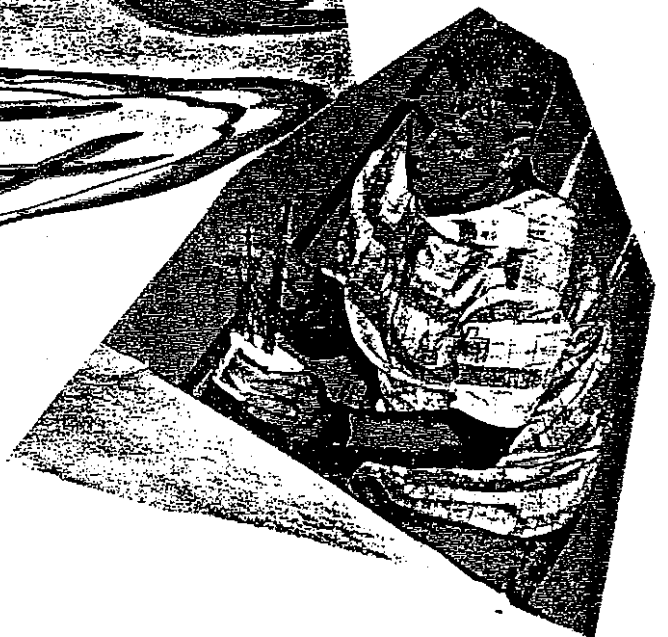
«DATA ADD PANTHERS»

APPENDIX 11

MF:rf

August 13, 1992

«ADDRESSES»

Dear «SALUTATION»,

Greetings from your Co-Leaders and Colleagues. It seems ages since we have had any opportunity of catching up. We are looking forward to meeting you all at the Panthers on Thursday evening, September 3 (Foyer - Front Entrance 6.30 p.m.) We have really missed you all, each bringing your own particular contribution. Peter and Dan are moving along with the Spirit in their own way and we are finding each term to be blessed with each teams individual gifts. An amazing experience for us.

We were really thrilled to know of Liz's Twilight with St. Canice's Staff, David's position as acting REC, and Gary as acting Assistant Principal. It was so good to have Colleen as a very active and supportive colleague on Westmead's Staff Day and Anne we missed you greatly at our mountains gathering at Blackheath. We had a glass of wine in your honour!

Life for us has been very busy, but none-the-less rewarding. Our programs with the Broken Bay Principals at Kincumber and the Principals from the Armidale Diocese and representatives from Maitland Diocese were challenging, spirit filled and the response and action planning for the future, very positive. Each week has been full, with Staff Days and August 24 will find us Wellspringing again. Pray for this group and for the facilitators.

We think of you often and thank God for the tremendous gifts you are and the contributions you make.

Every Blessing, Love and Prayers,

Anna Warlow, SGS	Marg Finlay, IBVM	Bill Tarrant, FMS
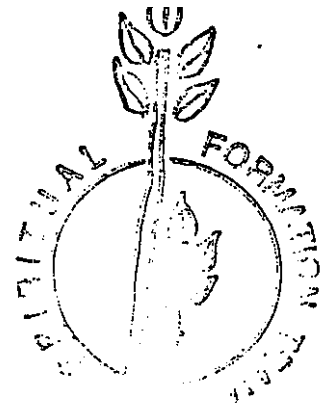
AW:cl

September 14, 1992.

Dear Co-Leaders,

A reminder that our Leadership Formation Program for this term commences
5.30 this Thursday 17th September at Champagnat Centre, Dorahy Street,
Dundas, and concludes with lunch on Saturday at 1:00.

To make it more convenient we have arranged a later registration - so, **5.30**
registration and pre-dinner.

Please bring with you a Bible and a newspaper headline illustrating a justice issue
in which **"I could make a difference"** . This will be used in our evening liturgy
on Friday.

Saturday's Liturgy will focus on "The Agony of Somalia". In much of our current
literature encouraging us to "act locally and think globally" there is the invitation to
accept the challenge to open our hearts to our brothers and sisters in the suffering
areas of our world, and the challenge to share in our co-leadership with each other
in raising awareness.

> *"Awareness of the sacred in life is what brings our world*
> *together and the lack of awareness and sacred care*
> *is what is tearing it apart"*
>
> *(Joan Chittister OSB*
> *Wisdom Distilled in the Daily)*

Our liturgies during our time together will hopefully increase our AWARENESS.

During Session One on Thursday evening, you will be invited to share personally
and as teams on action that has been taken since our last gathering. It has been
encouraging to hear some reports. Please bring along, in multiple copies of 32,
anything you may have used in staff/groups reflection which could be helpful for
your co-leaders!

We look forward to seeing you on Thursday.

Sincerely,

Anna   Marg   &   Bill

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PARRAMATTA

AW:rf

July 29, 1992
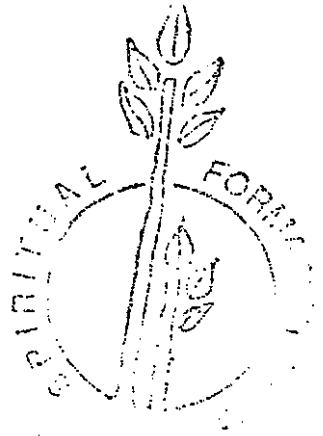
Dear Co-Leaders,

Thank you for the Personal Growth Groups received so far. Congratulations! Enclosed are copies of these for your use. It has been good to meet up with several of you on staff days etc. You are indeed *"keeping the flame alive".*

Great news re your "Honking Gathering" on 23/7 at Blacktown South. Have heard very positive vibes trickling through.

As the time draws closer, we will forward to you reading material and your collated reflective responses from our last gathering, which will be a source of focus at our *September 17-19* Workshop at Dundas (5.00 p.m. Thursday - 1.00 p.m. Saturday).

We hope your endeavours with Staff Reflections etc., are encouraging experiences for you.

Keep Honking,

Your Co-leaders,

Anna Warlow, SGS   Marg Finlay, IBVM   Bill Tarrant, FMS

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APPENDIX 12

CODING PROCESS

Sample of Coding process for "Wellsprings" focus group

1   Transcript of taped interview typed into a Word document.

2   Transferred into a text document for importing into NUD*IST

3   Imported text documents were coded:

The text unit is the smallest unit of text that can be coded and usually consists of a few lines, one sentence or a paragraph on the same theme.

The following comment was made in one principals' focus group:

> "The development of the Catholic school system was in the
> hands of the religious who had strong formational programs in
> their early training in the religious tradition. It was ongoing
> formation … [they were] formed for the job" (I30)

This comment was one text unit and was coded under "Issues" as the node "Principal Formation" (6.4). Discussion on Principal formation occurred in other interviews. The node "Principal Formation" was identified in four other documents.

The coding status for the node "Principal Formation" was five documents and thirty three text units.

APPENDIX 13

DOCUMENT CODING

Data Collection Method and Source of Data	Research Code	NUD*IST Document Listing Number (traced to source)
1 Interview		
a Individual		
a.1 CEO personnel	I1 (off-line)	1
a.2 CEO personnel	I2 (off-line)	2
a.3 SFT member	I3 (off-line)	8
a.4 CEO personnel	I4 (off-line)	10
a.5 SFT member	I5 (off-line)	21
a.6 Principal interview	I6 (on-line)	24
a.7 Principal interview	I7 (on-line)	25
a.8 SFT member	I8 (off-line)	19
a.9 SFT member	I9 (off-line)	20
a.10 CEO personnel	I10 (on-line)	39
a.11 CEO personnel	I11 (off-line)	9
a.12 SFT member	I12 (off-line)	22
b Group		
b1 Wellsprings participants		
b1.1 Wellsprings	I20 (on-line)	26
b1.2 Wellsprings	I21 (on-line)	28
b1.3 Wellsprings	I22 (on-line)	32
b1.4 Wellsprings	I23 (on-line)	33
b1.5 Wellsprings	I24 (on-line)	34
b1.6 Wellsprings	I25 (on-line)	35
b1.7 Wellsprings	I26 (on-line)	36
b1.8 Wellsprings	I27 (on-line)	37
b1.9 Wellsprings	I28 (on-line)	38
b2 Principals focus groups		
b2.1 Principals	I30 (on-line)	11
b2.2 Principals	I31 (on-line)	12
b2.3 Principals	I32 (on-line)	14
b2.4 Principals	I33 (on-line)	15
b2.5 Principals	I34 (on-line)	16
b2.6 Principals	I35 (on-line)	13
2 Survey	SI (off-line)	7
3 Documents		
a Principal research		
a1 IEU Survey of principals	D9 (off-line)	17
a2 CEO survey of principals regarding spiritual formation	D1 (off-line)	3
b. SFT documents		
b1 SFT Wellsprings	D21 (off-line)	29
b2 SFT Wellsprings	D22 (off-line)	4
b3 SFT Wellsprings	D3 (off-line)	31
b4 SFT Wellsprings	D4 (off-line)	30
b5 Historical documents	D24 (off-line)	5

APPENDIX 14 (a)

PRIMARY NODE: EXPERIENCES (of spiritual formation)

Minor Node Address	Node Description	Number of Documents	Number of Text Units
3.1	Liturgy	6	34
3.2	Small group sharing	5	28
3.3	Use of story	not coded	offline document
3.4	Reflective time	7	26
3.5	Creative expression	5	21
3.6	Personal sharing	3	6
3.7	Supportive environment	4	12
3.8	Educative	1	1
3.9	Acceptance of difference	3	11
3.10	Theological knowledge	6	36
3.11	Teaching religious education	1	2
3.12	Prayer	5	21
3.13	Physical environment	5	23
3.14	Counselling	1	11
3.15	Shared prayer	3	26
3.16	Failure	2	8
3.17	Misconceptions	1	1
3.18	SOS revision	1	2
3.19	Around themes	1	9
3.20	Slowing down	1	3
3.21	Tai chi	3	15
3.22	Community	5	40
3.23	Modelling	5	54
3.24	Variety of	1	10
3.25	Conversations	1	8
3.26	Personal space	4	21
3.27	Personal care	1	8
3.28	Bonding	5	43
3.29	Scripture	1	6
3.30	Massage group	1	7
3.31	Prayer focus	1	3
3.32	Of God	1	10
3.33	Hospitality	1	5
3.34	Attention to detail	1	3
3.35	Social humour	1	4
3.36	Nurture	1	3

APPENDIX 14 (b)

PRIMARY NODE: Issues

Minor Node Address	Node Description	Number of Documents	Number of Text Units
6.1	Level of knowledge		
6.2	Readiness	8	60
6.3	Presenters	4	18
6.4	Principal formation	5	33
6.5	Confronting	1	3
6.6	Unknown needs	2	4
6.7	Differences among teachers/different needs	8	81
6.8	Style of presentation	6	69
6.9	Choice	3	14
6.10	Adult learning model	4	22
6.11	Teacher reluctance	5	39
6.12	Adult development	7	46
6.13	Perceptions of teachers	2	3
6.14	Male spirituality	2	8
6.15	Time	6	41
6.16	Balance	2	4
6.17	Resources	3	22
6.18	Mission	5	47
6.19	Pre service	3	7
6.20	Principal as religious leader	3	34
6.21	Future	5	38
6.22	Negativity	4	50
6.23	Empathy	1	3
6.24	Non Catholic teachers	1	3
6.25	School impact	5	44
6.26	Industrial issues	2	5
6.27	Demands of teaching	4	11
6.28	Relationships with priests	2	6
6.29	Teacher movement	2	23
6.30	Own development	2	33
6.31	Staff influence	1	16
6.32	Uncommitted teachers	2	25
6.33	Access to programs	1	1
6.34	Family issues	5	16
6.35	Staff lack of depth	2	18
6.36	Staff hurt	2	17
6.37	Unchurched teachers	1	7
6.38	Re-educating practices	1	4
6.39	Public role	3	19
6.40	Impact on students	2	17

Appendix 14 (b) cont

Minor Node Address	Node Description	Number of Documents	Number of Text Units
6.41	Non Wellsprings	2	4
6.42	Teacher employment	1	11
6.43	Principal to principal communication	1	8
6.44	Principal to consultant	1	14
6.45	Review appraisal	1	9
6.46	Principal support	2	11
6.47	Pragmatism	1	10
6.48	Models of formation	3	34
6.49	Religious life	1	4
6.50	New church	2	51
6.51	Size of schools	1	8
6.52	Privacy	2	6
6.53	Younger teachers needs	1	4
6.54	Continuity	1	2
6.55	School life	1	3
6.56	Teacher brokenness	1	6

PRIMARY NODE: Responses

Minor Node Address	Node Description	Number of Documents	Number of Text Units
7.1	Mixed	6	28
7.2	Confronting	3	12
7.3	Not letting go	1	1
7.4	Positive	11	204
7.5	Fear	2	7
7.6	Reluctance	4	12
7.7	Inner peace	3	10
7.8	Negative	6	40
7.9	Energize	2	6
7.10	Informative	1	1
7.11	Forming bonds	6	29
7.12	Conversation following	2	21
7.13	Belonging	1	4
7.14	Untouched	2	9
7.15	Empowered	3	33
7.16	Lived response	6	63
7.17	Anger	2	25
7.18	Transformation	2	7
7.19	Deeper understanding	4	14
7.20	Open eyes	5	36
7.21	Liberating	2	2
7.22	Challenged	3	21
7.23	Remember/draw from	2	11
7.24	With family	4	44
7.25	Parish community	2	28
7.26	Confidence	1	5
7.27	Relationships	1	3
7.28	In school	7	135
7.29	Consciousness	1	7
7.30	Continue to deeper	5	22
7.31	Feel valued by system	1	10
7.32	Too deep	1	9
7.33	Too emotional	3	31
7.34	Community building	2	13
7.35	Critical reflection	6	48
7.36	Social action	2	7
7.37	Confrontational	1	7
7.38	Deeply personal	2	9
7.39	Sparked off further study	1	4
7.40	Prayer life	1	8
7.41	Changed perspective	2	7
7.42	Nurture self	1	2