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THE PILGRIMS' RETURN: THE INFLUENCE OF THE ASSISI PILGRIMAGE ON HIGH
SCHOOL PARTICIPANTS

A Dissertation Presented
to
The Faculty of the School of Education
Department of Leadership Studies
Catholic Education Leadership Program

In partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

by
Fr. Christopher Iwancio OFM Cap.
San Francisco
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THE UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO

Dissertation Abstract

The Pilgrims' Return:

The Influence of the Assisi Pilgrimage on High School Participants

Catholic schools were founded to assist parents in the passing of the faith to their children (Second Vatican Council, 1965; SCCE, 1994). Despite this mission, research has indicated that in the United States there has been a disassociation Catholics from their faith (Pew, 2008, 2014; Smith and Denton, 2005; St. Mary's Press and CARA, 2018). Programming was developed to encourage youths' faith development and their active membership in the Catholic Church (Denton and Smith, 2005; USCCB, 1997). One program, pilgrimages, has seen an increase in participants across the world (Cleary, 2017; Harris, 2010, Rymarz, 2008).

This mixed-method study sought to explore the motivations and influence of the Assisi pilgrimage on participants from St. Bonaventure High School (pseudonym). *The Assisi Pilgrim Survey*, an 18 item survey consisting of questions about demographics, religiosity utilizing questions from the National Study of Youth and Religion (2002), and open ended questions were distributed to current students who went (n=24). Race, socio-economic status, and religiosity data were used for purposeful sampling. Eight students participated in semi-structured interviews, in which they also provided photos from their pilgrimage.

The study found that the pilgrims had tourist motivations, social motivations, religious motivations, and Franciscan motivations for attending the pilgrimage. It also found that a number of external factors such as money and family played a role in their

desire to attend. Students described their experience as affording them the opportunity to connect to both peers and adults during free time, being able to understand more and to relate

better to the person of St. Francis by visiting places connected to his life and the Franciscan movement, as well as participating in a number of structured activities that influenced their faith.

This study suggests that pilgrimage was an influential campus ministry program to pilgrims of different backgrounds, and religiosity in a positive way. It affirms the use of pilgrimages as programming alongside retreats and service trips. However, it was found that Campus Ministry programming needs to address the needs of students in their day-to-day context, as well as, to develop more resources to allow more marginalized students to attend.

This dissertation, written under the direction of the candidate's dissertation committee and approved by the members of the committee, has been presented to and accepted by the Faculty of the School of Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education. The content and research methodologies presented in this work represent the work of the candidate alone.

Christopher Iwancio
Candidate

May, 1, 2019
Date

Dissertation Committee:

Ursula Aldana, Ph.D.
Chairperson

May, 1, 2019

Michael Duffy, Ed.D.

May, 1, 2019

Emily Nusbaum, Ph.D.

May, 1, 2019

Kathryn Barush, D.Phil.

May, 1, 2019

DEDICATION

As they approached the village to which they were going, he gave the impression that he was going on farther. But they urged him, "Stay with us, for it is nearly evening and the day is almost over." So he went in to stay with them.

-Luke 24:28-29

This dissertation is dedicated to my father, Paul Iwancio, and my high school teacher, Michael DeMarco, for their dedication to the field of education, for instilling in me the importance of education, and its transformative power of education when society sees it as a basic human right.

And

To every one of my teachers, who have dedicated themselves to the vocation of Catholic education.

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CHAPTER I

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Statement of the Problem

Catholic schools have been established to assist parents and churches to the pass on the Catholic faith, as well as to help each young person develop as a whole person through participation in religious practice both individually and communally. Schools and churches have developed youth ministry and special programming geared towards young people to foster this growth through activities such as retreats, service projects, and extended trips. Despite this mission, recent research has shown a disassociation of youth from the faith (Pew, 2008; Pew, 2014; Smith and Denton, 2005; St. Mary's Press and CARA, 2018). However, there has been a significant increase in youth participation in special religious travel called pilgrimages, but little research has been done on the influence of pilgrimage experiences on Catholic high school students, as part of a youth ministry program (Cleary 2017; Harris, 2010; Rymarz, 2008).

Background and Need

Despite the efforts of my parents, my local church and my Catholic school, I too fell away from the practice of my faith during high school. I participated in a number of events sponsored by the school and parish that ought to engage youth through dances, retreats, special prayer rituals and other programming. Despite the number of programs, they did not engage me or help me to develop my faith. However, when a couple of my friends invited me to go on a special religious experience which involved traveling out of state, I found myself returning home as a different person. This led me back to the practice of my faith.

Now, having participated in a number of youth pilgrimages as a chaperone, I see that these programs provide a unique opportunity to reach and to influence the lives of young people.

Youth ministry seeks to respond to the needs of youth, to help them develop, and to share their talents with others (USCC, 1976). The role of youth ministry is to empower young people to be disciples, to help them grow into participation in the Church and to foster personal and spiritual growth (USCCB, 1997). Churches, schools, and other organizations use youth ministry to assist parents, the primary educators, in the development of their children (USCCB, 1997). While youth ministry can provide experiences that help young people develop their faith, Aldana (2015) pointed to a need to study the impact of religious programming on the lives of the young people to see if it meets the needs of young people within their particular social and cultural context.

While Catholic youth ministry has worked to foster the faith lives of teenagers, recent research has revealed that a disassociation from Catholicism in the United States is significantly high. The Pew Research Center's (2008) *America's Changing Religious Landscape* study found that Catholicism has lost more adults than other religious groups (p. 19). The Pew Center (2014) reported that between the years of 2007-2014 the number of adult Catholics dropped by approximately four million people (p. 9). Among Catholic teenagers the decline is particularly staggering compared to other religious groups. In 2005, Smith and Denton published an in-depth longitudinal study called the National Study of Youth and Religion (NSYR) to study the spiritual lives of teenagers (13-17 years old). They found Catholic teenagers scored "5 to 25 percentage points lower than their conservative, mainline, and black Protestant peers on many of a variety of religious belief, practices, experiences, commitments, and evaluations" (p. 194). A recent study conducted by St.

Mary's Press and CARA (2018), reported that 13 was the median age for disaffiliation from Catholicism.

A number of forces have had a negative impact on these efforts. In the United States the influences of individualism, materialism, pleasure seeking, and consumerism have been powerful influences undermining the Christian faith (USCCB, 1992). The impact of these influences has led to the rejection of authority (Wright, 2016), privatization of religion (Wright, 2016), and the dissolving of family structures (Smith and Denton, 2005). As a result, religious formation has suffered from a breakdown in the chain of religious memory, which has been passed from one generation onto the next (Hervieu-L  ger, 2000).

Despite the disassociation of youth from organized religion there has been a worldwide increase of youth participating in religious pilgrimages (Cleary, 2017; Harris, 2010; Rymarz 2007a, 2008). Casti (2015) described the increased participation of youth in the pilgrimage to the ecumenical religious community in Taiz  , France, which comprises many Protestant, Orthodox, and Catholic members. Harris (2010) observed the Marian shrine in Lourdes, France, where in the mid-nineteenth century St. Bernadette experienced a vision of the Blessed Virgin Mary, has seen an increasing number of young people going to assist many sick and elderly pilgrims. El Camino de Santiago de Compostela, a pilgrimage which follows various paths throughout Europe to what is believed to be the final resting place of St. James in Galicia, has also seen a recent increase in young participants. In 2005 the Pilgrim's Office in Santiago de Compostela (Oficina de Acogida al Peregrino) reported that 30,217 pilgrims under the age of 30 registered for the pilgrimage while in 2016, a record 75,460 pilgrims under the age of 30 registered (Oficina de Acogida al Peregrino, 2016). Much of this effort has been attributed to the efforts of Pope John Paul II who visited many

pilgrimage sites such as Mexico City, Santiago de Compostela, and Lourdes in order to help revitalize the faith, especially among youth (Casti, 2015; Cleary, 2011).

Pope John Paul II, following the call of Pope Paul VI to develop new ways to pass down the faith, developed World Youth Day. Pope John Paul II (1996) wrote that the purpose of World Youth Day was to:

make the person of Jesus the centre of the faith and life of every young person so that he may be their constant point of reference and also the inspiration of every initiative and commitment for the education of the new generations. (¶1)

Since 1984, World Youth Day (WYD) has been held every two to three years (Norman and Johnson, 2011). In 2000 over 2.5 million people traveled to WYD and in 1995, when held in Manila, WYD drew over 4 million people (Rymarz, 2006). While much programming is available for youth in parishes and schools, Pope John Paul II (1996) intended the pilgrimage experience to offer to youth “new encouragement for commitment, objectives which foster ever greater involvement and participation” (¶ 3).

WYD, while considered by the church as a pilgrimage, is not easily classified as a pilgrimage because it does not fit traditional pilgrimage theory. Norman and Johnson (2011) point out that WYD has no permanent geographical tradition. While pilgrimages such as Lourdes, and Santiago de Compostela have a geographical center to which people gravitate, the location of WYD changes every time it is held. However, the powerful religious experiences described at WYD are comparable to those at fixed geographic pilgrimage shrines and sites. For example Rymarz (2007) reported that 12 months after the pilgrimage 98.6 % of Australian pilgrims (under age 18) who went to World Youth Day in Cologne,

Germany described as having experienced their faith being strengthened as a result of the pilgrimage experience.

Research into youth pilgrimage reflects that the practice of pilgrimage appeals to young people from early teens to those who are in their mid-thirties. The pilgrimage to Taize is geared towards those between ages 17-29 (Vilaça, 2010), WYD targeted for those ages 16-30 (Rymarz, 2007). Ann Casson (2013) noted that school-aged students (18 and under) from England experienced pilgrimages differently than young adults (19+) from England. She also observed that the experience of pilgrimages differs from the experiences of retreats and mission trips and that more research is needed to understand the experience of pilgrimages taken by high school students.

Pilgrimage is a multidimensional experience with different expectations and motivations held by young pilgrims (Eade and Sallow, 2000; Rymarz, 2007). While research of Australian youth showed that those attending World Youth Day had a particularly high religious commitment (Cleary, 2017; Mason, 2010; Rymarz, 2007), research of English youth on pilgrimages to Taize and Lourdes revealed that religious commitment was particularly low (Casson, 2013; Casti, 2015; Harris, 2010). To account for these differences, the Catholic journalist, John Allen (2005) developed categories for those who had varying levels of interest in the pilgrimage experiences; those who were tourists, those who were unsure of their motivations, and those who were strongly committed to the experience. Mason (2010) further developed the categories to include the devoted, the involved, the open, and the social. Similarly Cleary (2017) developed four key groups: devoted pilgrims, religious believers, meaning seekers, and social tourists (p. 262). The motivation of pilgrims

reflected both the religious and social nature of pilgrimages (Cleary, 2017; Harris, 2010; Rymarz, 2011; Singleton, 2011).

During youth pilgrimages both social and religious activities might take place. Formal rituals such as Mass and Confession, which have been traditionally a part of Catholic pilgrimages, are also part of youth pilgrimages. Devotions such as a Stations of the Cross, which is a prayer ritual reflecting on the passion and death of Jesus, takes place during World Youth Day. Taize pilgrimages often include the singing of repetitive chants; and rosaries, a repetitive cycle of prayers meditating on the life of Mary and Jesus, are often recited at Lourdes. Participants often receive formal presentations or instructions on various topics such as the Bible sessions at Taize and catechism sessions at WYD. Social interactions can range from small group sharing at Taize (Casti, 2015), exchanging souvenir pins with others at WYD (Singleton, 2011), and relaxing at a local food establishment (Harris, 2010).

Pilgrimages are complex religious and social experiences, whose form can take many different shapes. Upon their return home pilgrims have reported increased involvement in their churches and youth groups (Kregting and Harperink, 2005; Rymarz, 2007) and were found to be more likely to discuss religion with family and friends (Rymarz, 2007). Additionally after returning home pilgrims have reported being more empathic for those in need and a greater desire to help others (Cleary, 2017; Harris, 2010).

Pilgrimages is one of a number of initiatives the larger institutional Catholic Church has engaged to provide ways for youth to encounter the message of God's love and to be embedded into the life of the Church further deepening their knowledge of the faith. To address the current context, new and creative programming has been created in parishes and schools to empower young people as disciples of Jesus Christ, to encourage participation in

their faith community, and to cultivate the spiritual growth of each person (USCCB, 1997). The development of these programs has been occurring at multiple levels of the church: global, diocesan, parishes, and schools. East, Eckert, Kurts and Singer-Towns (2004) found that participation in extended experiences, like World Youth Day (WYD), were beneficial for youth to “feel pride and enthusiasm in being Catholic”, to develop “a deep sense of community”, to create opportunities for new leadership roles, and to help young people experience a “larger sense of the Church”(p. 46-47). With the potential for youth attending pilgrimages like WYD (Rymarz 2007b, 2008) and Lourdes (Harris, 2010) to have a positive effect; research needs to be done on the pilgrimage experience of Catholic high school youth from the United States.

Purpose

The purpose of this mixed-method study is to understand the impact of a pilgrimage to Assisi on adolescent participants from St. Bonaventure Catholic High School (pseudonym). Through surveys it identified the various demographic of those who attended the pilgrimage, their religiosity, as well as some of the motivations and experiences of participants for attending the pilgrimage, that were used to develop a purposeful sample. From this sample, the researcher conducted semi-structured one-on-one interviews of participants in order to provide deeper understanding of the influence of the Assisi pilgrimage and its elements on participants and their personal faith.

Theoretical Framework

Three interrelated fields of theory, which included adolescent religiosity, youth ministry, and pilgrimages, were explored through the theoretical framework found in the work of French sociologist of religion, Danièle Hervieu-Léger. Hervieu-Léger (2000) viewed

the breakdown of the passing of faith, which she terms the *chain of memory*, as being influenced by the social forces of post-modernism. However, despite these forces, she observed the phenomenon of the World Youth Day pilgrimage, in which many young people were participating in a religious experience, showed the chain of memory being reinvented in a unique way. From this framework the field of sociology of religion focused primarily on contemporary research that has been done within the context of United States culture. Further research focused on the ecclesial role of the Catholic Church on transmission of the faith to young people through youth ministry within the context of Catholic schools. Finally, the field of contemporary pilgrimage theory was mined, with regards to the phenomenon of World Youth Day.

Research Questions

1. What are the motivations of St. Bonaventure High School (Pseudonym) students who attended the Assisi pilgrimage?
2. How do students describe their experience of this pilgrimage and its elements?
3. How do students describe the influence of this pilgrimage experience in relation to their personal faith and practices?

Significance

Little research has been done to explore the effectiveness of Campus Ministry programs (Cutarelli, 2006; Sureau, 2012). This study adds to the body of research and knowledge regarding the experience of youth while on pilgrimage, as well as the body of research on campus ministry programming in the United States. It also provided insights benefitting future creation of effective pilgrimage experiences for youth in varying forms. Casson (2012) noted that much research on pilgrimage has focused on the experience of

adults and therefore, “research is required into the experience and understandings of pilgrimages within the Catholic secondary school”(p. 45). Because young people “are active agents in their own formation process” (CCE, 1988, ¶105) cooperation in the process is essential. Hence, the voice and agency of young people is crucial as “the voices of young people themselves are rarely considered when discussing effective Christian education and youth ministry” (Kaster, 2008, p. 5). This study provided a greater voice for those who participate in campus ministry programs, and provided more agency on the part of young people in the research of their experience of faith. Because pilgrimages for youth require a large commitment of resources including personnel, money and time (Mason, 2010), by studying how students experience various elements, resources should be better allocated, as recommended by Smith and Denton (2005) to provide for more effective youth ministry.

It is hoped that this study will lead to better campus ministry programming at Catholic high schools. Well-run and relevant programming can be transformative to adolescents not only in faith practices, but in their overall personal development. This study led to more research on adolescent faith, research that allowed for young people to have more agency, as well as allowing for marginalized voices to be heard. The transmission of religion, particularly in the history of the Catholic Church, has led to the founding of many great social institutions, such as schools and parishes, but throughout history these institutions have contributed oppressive and destructive forces that have led to the destruction of cultures and the stifling of human development. In addition, if the goal of youth ministry programs is to foster adolescents to grow and participate in faith, but also to encourage leadership in our church and society, then this research intends to provide an

avenue youth to voice their experiences and helping to shape programming in which they take part.

Definition of Terms

Religiosity- “the content of religious belief, the conduct of religious activity and the centrality of religion to life” (Pearce and Denton, 2011, p. 13)

Spirituality- “the personal search and desire for a meaningful connection to something or someone sacred” (Pearce and Denton, 2011, p. 15).

Religious- the way in which a person is “spiritual in a particular way as informed by the beliefs and practices of a religious group” (Rossiter, 2011, p. 59).

Pilgrimage- A journey undertaken by someone or a group of people in order to seek meaning or purpose in one’s life.

Youth Pilgrimage- A pilgrimage organized by a church, organization, school or group for the purpose of helping young people develop their faith.

Youth Ministry- “The response of the Christian community to the needs of young people and the sharing of unique gifts of youth with the larger community” by drawing on “the resources and gifts of the adult community to provide opportunities for growth” and the opportunity for young people to work with adults in using their gift and talents to carry out the Church’s mission. (USCC, 1976, p. 4).

Campus Ministry- Youth ministry programming carried out within the context of a school or university setting.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Restatement of the Problem

The Catholic Church in the United States has faced a sharp increase in those disassociating from the Catholic faith. While, adolescence has been seen as an important time in the formation of faith development, it is currently a time when many adolescents are leaving the faith. Catholic schools, along with parents and parishes, have devoted a significant amount of attention and resources to develop programming to stem the departures (Denton and Smith, 2005). While the effectiveness of these programs is unknown, the initiative of World Youth Day has shown to be a highly attended pilgrimage that has helped in the adolescents' faith development, in particular for those who attend Catholic schools (Cleary, 2016; Mandes, 2016; Mason, 2010; Rymarz, 2011, 2007a, 2007b). Along side the development of WYD, a number of other pilgrimages have seen a growth in the number of young people participating. However, little to no research has been done on the influence of the pilgrimage phenomenon on American Catholic high school students.

Overview

This review of literature will address areas of current research on adolescents' religious practices and the efforts of the Catholic Church to foster growth in religious practices, faith and behavior among young people. The review will focus on current studies reporting an increase in disassociation of young Catholics in the United States and the social influences believed to have contributed to this decline, as well as current understanding of adolescent religiosity. With this background, the review will explore the Church's mission of passing on the faith with a focus on the role of the Catholic school in this process. Within

this context the development of Catholic youth ministry and its programming within the United States, will be analyzed. Finally, literature concerning the phenomenon of pilgrimage will be explored including its ancient roots, to its modern decline, and its post-modern revitalization. The growth of pilgrimages for youth will be examined with special emphasis on World Youth Day in its unique role in serving as a model for ministry to youth in a post-modern context.

Adolescent Religiosity

Studying Youth and Religion

In modern times, early figures such as John Locke and Jean-Jacque Rousseau showed interest in the religious lives of children and adolescents and saw it as a unique experience different from the religious life of adults (Schweitzer, 2014). Some of the contemporary research done on adolescent religiosity has viewed the period of adolescence as an important time in religious development in which many rapid changes can occur (Fowler, 1981; Regnerus and Eucker, 2006; Smith and Denton, 2005;). Between childhood and adulthood many theorists have observed a number of stages in religious development (Schweitzer, 2014). James Fowler (1981) used the work of Piaget, Erikson, Kohlberg, and Niebuhr to create a six-stage (one-pre stage) structure to account for the faith development stages that can occur from childhood to adulthood. Fowler (1981) developed his stages of faith as follows:

Stage Zero –Undifferentiated: describes the time approximately from birth to two years old in which early learning of either trust and safety, or distrust and fear are learned (p.119-121).

Stage One-Intuitive-Projective: describes a phase commonly seen between the ages of three to seven in which the person develops the imagination and becomes aware of the self (p.122-134).

Stage Two- Mythic-Literal: describes the time of school age children, in which the person becomes aware of justice in the telling of stories (p.135-150).

Stage Three- Synthetic-Conventional: describes approximately the age of 12 to adulthood in which the person's perspective extends beyond the family, a person's identity forms, and contradictions may be found but may be ignored (p.151-173).

Stage Four- Individuative- Reflective: describes the time approximately from the mid-twenties and mid-thirties in which a person struggles with their beliefs, as they begin to take more personal agency for these beliefs (p.174-183).

Stage Five- Conjunctive: takes places within a mid-life crisis in which the paradoxes of previous beliefs that conflicted with one another are resolved and the person comes to a more multi-dimensional understanding of faith (p.184-198).

Stage Six- Universalizing: in which a person treats all people with love as part of a universal community and does not desire anything for himself or herself (p.199-211).

McDargh (2001) noted that the person's faith development brings together two poles, the person living in a certain context and the other that one's personal faith as tied to the universal. The person's development is tied heavily to the cognitive development of the brain (King and Roeser, 2009).

Webb-Mitchell (2001) having worked with a number of people with various developmental challenges, criticized Fowler and other developmental psychologists for trying to over generalize people who have a more fluid identity of faith in to a particular

stage. Fowler's stages have been criticized for suggesting that people, with what appeared to be earlier forms of faith, had less meaningful religious lives (King and Roeser, 2009).

Fowler's work showed that faith is developed over time and takes different forms as a person. However, it is important to note that adolescents' religiosity is a multi-dimensional phenomenon that can be difficult to measure.

Adolescents face a number of experiences that can have negative impact on their future well-being. Felitti et al. (1998) conducted a study of 45,000 adults in Southern California researched the adverse childhood experiences (ACE) of participants including "psychological, physical, or sexual abuse; violence against mother; or living with household members who are substance abusers, mentally ill or suicidal, or even imprisoned" (p. 245). The study reported that more than half of those who participated had at least one ACE and more than 20% had three or more ACEs. The study found a strong relationship between the numbers of ACEs a person experienced to a higher risk of death. Those who had more than four categories "had 4-12 fold increased health risks for alcoholism, drug abuse, depression and suicide attempt"(p. 245). On the other hand, people's practice of religion, their personal religious beliefs and the importance they place on religion has been revealed in research to have positive effects of on people's lives.

Studies have shown that religion has an inverse effect on substance abuse of drugs, alcohol and tobacco (Adamczyk, 2012; Bridges and Moore, 2002; Evans et. Al, 1995; Pawlak and Defronzo, 1993; Wallace and Williams, 1991). Further studies observed that religion had a positive effect on suicide prevention, lower depression, and overall wellness (Benson, Roehlkepartain, and Rude, 2003; Donahue, 1995; Jessor, Turbin, and Costa 1998; Wallace and Foreman, 1998; Wright, Frost, and Wisecraver, 1993). In addition, some

research determined religion had been found to improve academic achievement, civic engagement, and volunteering (Muller and Ellison, 2001; Regnerus, 2000; Serow and Dreyden, 1990; Smith 1999).

Voas (2016) stated that when studying adolescent religiosity the three best measures of religion were: belief, practice, and affiliation. The dimensions of belief and practices are considered primary, “representing the distinction between the internal (belief in creeds, knowledge and acceptance of doctrine, affective connection) and the behavioral (participation in services, private devotion and communal activity)” (p. 202). Voas further postulated that affiliation, often measured through self-identification, and does not necessarily indicate a person’s agreement on basic tenets of the faith or participation in a particular religion.

Recent Research of Youth Religiosity

Not only has there been a decline in the religious practices of young Catholics, but also in the beliefs of the Catholic faith (Pew, 2008; Pew, 2014; Smith and Denton, 2005; St. Mary’s Press and CARA, 2018). This section will give an overview of some of the research reflecting this decline among adolescents, as well as the challenge to beliefs held later in adulthood. This review will focus mainly on the research that has been widely used by academic researchers, to give a snapshot into the life of Catholics within the United States.

In 2007 the USCCB commissioned the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA), a non-profit research center affiliated with Georgetown University, to study U.S. adults (over the age of 18) Catholics’ beliefs and practices of the sacraments. In February 2008, 1,007 self-identified Catholics were surveyed through a random sample by telephone, and then given an internet survey on their beliefs and practices. The survey paid particular

attention to the generational differences among Catholics. Of those surveyed, 99% of Pre-Vatican II Catholics (born before 1943) received First Communion, compared with 85% of Millennial Catholics (born after 1981). While 95% of Pre-Vatican II Catholics received the sacrament of Confirmation, compared with only 69% of Millennial Generation received the sacrament. Those who attended Catholic educational institutions were more likely to have received both First Communion and Confirmation. “Nearly all weekly Mass attenders and those who have attended Catholic educational institutions have received their First Communion and have been confirmed” (p. 2). Of those who attended a Catholic high at some point only 29% reported weekly mass attendance, compared with 22% of those who did not attend a Catholic high school (p. 22). While this may imply that the Catholic educational institutions have a positive impact on sacramental practice, it may also be the case that those who have a high sacramental practice are more likely to attend Catholic educational institutions.

St. Mary’s Press and CARA (2017) partnered to study those between the ages of 15-25 who no longer affiliate themselves with the Catholic faith in order to learn the reasons why they left the Church. The study was conducted in two phases. The first phase took place in September 2015 and consisted of 214 surveys from young people who were between the ages of 15-25 who had left the faith. The second phase, conducted between January and March 2017, followed up with interviews of fifteen people from the first phase in order to understand how they came to disaffiliate. The study found no significant difference in the number of male and female teenagers or young adults leaving the Catholic Church. At 20 percent, the most common response for leaving was they stopped believing in God or religion (p. 43). The study also found 39 percent of former Catholic teens and young adults

left the church between the ages of 13 and 17 (p. 42). Some common reasons for disassociation, which appeared in the interviews, included dissent on the Church's teaching on same-sex marriage, abortion and birth control (p. 21).

Pew Center's study *America's Changing Religious Landscape* (2014), a national representative telephone survey of 35,071 adults, served as a follow up to Pew Center's 2007 study, of the same name. The study found that between the years of 2007-2014 the number of adult practicing Catholics in the United States declined from approximately 54.3 million to 50.9 million. Within that same period of time, "the percentage of Americans who are religiously unaffiliated – describing themselves as atheist, agnostic or 'nothing in particular' – has jumped more than six points, from 16.1% to 22.8%" (p. 9). Of those identifying themselves as religiously unaffiliated or "nones", 36% of those entering adulthood (those between 18 and 24 years old) made up the largest generational group. Religiously unaffiliated adults, made up the single largest religious group in the United States. Defining "unaffiliated" often called "nones" included those who are atheists, agnostics or no religion in particular (p. 10).

The Higher Education Research Institute (2005) conducted a survey of 112,232 first-year college students from 236 colleges and universities studying the spirituality of students. The report found that first year students surveyed demonstrated a relatively high level of religious involvement. It stated that, "about for in five report that they attend religious services in the past year and that they discussed religion/spirituality with friends and family" (pg. 4). While Roman Catholic was the highest religious preference at 28 % of those who were surveyed, they scored below average on a number of measures including "Religious Commitment, Religious Engagement, Religious/Social Conservatism, and Religious

Skepticism” (p. 22).

The National Study of Youth and Religion (NSYR), was a nationally represented longitudinal study funded in part by the Lilly Endowment to study American youth and religion. Conducted from 2002-2015 in separate waves through surveys and interviews, in four waves, the NSYR focused on adolescents ages 13-17 transitioning into adulthood (ages 23-28). The findings presented will focus on the first two waves of data which were spaced three years apart. Wave 1 which ran from 2002-2003 had a representative sample survey of 3,290 households with one parent and one adolescent (ages 13-17). Wave 2 took place between June 2005 and November 2005 with respondents between the ages of 16-21 in 2,604 households which consisted of 78.6% of Wave 1 participants.

Hardie, Pearce and Denton (2016), using data from the first two waves found a decline in religious services for all youth despite level of attendance. Although young women reported higher service attendance than young men, there was a greater decrease (.70) among women than men (.54) between the two waves (p. 163). Sixty-five percent of those 17 years old had a reported a decrease in attendance of compared with fifty-six percent of 13 years (p. 164). Those with more structural supports, such as going to a four-year college or university or living at home, experienced less drop in attendance (p. 170). For example those who simply moved away from parents saw a decrease in attendance by 89 percent compared to a 59 percent decrease in those who entered a college or university (p. 165).

In examining religious beliefs, Smith and Denton (2005) found that overall, religious beliefs among adolescents was surprisingly very high. Of those surveyed, 84 percent of all teenagers in the United States reported belief in God, with Catholic teenagers slightly higher

at 85 percent (Smith and Denton, 2005). Of those surveyed, 65 percent of teenagers reported seeing God involved in their lives, 64 percent of all Catholic teenagers reported seeing God involved (Smith and Denton, 2005). One significant difference between Catholic teenagers and the general population of teenagers surveyed was in the belief of demons and evil spirits. Only 28 percent of Catholic teens held a definite belief, compared with 41 percent of the general population of teenagers (Smith and Denton, 2005). Regarding religious experience, one major difference found between Catholic youth and all the teenagers surveyed was that of having had a powerful experience of worship, which was found for 51 percent for all youth surveyed compared to 37 percent for Catholic teenagers (Smith and Denton, 2005).

In their interviews, Smith and Denton (2005) found youth overall were inarticulate about religion and faith, while Catholic teenagers in particular were found to be the most inarticulate. Smith and Denton theorized that teenagers could not articulate their beliefs, not because they lacked maturity or intellectual abilities, but rather because they had not been “effectively educated in and provided opportunities to practice talking about their faith” (p. 133). In many cases this interview was the first time any adult had asked them about their faith and how it had impacted their lives. Smith and Denton found that compared to other youth surveyed “on most measures of religious faith, belief, experience, and practice, Catholic teens as a whole show up as fairly weak” (p. 216).

Moralistic Therapeutic Deism

As a whole Smith and Denton (2005) found that among those they interviewed, regardless of the religious tradition, many teenagers’ views were “vague, limited, and often quite at variance with the actual teachings of their own religion” (p. 134). Smith and Denton (2005) found that teenagers developed systems of belief that morphed traditional beliefs.

Through analysis and by developing themes of the data Smith and Denton (2005) summarized the prevailing dominant attitudes and beliefs of teenagers in the United States as “Moralistic Therapeutic Deism” (p.162). They defined the construct of major beliefs are held by youth as:

1. A God exists who created and orders the world and watches over human life on earth.
2. God wants people to be good, nice, and fair to one another, as taught in the Bible and by most world religions.
3. The central goal of life is to be happy and to feel good about oneself.
4. God does not need to be particularly involved in one’s life except when God is needed to resolve a problem.
5. Good people go to heaven when they die. (p.162-163).

Smith and Denton (2005) found that Moral Therapeutic Deism asserted a level of influence between the teenagers’ individual beliefs and practices and organized religion’s beliefs and practices. They also found that Moral Therapeutic Deism varied how it influenced teenagers and could not be considered a monolithic system of belief and practices. One teenager interviewed stated:

I think every religion is important in its own respect. You know, if you’re Muslim, then Islam is the way for you. If you’re Jewish, well, that’s great too. If you’re Christian, well good for you. It’s just whatever makes you feel good about you (p. 163).

This piecing together of faith found in Moral Therapeutic Deism, mimics the phenomenon of the creation of the new chain of memory theorized by Hervieu-Léger, as the result of postmodernism.

Post Modernism

Postmodernism has been seen as having an effect on the changes taking place in adolescents' religiosity. Kopp (2010) viewed postmodernism as a collection of various philosophies that is a rejection of modernism. While it would be difficult to define postmodernism as one particular movement with defining features, however Schweitzer (2004) noted that postmodernism has a number of features which has impacted adolescents and religion including: pluralization, individualization, privatization of religion, and globalization.

Schweitzer (2004) defined pluralization as "the process through which religious orientations and attitudes have taken on multiple shapes" (p. 14). Schweitzer defined individualization as a religious orientation that is not as much influenced by institutional organized religion and its structures, but rather by "a matter of individual choice" (p.14). Privatization of religion is defined as the treatment of religion as a private matter, which is separated from "work, economy, and politics" and relegated to one's personal intimate character (p.14). Globalization is seen as the economic process in which different cultures are brought closer together, which may result in a clash of cultures.

As a result, many adolescents have taken a hodgepodge approach to faith and have incorporated pieces of different faith traditions into their lives without necessarily appropriating or internalizing their meanings (Schweitzer, 2004). Schweitzer goes on give the example of this phenomenon in the way a number of Christian youth while believing in

the resurrection; also believe in reincarnation (p. 51-52). Flory and Miller (2008) noted “spirituality has become decoupled from religion, with many people pursuing their own private, individualistic, and non-institutionalized form of spiritual fulfillment where the individual quest for meaning takes precedence over membership in, or commitment to, the religious community” (p. 11).

Chain of Memory

The French sociologist, Danièle Hervieu-Léger has theorized that the breakdown of the structures of transmission (chain of memory) has led to the fragmentation and the creation of bricolage. Casson (2011) defined bricolage as the “making creative and resourceful use of whatever materials are on hand regardless of their original purpose” (p. 208). Hervieu-Léger (2006) sees bricolage as the individual beliefs being a composite or mixture of a number of borrowed elements from various sources. This is seen as a byproduct of the increasing pool of religious resources brought about by globalization (Hervieu-Léger, 2006). Another important factor in the current situation of religious beliefs, is the weakening of religious structures, which has led to the breakdown of the structures by which the faith is transmitted, which is referred to as the chain of memory (Hervieu-Léger, 2006). These changes have resulted in a society that is “less and less able to nurture the innate capacity of individuals and groups to assimilate or imaginatively to project a lineage of belief” (p. 123) which has led to a fragmentation of religious memory and identity. With people’s desire for utopia, there has been an increase in new religious movements and strengthening of ethic religions, Hervieu-Léger (2000) saw a desire for people to reinvent the chain of memory in a response to a post-modern world.

While many in society have expected that secularization, which had been posited to

have begun in modernity and continued through postmodernity, to bring about and the end of religion, religion has been revived in some ways and taken on new forms (Schweitzer, 2004). Contrary to popular thought teenagers are “spiritual, but not religious” and American adolescents are drawn to and participate in many traditional religious practices and communities (Smith and Denton, 2005). Research has also shown that adolescents are religious. According to NSYR Wave 1, 59 percent of youth attended religious services at least once a month, and 45 percent desired to attend religious services at least weekly if it were up to them (Smith and Denton, 2005).

Despite the influences of postmodernism a number of social structures such as parents, schools, and religious programming have been able to keep the chain of memory going and have had an influence on the religious life of teenagers. Smith and Denton (2005) reported that adolescents who have parents who find faith to be important and attend church more often are more likely to be religious and attend church more often. Approximately 45 percent of US teens have attended some sort of religious retreat, conference or event (Smith and Denton, 2005). For Catholics, the role of Catholic schools has an impact on retention of youth, St. Mary’s Press and CARA’s (2017) study of those who have disaffiliated from the Catholic Church reported that only 19 percent at some point attended Catholic elementary school, and only 8 percent attended Catholic high school. However, Smith and Denton noted that despite the large numbers of U.S. teenagers who participated in organized religious programming, effects of the programming have not been sufficiently researched. Also the U.S. Catholic Church had “invested fewer resources into youth ministry” compared to others (p. 210) and structures that supported “youth ministry and education have thus become structurally and culturally weakened in recent decades” (p 214).

Passing on the Faith to Youth in the Church

Mission of Faith Transmission and Schools

The Second Vatican Council (1965) stated in *Gravissimum Educationis*, that people of “every race, condition and age, since they enjoy the dignity of a human being have an inalienable right to an education” (§1). Further it established that every Christian has a right to a Christian education (§2). The *Gravissimum Educationis* also declared the church has the responsibility not only to proclaim the Gospel message of Jesus to all people, but also to take a role and assist in Christian education (§2). Christian education was laid out in *Gravissimum Educationis*, as not just helping people to mature, but also helping them to develop their “knowledge of the mystery of salvation”, as an awareness of the gifts they have been given, as helping them develop their ability to worship God, formation in justice and holiness, as well as the agency to spread the good news (§2). While parents have the primary responsibility for the education of children (§3), the community assists them (§3), and the Church uses a number of means to assist in education in a special way through schools (§4).

To define the mission of the Catholic school better the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education (1977) published a document entitled *The Catholic School*, which stated:

The Catholic school, far more than any other, must be a community whose aim is the transmission of values for living. Its work is seen as promoting a faith-relationship with Christ in Whom all values find fulfillment. But faith is principally assimilated through contact with people whose daily life bears witness to it. Christian faith, in fact, is born and grows inside a community (§ 53).

Henning (2008) explained that in the task of forming youth parishes and Catholic schools are partners. Henning (2008) described the task of the transmission of the faith as cognitive (knowing), affective (loving) and behavioral (serving).

The New Evangelization

While passing on the faith has always been a part of the mission of the church, the 21st Century has seen a large decline in the number of those committed to the Catholic faith especially in Europe and North America (Rymarz, 2012). In response to this decline the church has been engaged in the New Evangelization. New Evangelization is a term first used by Pope John Paul II in 1979 during a visit to Poland to refer to an ecclesial effort called on by Pope Paul VI (Cahall, 2013). At the tenth anniversary of the Second Vatican Council, Pope Paul VI (1975) in the apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi* called for the examination of the evangelization that was started at Vatican II in both content and methodology. In dealing with the methodology of evangelization Paul VI (1975) wrote that in proclaiming the message of the faith the “presentation depends greatly on changing circumstance” (§ 25) which include “time, place and culture” (§ 40). While Paul VI embraced culture, there is a cautionary note that contemporary culture does not always support the gospel message and can undermine its message, so the content of the message must take priority (Rymarz, 2010).

Building on the Second Vatican Council and *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, Pope John Paul II (1990) wrote *Redemptoris Missio* not only to promote the transmission of the teachings of the church, but also to provide a space in which one can have a personal encounter with Jesus (Rymarz, 2010). Pope John Paul II saw three situations in which the church is called to evangelize:

First, there is the situation which the Church's missionary activity addresses: peoples, groups, and socio-cultural contexts in which Christ and his Gospel are not known. . . . Secondly, there are Christian communities with adequate and solid ecclesial structures. . . . Thirdly, there is an intermediate situation, particularly in countries with ancient Christian roots, and occasionally in the younger Churches as well, where entire groups of the baptized have lost a living sense of the faith, or even no longer consider themselves members of the Church, and live a life far removed from Christ and his Gospel. (¶ 33).

Rymarz (2010) noted that the main theme within the new evangelization centers on each person having an encounter with the person of Christ in an intimate way from which a person changes and as a result is empowered to “engage and critically shape culture” (p. 20). One of the challenges has been that while the Church held a particular place of power and influence in the past, that place has been lost and now it must compete with a number of other sources for attention (Rymarz, 2010).

Development of Catholic Schools in the United States

The change of the church’s particular place of influence can be seen in the system of schools in the United States. When the first few Catholic schools were founded, the mission of Catholic schools sought to provide a place where Catholic groups, who had emigrated from Europe, a space to develop their identity within a majority Protestant country which sought to provide the freedom to practice religion (Heft, 2011). However, an influx of immigrants to the United States from Europe, who were seeking better opportunities and religious freedom, lead to the need for a more robust Catholic school system (Heft, 2011). In the early 1800s Horace Mann, along with other civic and Protestant religious leaders sought

to establish a unified education system, which would include religious instruction (Heft, 2011). In Mann's school system resided religious instruction, which was in the Protestant tradition, and growing anti-Catholic movements threatened the religious identity of Catholics (Heft, 2011).

To respond to these needs, the United States' bishops declared in 1844 at the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore that every parish should establish a school. Catholic schools thrived until the 1960s, which was seen as the high water mark. However, significant social changes, both within the United States and the Catholic Church impacted enrollment in Catholic schools. Before 1960, over 90 percent of teachers were either priests or religious brothers or sisters. By 2000 priests and religious made up approximately 7 percent of teachers (Przygocki, 2004). With the loss of these educators, came a greater need for lay teachers who could share in the mission of Catholic education (Heft, 2011). With the onset of lay teachers schools needed to pay competitive salaries to its teachers, therefore tuition rates for students had to increase to meet this need (Heft 2011). As the result of a number of these economic and demographic factors over 6000 Catholic schools across the United States have closed (Knowles, 2014). Most of the schools closing were in urban settings, while schools in suburban settings are still surviving (Heft, 2011). Catholic schools must now take in more non-Catholic students to fill their enrollment numbers. This is a challenge to the mission of the school if they are to take their role of transmitting the faith seriously, if schools do not take their role of passing on the faith seriously then they become like other private schools (Rymarz, 2010).

Early Youth Ministry

While Catholic schools and parishes in the United States have been the major institutions responsible for the transmission of the faith, and the development of Catholic identity, a number of other initiatives have helped young people. To provide a place for youth to place to grow and develop Auxiliary Bishop Bernard H. Sheil founded the Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) as a boxing program for teenage boys in Chicago (Roberto, 2010). In 1905, Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD) was started by Pope Pius X to provide religious instruction and in 1935 became an independent agency in the United States for those who did not attend Catholic schools (Roberto, 2010). For adolescents, CCD (Confraternity of Christian Doctrine), Catholic Schools and CYO (Catholic Youth Organization) served as the primary means by which youth were ministered (Smith and Denton, 2005; Roberto, 2010). Throughout the turbulent social changes in the 1960s, CYO, CCD and Catholic schools struggled to meet the needs of young people. Because of the rapid social changes taking place in the 1960s and 1970s, participation in these activities fell and there was a need for a new approach to ministry (Roberto, 2010).

Youth Ministry in the United States

The Church responded to this need, in 1976 a special advisory board from the United States Catholic Conference (USCC) published *A Vision of Youth Ministry* to develop guidelines for youth ministry (McCarty, 2005). The document was based on the idea of companionship using the Biblical Story of the Road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35) as a model (Canales, 2007). The document, while beneficial, was not as comprehensive as it sought to be (Canales, 2007), and was only the work of one department of the USCC, called the National Advisory Board for Youth Activities (McCarty, 2005).

In the 1970s and 1980s the field of youth ministry grew as dioceses developed offices to support youth ministry. The role of youth minister was created in parishes in order to help parishes to offer youth formation (McCarty, 2005). Part of the changes facing youth ministry was the growth in lay youth ministers who developed into a field of professional ministers (McCorquodale, 2001). With the growth of this field, the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry formed in 1982 as the successor to the National Catholic Youth Organization Federation (McCorquodale, 2001).

In 1997, a more comprehensive strategy for youth ministry was approved and published by the United States Council of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), the renamed bishops' conference. *Renewing the Vision* (RTV), brought with it a broader approach addressing developmental issues of youth (Roberto, 2010). Both Canales (2007) and Roberto (2010) note that the document was significantly impacted by Pope John Paul II, whose pastoral letters, World Youth Day events, and other actions drew focus on the contemporary issues facing young people.

The USCCB's (1997) document, *Renewing the Vision*, developed three goals for the Church to “*respond* to the needs of young people and to *involve* young people in sharing their unique gifts with the larger community” (p. 9). *Renewing the Vision* lays out a framework for youth ministry by first addressing the goals for ministry, next by examining the themes and components for ministry, and finally by providing an image for ministry. RTV (1997) named three goals for ministry with Adolescents:

Goal 1: To empower young people to live as disciples of Jesus Christ in our world today (p. 9).

Goal 2: To draw young people to responsible participation in the life, mission and work of the Catholic faith community (p. 11).

Goal 3: To foster total personal and spiritual growth of each young person (p.15).

Roberto (2010) noted that while two of the goals found inspiration from *A Vision of Youth Ministry*, one goal was added “specifically designed to focus youth ministry on promoting active discipleship in the lives of young people” (p. 36).

Renewing the Vision was intended by the United States Council of Catholic Bishops to provide an integrated approach rather than one particular model, recipe, or program (1997, p. 19). In developing the components for a comprehensive framework, the document states that “no one strategy, activity, or program is adequate to the task of promoting the three goals for ministry with adolescents and that families, parishes, and schools cannot work in isolation if the Church is to realize its goals” (p. 19). In addition the document stated the “approach uses all of our resources as a faith community-people, ministries, programs-in a common effort” (p. 19-20). The framework consist of the following parts:

- Utilize each of the Church’s ministries-advocacy, catechesis, community life, evangelization, justice and service, leadership development, pastoral care, prayer and worship- in an integrated approach to achieve the three goals for ministry with adolescents;
- Provide developmentally appropriate programs and activities that promote personal and spiritual growth for young and older adolescents;
- Enrich family life and promote the faith growth of families of adolescents;
- Incorporate young people fully into all aspects of church life and engage them in ministry and leadership in faith community;

-Create partnerships among families, schools, churches and community organizations in a common effort to promote positive youth development (p. 20).

Canales (2007) noted that while the list was rather generic, the framework was one piece lacking from the earlier document, *A Vision of Youth Ministry*. Seven themes that *Renewing the Vision* (1997) takes up in fleshing out the framework suggested that ministry should be: developmentally appropriate; family friendly; intergenerational; multicultural; community-wide collaboration; with leadership development; flexible and adaptive.

The essential eight components for ministry with adolescents that the document lays out are: advocacy; catechesis; community life; evangelization; justice and service; leadership development; pastoral care; prayer and worship. One of Canales' (2007) criticisms regarding the document is that prayer and worship is listed last among the components, but theologically speaking it should be first because of the "vital relationship between the way we worship and what we believe" (p. 64).

Development of Youth Ministry in Schools

The roots of campus ministry in Catholic schools were first developed at secular colleges and universities. In 1893 at the University of Pennsylvania, a group of young Catholics organized a Newman Club, modeled after the Melvin Club at the University of Wisconsin, in order to help students grow "spiritually, socially and intellectually" (Cutarelli, 2006, p. 24.). For the subsequent decades a large number of Newman Clubs developed throughout the country, as well as a number of campus ministry programs and organizations to respond to the needs of college students in secular universities and Catholic colleges (Cutarelli, 2006).

The vast number of spiritual needs of students in Catholic elementary and secondary schools many priests, men and women religious who served as teachers and administrators. Warrick (1986) observed that a sharp decline between the 1960s into the 1980s in the number of priests and religious working in Catholic schools caused schools to need to address Catholic identity as well create new programs and structures to meet the needs of students.

Programming

Youth ministry efforts both in parishes and schools have developed a number of programs as a way to reach out to young people. Some of the older models such as CYO and CCD have struggled to reach out to youth within a post-modern context. New programming has been created and built upon employing the goals laid out in *Renewing the Vision* and the foundation started by *A Vision for Youth Ministry*.

To fulfill the need for newer models, various retreats were instated in the 1960s and 1970s including Teens Encounter Christ (TEC), Search, and Kairos. It is also during this point that liturgical renewal was taking place; mass was being celebrated in the vernacular; contemporary music was being developed for the mass; and opportunities for greater involvement for non-ordained people, especially the youth were initiated. While bishops within the United States provided theological foundations for youth ministry in *A Vision for Youth Ministry* and *Renewing the Vision*, the National Federation for Youth Ministry was developed to start a number of initiatives to help renew ministry to youth (Roberto, 2010). While a number of these programs had been operative for a number of years, research into their effectiveness had begun to be needed since a number of young people were still leaving the Catholic faith (Martin, 2016).

In 2004, *Effective Practices for Dynamic Youth Ministry* (East, Eckert, Kurtz, and Singer-Towns) was published as part of a larger project sponsored by the Center for Ministry Development, Saint Mary's Press, and the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry. The qualitative study of the effective practices taking place within parish youth ministry, consisted of 400 interviews of youth (14 to 19 years old), adults working in youth ministry, as well as parish staff members. The study found that youth ministry programs usually contained five elements: "faith formation, service, liturgy, retreats, and extended trips" (p.43). The study (East, Eckert, Kurtz, and Singer-Towns, 2004) postulated that within these elements could be found the eight components set out in *Renewing the Vision* (1997).

The report (East, Eckert, Kurtz, and Singer-Towns, 2004) observed that many young people experienced "faith formation as boring and out-of-touch with their lived reality" (p. 44) and that for formation to be effective it had to be actively engaging and related to their lived experience. The study found that faith formation was best led by adults, but allowed for youth leadership, youth sharing, included group building/bonding, was experiential and did not have the feel of the school classroom (p. 44).

On the topic of extended trips, the study (East, Eckert, Kurtz, and Singer-Towns, 2004) noted these experiences allowed for youth moments away from the normal environment and included experiences such as mission trips, pilgrimages, camps, and youth conferences. The study found these experiences helped youth feel connected to a larger church, helped them develop bonds with others, developed a sense of identity, and provided some to grow as leaders (p. 46-47).

With liturgies, East, Eckert, Kurtz, and Singer-Towns (2004) saw that youth sought to be actively engaged in rituals through use of all their senses, music that they could connect

with, and be involved in liturgical roles. With regards to retreats, the study remarked that these opportunities provided transformative experiences that helped youth connect with others, develop a stronger relationship with God and reconnected them to the practice of the faith (East, Eckert, Kurtz, and Singer-Towns, 2004, p. 48). Similarly, Seishas (2009) doctoral dissertation found that the Kairos Retreat provided a transformative opportunity for adolescents to build community and to find healing.

East, Eckert, Kurtz, and Singer-Town (2004) noted service programs helped youth to see the faith in an embodied way, to connect better with the poor, helped them to understand issues around social justice, helped them in their capacity to be compassionate to others, and helped youth to realize their agency. Trinitapoli and Vaissey's (2009) study of short-term mission trips found that there was an increase of religious practices such as attendance at church and that prayer and overall the mission trips proved to be a transformative experience.

In addition to retreats, prayer experiences, and service trips; East (2010) mentioned pilgrimages as a program in which youth can develop a sense of community, experience acceptance, and learn about the faith. Theisen (2008) recommended pilgrimages as one way in which young people can experience Jesus in a similar way that the disciples experienced the risen Jesus on the Road to Emmaus (Luke 24: 13-35).

Influence of Campus Ministry Programming in Secondary Schools

While little research has been done as to the influence of various programs within the scope of youth ministry (East, Eckert, Kurtz, and Singer-Town, 2004; Seishas, 2009; Trinitapoli and Vaissey, 2009); a few studies revealed the influence of youth ministry have been done in the setting of a Catholic high school. Sureau (2012) explored how those involved in a Catholic high school ministry program and its components effect the

perceptions, perceptions, and practices of high school seniors. Sureau surveyed seniors (N=154) over the age of 18 from three Catholic high schools with in the same diocese. Sureau found those who participated in retreats and service trips were most significantly likely to be involved in their parishes.

Through a case study, Martin (2016) examined the influence of a Catholic school's faith formation efforts upon 12th graders' religiosity. Martin's research site was a Catholic high school in the Northwestern region of the United States. The project was carried out using mixed-method beginning with survey research (N=118) followed up by one-on-one interviews (N=6) applying Pearce and Denton's (2011) typology of adolescent religiosity. The study revealed that the school's faith formation practices of service and retreats had the most positive effect on adolescents, that religion classes and school masses were moderately influential, and that prayer at school was seen as the least influential on the religious lives of adolescents.

While these studies by Sureau (2012) and Martin (2016) indicated that service experiences and retreats can have a positive influence on the religiosity of adolescents, several scholars noted that there are a number of experiences of religion in a Catholic high school that have a negative impact reinforcing socioeconomic pressures and racism, as well as sexual orientation and gender stereotypes. Burke (2011) using ethnography studied the experiences of an all-male Catholic school, including the school's religious efforts at faith development. In his conclusions concerning the lasting influence of a Senior retreat remarked, that while the retreat provided a space for people to be vulnerable, critically look at how their actions affect others, and develop their faith; the school did not follow up on this

issues and used the retreat as an excuse for not dealing with “the messiness of boys-emotional, the dehumanization of racism and gender discrimination” (pg. 127).

Using ethnographic fieldwork, Aldana (2015) explored the experiences of Latino and African American males at two Cristo Rey high Schools in the American Southwest. Aldana (2015) postulated that those who are responsible for shaping the religious spaces within a Catholic high school need to take into account both the cultural and social identities of students in order to develop students properly. Her conclusions were shared by Ellis (1996) who reported her faith had been stunted and undernourished in a culturally relevant way while attending a Catholic high school in Pittsburgh, PA. For example, Ellis identified the only a few racial role models such as St. Charles Lawanga, and St. Benedict the Moore; instead she encountered the white skinned imagery of God the Father, Jesus, and Mary.

Maher (2001) interviewed 25 (twelve female and thirteen male) gay and lesbian adults who had attended Catholic high schools. Maher (2001) learned that these adults had negative experiences of religious activities. In particular they experienced personal sharing within the context of retreats as threatening to them. Interviews also revealed that, as students, gay and lesbians were made uncomfortable when they felt like religion, which negatively viewed their sexuality, as being forced upon them (p. 89). Tonya D. Callaghan’s mixed-method (2012) study explored the experience of 20 lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) teachers and students in publicly-funded Canadian Catholic schools. The study found that the religious atmosphere of the schools found homophobia prevalent among many institutions. Experiences included repression, harassment, bullying, and being outed.

Many schools and parishes intend of to help young people to develop their sense of belonging, feeling that they are loved by God, and that they are a part of the church. Having this sense of belonging and being cared for, Hervieu-L  ger (1998) observed are necessary for the passing of the faith to be successful in the chain of memory. However, as Aldana (2015), Callaghan (2012), Ellis (1996) and Maher (2001) these conditions may not always exist, especially for those who have been marginalized. The results of these efforts in youth ministry programs, especially pilgrimages attended by youth, have mixed results and need further research.

Pilgrimages

Development of Pilgrimages

In the ancient world Pilgrimages, like modern ones, took on many different forms and served different purposes. Among ancient Near East cultures, devotees would travel to shrines devoted to specific gods where it was believed that the divine abided (McCarthy, 2003). The ancient Greeks traveled to sacred temples, such as to the Parthenon in Athens, to participate in civic festivals that enforced the identity of a city-state and helped establish the cult of a particular deity (Coleman and Elsner, 1995).

As organized religions developed, tribal sites of worship would be over taken by more a formal religious cult (McCarthy, 2003). The ancient texts of Hebrew Scripture discuss the tension between different cults each with local temples and deities and the emergence of a more organized religion with a single God. For example the Canaanites with their temple of Bethel became a source of tension between the local cultic beliefs and the Israelites efforts to unite as one nation under one deity (McCarthy 2003). Later, two distinct cultures developed into the faiths of Islam and Judaism, and had major religious centers,

Jerusalem and Mecca; which still serve as major pilgrimage sites for believers. Coleman and Elsner (1995) noted that early pilgrimages of ancient traditions had in common ritualized travel, which took people out of their everyday routines to a sacred place away from where they lived. They arrived at a place where they could be healed, they could socialize, and they could experience the transcendent.

As Christianity grew throughout the Mediterranean world, people desired to connect to Jesus by traveling to pray and worship at the places where he lived, taught, and died. The writings of Eusebius, an early Christian historian, document the visit of bishops from the 2nd and 3rd Century traveling to the Holy Land (McCarthy, 2003). While early church leaders such as Athanasius, John Chrysostom, and Jerome wrote about their pilgrimages to the Holy Land, it was the visit of Helena, the Emperor Constantine's mother that really helped develop the practice of going on pilgrimages to the Holy Land (Coleman and Elsner, 1995; McCarthy, 2003; Turner and Turner, 1978;). Helena not only went to inquire about and to locate the particular places connected to Jesus, but she also began the building of a number of churches (Coleman and Elsner, 1995). This proliferation of sites, allowed for a greater number of Christians to partake in pilgrimages.

However, not every Christian could travel to the Holy Land. Therefore more local pilgrimage sites developed in order to serve as a surrogate experience closer to home (Turner and Turner, 1978). Rome developed as a popular pilgrimage site because it was believed to be the final resting place of the apostles, Saints Peter and Paul. The city of Santiago de Compostela in Spain was believed to be the final resting place of the remains of St. James. The pilgrimages devoted to the cult of the saints developed because of the Catholic belief that a person's journey of salvation takes places over one's lifetime and that a person can

receive assistance in their spiritual journey by saints, who are believed to be in heaven (Turner and Turner, 1978).

Pilgrimages also developed at sites connected to people known to have had visions. For example, around the year 1061, a local aristocrat in England had a vision of the place in Nazareth where the angel Gabriel visited Mary and where Jesus grew up. As a result a replica was built in Walsingham (Coleman and Elsner, 1995). Pilgrims traveled to these places with various motivations including seeking the intercession of a saint, giving thanksgiving for a favor granted, fulfilling a vow, seeking healing, or making penance for one's sins (Labande, 2003).

With the growth in pilgrimages, church and political powers made efforts to regulate pilgrimages because of a number of abuses. For example, the church required documentation to verify the authenticity of relics because of a proliferation of fake saint's relics (Coleman and Elsner, 1995). The church also developed a systemization of penances through indulgences, which were a form of pardon granted by the church for doing some religious act of devotion or charity, such as a pilgrimage, for which one would receive remission for one's sins (Coleman and Elsner, 1995). Despite the desire for control, a number of abuses increased and led to the Reformation, which had an important impact on the practice of pilgrimage. Protestants rejected many Catholic practices including pilgrimages. For example, in England, Henry VIII had a shrine dedicated to the martyrdom of Thomas Becket in Canterbury destroyed both to assert his authority, and to rid the cult of Catholicism (Coleman and Elsner, 1995).

Despite the decline of pilgrimages in Europe, a number of appearances of the Virgin Mary throughout Europe and the New World led to a new growth. Apparitions in

Guadalupe, Mexico (16th Century), La Sallette, France (1858), Lourdes, France (1858), and Fatima, Portugal (1917) provided a new set of pilgrimage sites for people to visit (Labande, 2003). Coleman and Elsner (1995) noted “between 1830 and 1933 the Virgin appeared in nine places in Europe, often proclaiming a millenarian and urgent message, this establishing a genre of appearance suited to the concerns of post-Enlightenment Europe” (p. 128).

Despite the popularity of a number of these apparition sites, the Catholic Church has been often suspicious of reports new apparition pilgrimage sites and often hesitates for long periods to endorse the site (Coleman and Elsner, 1995).

Since the 20th Century, the number of pilgrimages and pilgrims has seen a rebirth, while paradoxically, at the same time a significant number of people have left the Catholic faith. Pilgrimage sites have seen both a revitalization as well as rebuilding. For example the pilgrimage site of Walsingham, destroyed by Henry VIII during the reformation, was rebuilt between the 1920s and 1930s due of the efforts of Alfred Hope Patten (Coleman and Elsner, 1995). The pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela was recognized by the United Nations in 1985 as a world heritage site and has also seen a significant jump in participants (Vilaça, 2010). Reader (2007) noted several factors contributing to the recent growth of pilgrimages including: greater mobility; better transportation; improved financial circumstances of pilgrims; superior living conditions; a bigger desire to search for meaning and identity; and a greater promotion of pilgrimages.

Pilgrimage Theory

Understanding the ancient practice of pilgrimage within a contemporary context was developed through the work of anthropologists Victor and Edith Turner (1978). The Turners studied the role of the structure of society and how it interacted on pilgrimages (Cocîrță,

2016). The Turners, a husband and wife team, saw pilgrimages as a both physical and material manifestation of religion experienced by ordinary people, which had broken down normalized social structures into a middle phase, which would lead to the liberation of each person into a new reality (Cocîrță, 2016). Margry (2008) noted that the Turners developed their work using the work of Arnold van Gennep (1909; 1960) who studied the experience of rites of passage, or transition, in tribal communities. The Turners noted that pilgrimages differed from rites of passage because pilgrimages were voluntary acts while the rites of passage were obligatory (Turner and Turner 1978). Pilgrimage moves the pilgrim “from a mundane center to a sacred periphery which suddenly, transiently becomes central for the individual” (p. 34).

The Turners’ theory revolved around the concepts of *communitas*, and liminality. The idea of *communitas* is that a group dynamic that occurs when pilgrims leave their homes, social structures, and routines and enter with others into a new temporary anti-structure (Turner and Turner, 1978). This connectedness brings about a sense of the sacred, companionship, and homogeneity (Turner and Turner, 1978). This human bond occurs spontaneously and can be experienced as a supernatural experience (Turner and Turner).

The detachment and temporary phase created is called liminality, provides a space in which spiritual meaning may be found, as well as offers a greater propensity for the person to experience new things transcending familiar social structures of power, status, and authority into a homogeneous state in which all are considered equals (Turner and Turner 1978). Coleman (2002) described *communitas* as a “pilgrim’s temporary transition away from mundane structure and social interdependence into a looser commonality of feeling with fellow visitors” (p. 356). Hence, liminality is connected with a rite of passage in which a

person is in the middle part of the process (Turner and Turner 1978).

Through ethnographic work some researchers have challenged the existence of phenomenon of *communitas* and liminality (Eade and Sallnow 1991; Margry 2008,). In the collective volume *Contesting the Sacred*, Eade and Sallow (1991) encouraged the abandonment of the Turnerian theory. Eade and Sallnow (1991) criticized *communitas* as too idealistic and cannot represent a universal experience. Eade and Sallnow (1991) critique *communitas* because it does not take into account the “mundane conflicts inherent in pilgrimage” (357). Coleman (2002) remarked that Eade and Sallnow (1991) “assert further that pilgrimage as an institution cannot actually be understood as a universal or homogeneous phenomenon but instead be deconstructed into historically and culturally specific instances” (357).

While Turner and Turner (1978) rejected the influence of society on pilgrimage, Eade and Sallnow (1991) argued for the definite influence of various forces, including society, upon pilgrimages. Eade and Sallnow (1991) found that though various authorities may try to control the space to some degree and develop a single narrative: a shrine is “a ritual space capable of accommodating diverse meanings and practices” (p. 15). A shrine is universal in nature in “its capacity to absorb and reflect a multiplicity of religious discourses, to be able to offer a variety of clients what each of them desires” (p. 15). Coleman (2002) remarked that similarities exist between the two theories, the shrine (the destination of the pilgrimage) serves as a vessel of meaning similar to the Turnerian idea that symbols contain multiple meanings. Coleman found that Eade and Sallnow’s tension between official and popular view of a site paralleled Turner and Turner’s understanding that a symbol has more meaning than what is apparent to dominate interpretation. Finally, Coleman mentioned how both

show how within the pilgrimage experience a vacuum is created, which for the Turners exists in the pilgrim and for Eade and Sallnow exists in the shrine.

A third construction of pilgrimage theory was developed by Cohen (1992) on two dominant typologies existing on pilgrimage: the tourist, and the pilgrim. This concept can be seen, much earlier, in the Turners' much quoted observation that 'a tourist is half a pilgrim, if a pilgrim is half a tourist' (Turner and Turner, 1978 p. 20). Cohen (1979) differentiated the pilgrim and the tourist in that a tourist attempts to move away from their own cultural homes in search of authentic experiences, while the pilgrim travels towards the center in search of meaning (Collins-Kreiner, 2009). Donnelly (1992) made the distinctions between tourists and pilgrims as such:

1. Pilgrims perceive an internal dimension to pilgrimage, while tourist are concerned with the external journey alone.
2. Pilgrims invest themselves; tourists avoid personal commitment.
3. The focus for the pilgrim will be affected by the pilgrimage. Tourists seek to remain untouched on a deep level by their experiences.
4. Both the journey and arrival are important to the pilgrim, while only the arrival matters for the tourists.
5. Community is formed for pilgrims; community is not a desideratum for tourists (pg 23).

Cohen (1979) presented five modes from pilgrims: recreational, diversionary, experiential, experimental, and existential, which showed the range of motivation that exist between the pole of tourism and pilgrim (p. 183). Collins-Kreiner (2009) observed that since the early 2000s much of the field of pilgrimage studies has moved away from the tourist-pilgrim

dichotomy and focused on the diverse experiences that a pilgrim can experience have while on pilgrimage.

With the focus of pilgrimages has seemed to have drifted away from strictly religious motivations, new pilgrimages have been developed to non-religious sites. This is evident in the popularity of places such as Graceland, where the musician Elvis Presley is buried, as well as Ground Zero, the site of the 9-11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center, and the World War II Monument in Washington D. C. each of which have evolved as sites where people have taken a pilgrimage (Reader, 2007).

On the other hand, Margry (2008) noted that there has been a revival in the use of pilgrimages in the Catholic Church in order to counter the secularization taking place in the West and it has been helpful in reviving the belief and practice of the faith. Loveland (2008) conducted a telephone survey of 1,000 people to see if there was a correlation between people's attitudes toward the Catholic Church's teachings on sexual morality and going on a pilgrimage. The study found that among pilgrims there was a strong adherence to the Church's teaching on sexual morality (Loveland 2008).

Youth Pilgrimages and World Youth Day

A number of pilgrimages have been undertaken by Catholic youth to help in their faith development. For example in England Ann Casson's (2013) ethnographic work within three Catholic high schools found that a school's participation in an annual pilgrimage to Lourdes, France, the site of the apparition of the Virgin Mary to a young girl named Bernadette, was seen as a sign of the school's Catholic identity. One of the schools took a small number of students, which was described as extra-ordinary for the participants, however the effects of the pilgrimage were difficult to identify (Casson, 2013). A larger

study, done through observations, questionnaires and in-depth interviews of English and Irish pilgrims to Lourdes found that young people had a positive experience which helped them to grow in their faith and socially (Harris, 2010). The study found that the flexible experiential space provided by the pilgrimage allowed pilgrims to have a positive experience through social experiences, such as working with infirm pilgrims and interacting at meals, as well as providing religious experiences like praying the rosary and going to church (Harris 2010).

Among pilgrimages which are attended by adolescent Catholics, none has been better attended than World Youth Day. World Youth Day was a deliberate attempt by the church to reach out to youth from all over the world and help them connect with others and with the faith. While Norman and Johnson (2011) have argued World Youth Day should be considered more an event than a pilgrimage because the traveling does not involve going to the same location, Rymarz (2007a) noted that many locations for World Youth Day have been at traditional pilgrimage sites including Rome, Italy and Santiago de Compostela, Spain. Pope John Paul II played an important role in the revitalization of pilgrimages through his travels as well as his initiative to establish World Youth Day (Vilaça, 2010).

The phenomenon of World Youth Day has been studied by a number of organizations, bishop conferences, and academic institutions, which found that overall, young pilgrims have had a positive experience of the pilgrimage (Cleary, 2011, 2016; Forschungskonsortium WJT, 2007; Mandes, 2016; Mason, 2010; Norman and Johnson, 2011; Rymarz, 2007a, 2007b, 2008; Singleton, 2011;). A number of studies of youth attending World Youth Day have focused on school-aged pilgrims, as a group, in particular those attending Catholic schools, such as Cleary (2016) and Rymarz (2007a, 2007b) who studied the experience of Australian pilgrims before and after World Youth Day.

Richard Rymarz (2007a) specifically studied those who attended Australian Catholic secondary schools, under the age of 18 who participated in World Youth Day 2005. The research began with questionnaire from 110 pilgrims and 70 non-pilgrims, as a control; followed by in-depth interviews of 19 pilgrims who had been surveyed. Pilgrims who attended World Youth Day showed a higher level of religious practices, than those in the control group. Rymarz (2007a) noted that this may be in part because of the selection process for those who chose to attend World Youth Day. Allen (2005) observed a range of motivations among those who attended World Youth Day: those who were more *tourist* in their motivations; those who were seeking meaning but did not necessarily have clear motivations; and those who were committed to the faith.

A follow-up study by Rymarz (2007b) examined the impact of World Youth Day on Australian pilgrims under 18 years old using a questionnaire of 63 pilgrims followed by in-depth interviews of 17 pilgrims conducted twelve months after the initial study. The overall experience of WYD was very positive: 46.8% of respondents rated the WYD experience as a 10 (0 being the lowest representing a terrible time and 10 being absolutely fantastic). The experiences that were most enjoyed by pilgrims of WYD 2005 in Cologne included: Days in the Diocese (an experience of spending a few days in the host country before the main events of WYD); the experience of international travel and culture; growth in understanding of the faith; and finally attendance at the Papal mass and the evening Vigil the night before. More than 50% of pilgrims indicated increased involvement in faith activities within their parish and school. Upon return 60% of the pilgrims surveyed were more likely to speak about their faith to parents and friends. In the interviews, pilgrims reported of having: a greater personal commitment; growing network of other pilgrims; a greater involvement in religious

activities; and a willingness to share faith. While some felt more likely to share faith and connect with other pilgrims, others felt isolated from others because of a lack of a common level of faith commitment.

While Rymarz (2007a, 2007b) focused on a small-scale study of school-aged pilgrims under 18, Cleary (2016) studied a larger population of school-aged pilgrims. Cleary (2016) conducted a large-scale mixed method study consisting of both a questionnaire and interview of Australian pilgrims before and after two World Youth Days.

Table 1

Cleary (2016) Australian World Youth Day Research Participants

	Madrid WYD 2011		Rio de Janeiro WYD 2013	
	Sydney Catholic Schools	General Population	Sydney Catholic Schools	General Population
Pre WYD questionnaire	454	-----	306	-----
Pre WYD interview	61	-----	29	-----
Post WYD questionnaire	282	380	292	188
Post WYD interview	101	10	54	10

Cleary (2016) found motivations and attitudes reported by the youth similar to those revealed by Allen (2005), Mason (2010), and Rymarz (2007a). These motivations and attitudes fall into four groups including “devoted pilgrims, religious believers, meaning seekers, and social tourists” (p. 282). Cleary’s findings showed that pilgrims from Catholic schools tended to have a much greater variety of religious profiles and motivations differed than those pilgrims from the general population. The interviews indicated, “many of the younger pilgrims were comfortable with spiritualities that were secular, individualistic, eclectic, subjective and self-

reliant” (p.263). Cleary found those youth with higher levels of religiosity did not necessarily develop stronger identity or different practices. However, those with moderate levels of religious practice and belief before WYD tended to become more committed to the faith afterwards. The findings also showed that the relationship between the religious and social elements was critical in the experience of WYD. While the report did not go into specifics about the elements of WYD, it did find that a number of experiences were very powerful and provided the pilgrims with an experience of the transcendent.

Religious Experience

Hervieu-Léger (2007) asserted that while many have argued that modernity has brought a decline in religion, there has been a growth of “individuals who cobble together in their own fashion systems of signification which give a subjective meaning to their own experience, and who independently choose (for their own gratification) the communal affiliation which they themselves recognize” (p. 161). In other words, the focus on the individual’s experiences of religion over and against the institution can be seen in the work of William James. James (1902/2009) in *Varieties of Religious Experiences*, argued for shifting the focus of religion from the institutional to the individual person, “the feelings, acts and experiences of individual men (and women) in their solitude, so far as they apprehend themselves to stand in relation to whatever they may consider the divine” (p. 27). James (1902/2009) further described that some experience religion “not as a dull habit, but as an acute fever” (p. 15). Alister Hardy (1979), a Darwinian biologist who studied religious experience as part of the natural world, defined religious experience as “a deep awareness of a benevolent non-physical power which appears to be partly or wholly beyond, and far greater than, the individual self (p. 1). Hardy reported people’s religious experiences by

creating an advertisement in many newspapers asking the question, “Have you ever been aware of or influenced by a presence of power, whether you call it God or not, which is different from your everyday self” (as cited in Rankin, 2008, p 3). Hardy’s research found that religious experiences could occur in many different ways, both within religious structures and outside religious structures, as well as in private settings and public settings.

Hoge and Smith (1982) noted that early research into religious experiences focused on conversion or awakening experiences in which people would rededicate themselves to religious tradition or renew themselves in the practice of their faith. Elkind and Elkind (1962) criticized former studies on religious experience because they focused on conversion experiences, which were typical of more Protestant faiths. As a result they conducted a study of 9th grade students from Massachusetts, which focused on a broader understanding of religious experience and was more inclusive of a variety of religious backgrounds in those who were being studied. Elkind and Elkind studied not only intense peak religious experiences, but also more ordinary reoccurring religious experiences that might take place for example during daily prayer. The reoccurring and smaller religious experiences included those that took place at church, and moments of solitude and prayer. The most significant peak moments included experiences of appreciation, meditation, lamentation, initiation and revelation.

Stark (1965) explored religious experience on a random sample of church members in Northern California, sought to understand religious experience in a way which did not just include peak moments, but rather in the way in which a person defined it. Stark found that four main types of religious experience including a confirming experience in which one’s faith and beliefs was confirmed, those in which a person is aware of God’s presence, an

ecstatic experience which may include a physical reaction, and those of a revelatory nature. Stark's inquiry also revealed a subcategory that a number of people who experienced a moment of feeling saved or awakened.

Hoge and Smith (1982) studying a sample of 451 Catholic, Baptist and Methodist tenth graders found that similar typologies found by Elkind and Elkind (1962) were present, but included an experience "salvation" found as a subcategory in Stark (1965). Hoge and Smith noted that Elkind and Elkind did not include denominations in their studies in which religious experiences of conversion were normative or regularly facilitated. Rankin (2008) recognized that religious experiences can be triggered by a number of religious rituals and structures included pilgrimages.

Conclusion

Every Christian person has a right to a Christian education and the church is called to assists parents in the development of their children with assistance from the parish and the Catholic school (Second Vatican Council, 1965; SCCE, 1997). Despite these efforts, among Catholic youth in the United States, there has been a decline in religious practice and ability to articulate the faith (Pearce & Denton, 2016; Pew 2014; Smith & Denton, 2005; St. Mary's Press & CARA, 2017). Studies have found a number of factors have contributed to this decline in post-modern times including pluralization, individualism, privatization or religion, and globalization (Flory & Miller, 2008; Schweitzer, 2004; Smith & Denton 2005). In particular these factors have caused a breakdown in the *chain of memory*, which is responsible for the passing down of the faith (Hervieu-Léger 2000, 2006). In the United States, despite the desire of bishops to foster growth in the faith lives of young people and to actively engage young people in their faith, fewer people desire to minister in the church as

priests in religious, attend Catholic educational institutions, or to be engaged in the faith (Heft 2011; Knowles, 2014; Przygocki, 2004). This has been exacerbated by: continuing clerical sex abuse scandals; alienation of faithful such as the LGBTQ community, divorcees, and women; and lack of engaging of qualified lay members of the church in meaningful leadership roles, especially women (Maher, 2001; St. Mary's Press and CARA, 2017).

Hervieu-Léger (2000) argued that the breakdown of the faith can be reversed by the reinvention of the chain of memory through remobilization and recreation of memory. This can be seen in the efforts of the Catholic Church to respond to the decline of the faith by calling for new methods and vigor in passing on the faith through a New Evangelization (John Paul II, 1990; Paul VI, 1975, Rymarz, 2010). Within the context of the United States, efforts have been made to New Evangelization through youth ministry programs in parishes and schools (Canales 2007; McCarty, 2005; Roberto, 2010, USCCB, 1997).

At the global level, Hervieu-Léger (1994) found the reinvention of the chain of memory very much present in the World Youth Day pilgrimage. Hervieu-Léger (1994) witnessed that while young people were participating in the religious environment sponsored by the church; they were also appropriating the faith in their own way. Smith and Denton (2005) saw in their research of American adolescents that while participation in some religious practices was lower, an appropriating of the faith, they termed Moral Therapeutic Deism.

In the United States, a number of initiatives in parishes and schools have been developed to integrate youth into the chain of memory. Some practices of youth ministry in parishes and schools include retreats, service projects, mission trips, and pilgrimages that have been developed the faith lives of adolescents both at the communal and personal level

(East, 2010; East, Eckert, Kurtz & Singer-Towns, 2004; Theisen, 2008; USCCB, 1997).

While the little research that has been done in the United States of the influence of youth ministry programs within Catholic schools, also referred to as campus ministry, has shown retreats and service projects as having an impact (Martin, 2016; Sureau, 2012;); the religious outreach of these schools can have a negative impact on those who have been traditionally marginalized (Aldana, 2015; Ellis, 1996; Maher, 2001) making the need to studying the impact of a campus ministry's pilgrimage program important in helping schools reestablish the *chain of memory*.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Restatement of the Purpose of Study

Recent research has shown a decline in the number of youth engaging in the Catholic faith. For years religious institutions have developed structures to provide programming for youth to engage in the faith, but little research has been done to support the effect of these programs. The purpose of this research is to study the impact of a pilgrimage experience on the faith life of participants, as part of a Catholic high school campus ministry program.

This study will explore the following questions:

1. What are the motivations of St. Bonaventure High School (Pseudonym) students who attended the Assisi pilgrimage?
2. How do students describe their experience of this pilgrimage and its elements?
3. How do students describe the influence of this pilgrimage experience in relation to their personal faith and practices?

Research Design

This study used a mixed methods approach using a survey and in-depth interviews, which provided an in depth approach to understanding the phenomenon of high school student's experience of a youth who attended pilgrimage. Vilaça (2010) noted each particular pilgrimage destination provides its unique setting its own rituals, customs, and dynamics. As a result, the study focused on the experience of one group of pilgrims.

This study employed a two-staged explanatory mixed methods study. Creswell and Clark (2011) identified the explanatory mixed-method as a useful tool in order to use quantitative data in order to purposively sample in the qualitative phase. The first phase of

the study employed a survey to identify different groups both demographically and in terms of religiosity, and a series of open-ended questions to produce a purposeful sample. In the second stage qualitative interviews were used to provide a deeper understanding of participants' religious identity, their perceived experience and the influence of the pilgrimage. These will be analyzed using a constructivist grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2014), as the two sociologists (Hervieu-Leger, 2000, Smith and Denton, 2005) who studied adolescent religiosity mention that teens in a post-modern society tend to construct their own faith systems which may contain pieces of organized religions.

Permission to conduct the research was obtained from the school administration. Following, IRB approval for research was sought for study to be conducted. After these permissions were granted, there was an initial meeting with the researcher and potential participants was held. At the meeting students were given an overview of the study and the purpose of the research; students were invited to participate in the study; finally, the necessary informational letter and consent forms were given out. At both stages of research were scheduled with administration to allow for the research at a convenient time for the students. The research was in January, as this is a time in high school seniors would be more likely to be able to participate in research, as opposed to later in the spring semester when they would graduate.

A survey was used in the first stage of the research project. The first part of the survey consisted of questions that will provide a description of the participants' demographic backgrounds, as well as a description of their current religious identities, and practices. The second part of the survey included open-ended questions, which provided a description of students' motivations, as well as perceptions of the pilgrimage and its elements. The second

part of the survey was used to identify participants, who will be interviewed later, that represent a range of experiences and backgrounds. Mason (2010) noted that different types of pilgrims may have different experiences, and as a result, be impacted differently by the pilgrimage. As a result, Interviewees were chosen to provide a range of different pilgrims' motivations, religiosities, and demographics.

Part of the Semi-Structure Interview will include photo-elicitation. Harper (2002) defined photo-elicitation as “the simple idea of inserting a photograph into a research interview” (p. 13). Photo elicitation can cover a wide range of different types of methodology, from found images brought by the researcher to participant-produced images (Holm, 2014; Williams and Whitehouse, 2014). Collier (1967) found that photos assisted the research process as it provided people to opportunity to explain meanings and societal subtleties. Within the context of the study of religion, Ammerman (2007) noted the use of this methodology helps provide a better understanding into lived religious experiences. Because of the pilgrimage has already taken place, pilgrims interviewed were asked to bring photos they have already taken on the trip or to find photos that can represent their personal experiences. Participants were not asked to take photos specifically for this research project as it may have interfered with their pilgrimage experience and a number of churches do not allow photography within the buildings, as not to disturb the sacredness of the space.

Setting

The study consists both the setting of the school environment where the students attend, but foremost the setting of the pilgrimage. Each pilgrimage sites has a unique history and culture, which motivates pilgrim groups to use considerable resources and planning to

organize a pilgrimage. Given the influence of the pilgrimage setting over the setting of the group, considerable description of the pilgrimage setting will be described.

The setting of the study includes both the setting of the Catholic school, which participated in the pilgrimage, and the setting of the pilgrimage itself. Pilgrimages to Assisi, Italy can last from one day to several days. Many pilgrims begin and end their pilgrimage in the city of Rome, and may include other Franciscan sanctuaries such as La Verna, and Greccio. Assisi is located in the Umbria region of Italy and has been occupied since Roman times. The city is most famous as the hometown to both St. Clare and St. Francis, medieval saints who started the religious movement of the Franciscans. Rome, which is often the port of entry and departure for many pilgrims to Assisi, is the capital of Italy, but also the location of Vatican City, the headquarters for the Roman Catholic Church, and the final resting site for the early followers of Jesus, St. Paul, and St. Peter. The Franciscan sanctuary of La Verna, is a mountaintop monastery which served as a place of refuge for St. Francis and the location where it is believed that in 1224 St. Francis received the stigmata, the physical manifestation of the wounds of Jesus. Greccio, is another town where St. Francis founded a sanctuary. There St. Francis reenacted the birth of Jesus using local townspeople and animals, which led to the popularization of the Christmas crèche.

St. Bonaventure High School (pseudonym) is all male Catholic high school located in the Western part of the United States. The school is a four-year college preparatory school with over 600 students. The religious order, which founded the school in the 1940s, still has several members staffing the school. The number of religious working at the school has significantly declined and the vast majority of staff and faculty are lay people. Most of the students come from a middle class to upper middle class background. The school's tuition is

lower than other private schools in the immediate suburban proximity, but not as low as some urban Catholic high schools.

The location of the school, in the Western part of the United States, can play a part in the religiosity of its students. Smith and Denton (2005), using the NSYR data, noted that there was a variance amongst the religiosity of adolescents within the United States. They noted that 25% of the adolescents who were surveyed in the west had never attended religious services compared with 18% of adolescents nationally. Those who answered that they never pray alone was 15% nationally compared to 19% of those who lived in the West.

Population and Sampling

The population of the study was those who participated in the Assisi pilgrimage. Historically, the high school pilgrimage has been attended by mostly juniors with only a few seniors opting to attend. Because of the difficulty in tracking down people who have already graduated and the focus of the study is the experience of high school students, the survey was only distributed to those who were at the time of the study still high school students.

The sample was purposefully chosen because of their participation of the pilgrimage. Creswell and Clark (2011) recommended purposeful sampling, when “participants who have experience the central phenomenon or key concept being explored in the study” (p. 173). A purposeful sample of interviewees was originally planned using Mason (2010) typology, profiles were developed based on four measures: religious service attendance, prayer routine, catholic teaching acceptance (Belief in God and closeness), sense of Catholic identity (picking and choosing beliefs, importance of faith, and religious salience). However the Mason (2010) typology was insufficient to produce the purposeful sample, as the survey results were too diverse to match the profiles. As a result a purposeful

sample was taken with students representing high, moderate, and low levels of religiosity using the four measures of religiosity. Within this sample students from a number of diverse ethnic backgrounds were chosen for each level of religiosity, except the lower levels of religiosity which did not have any students from diverse ethnic backgrounds.

Instrumentation and Data Collection

First Phase

For the first phase of the study, research was conducted using the Assisi Pilgrim Survey (Appendix C) created using questions from the NSYR, World Youth Day surveys (Mason, Webber, and Singleton, 2008 and Rymarz, 2007a, 2007b). The survey was administered electronically using Qualtrics. Since the student population at St. Bonaventure are all required to use iPads as part of the school's one-to-one technology program, the survey was administered through the tablets and utilizing wireless internet access. Each participant will choose a pseudonym rather than use their real name.

Part One of the Survey, Questions 1-8, were used to establish the religiosity of students, Questions 9-15, will gather demographic information. Part One, Questions 1-8, will utilize questions used in the NSYR.

Part Two, Questions 16-18, were open-ended questions designed to get each individual's perceptions on the overall experience of the pilgrimage and its elements. These open-ended questions were adapted from questions used by Mason (2010) and Rymarz (2007b).

Second Phase

For the second phase of this study, one-on-one semi-structured interviews with photo-elicitation were carried out with eight survey participants. The findings of the first phase were used to develop better interview questions. After the processing of the surveys,

participants were invited to participate in follow-up interviews. Purposeful sampling was used to select participants who represent a variety of ethnicities, denominations, and levels of religiosity. While the second phase did not provide information that can be generalized for all the participants of the Assisi pilgrimage, it provided a deeper understanding of how the pilgrimage is experienced in different ways by participants from different backgrounds.

Interviews were conducted at the school in a conference room or office and digitally recorded. Interviews were transcribed using a professional service. Afterwards, the transcription was reviewed for accuracy by the author. The researcher took notes during interview to include observations including reflections, facial expressions, and body language. Clarifying questions and reflections were used in interviews to verify that the researcher is accurately understanding difficult or unclear concepts and ideas.

Limitations

Pilgrimages sponsored by Catholic high schools are still a growing phenomenon. No research has been done on the number and variety of pilgrimages offered through schools in the United States. Campus ministry programs can vary from year to year because of staffing and resources, so pilgrimages may be offered at a school only periodically because of the significant resources and time they require. Adolescent religiosity can be influenced because of demographic variables. Because of the nature of this study it is beyond its scope to produce findings that can be generalized to a larger population, rather it will focus on a more in-depth analysis. In addition, wide distances that exist between possible Catholic high school research sites prevent a wider study from occurring.

The researcher's experience as a Roman Catholic priest and educator may have influenced the answers of those who are being interviewed. Also, the researcher is known at

the school and had participated in the pilgrimage. However, the researcher encouraged participants to be honest and open with their responses. Moreover, another researcher will examine the coded data with outside research to prevent researcher's bias. Self-reporting of perceptions helped provide critical reflection into the researcher's bias.

Finally, the study of adolescent faith has proven to be difficult for a number of researchers because many teenagers employ different vocabulary or understandings than other generations (Smith and Denton, 2005). The researcher had those who were interviewed bring in a photograph that represents their experience during the pilgrimage.

Delimitations

High school students may participate in a number travel experiences both inside and outside of school, which could be seen as a pilgrimage such as visiting a civil memorial or a pop cultural landmark or making a service trip. This study sought to examine the nature of pilgrimages that are developed to be a part of the spiritual and religious formation of its students. While a number of Catholic schools sponsor pilgrimage programs through their campus ministry programs, the number of times a particular pilgrimage may differ from year to year, such as World Youth Day. This research focused on those pilgrimages sponsored by a high school campus ministry program on a regular basis because it offered a specific program with consistency over the period of several years. This particular pilgrimage has been facilitated through an outside agency that has been running high school pilgrimages to Assisi for over twenty years.

The study limited its research to participants of the pilgrimages who are currently enrolled at the school, since getting in touch with alumni can be difficult, since a number of them are in transitional housing and in colleges and universities a considerable distance from

the research site. Also, since the study sought to examine the impact of pilgrimage on participants, only students who actually attended the school sponsored pilgrimage were studied.

Data Analysis

The purpose of this study was to develop a fuller understanding of the motivations, experiences and influences of the Assisi Pilgrimage on high school students who have attended. The first analytical step was to use survey data to create a purposeful sample that could be used for semi-structured interviews. Data was analyzed using Microsoft Excel. Students were selected from diverse backgrounds through use of demographic and religiosity of data. Four measures of religiosity were employed based on the work of Mason (2010): religious service attendance, prayer routine, catholic teaching acceptance (Belief in God and closeness), sense of Catholic identity (picking and choosing beliefs, importance of faith, and religious salience). Open-ended questions were also utilized in helping to select pilgrims, so that a range of experiences could be included in the sample. A total of eight interviews were conducted, with the initial two shaping questions for the next two, which then shaped questions for the final four interviews.

Interviews were transcribed and analyzed using a constructivist grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2014), was used in order to understand the phenomenon of how young people in post-modern society often construct their faith identity using many pieces of organized religions as found by religious sociologists (Hervieu-Leger, 2000; Smith and Denton, 2005). Charmaz (2008) defined the grounded theory method as beginning “with inductive strategies for collecting and analyzing qualitative data for the purpose of developing middle-range theories” (p. 397). Charmaz describes the constructivist

grounded approach as being concerned with “action as a central focus and see it arising within socially created situations and social structures” (p.398).

The first two interviews were coded to understand experiences and identify possible gaps. Charmaz (2014) recommended this method to help locate and gather sources of important data as it emerged in the process. Analytic coding memos were used throughout the coding process. This practice allowed for “question raising, puzzle piecing, connection-making, strategy building, problem solving, answer-generating, rising-above-the-data heuristic” (Saldana, 2016, p. 44). Follow, two more interview cycles occurred a week apart with two interviews during the second week, and the final four interviews the third week. Coding followed each set of interviews was shaped by concepts related to the research and interview questions: motivations/background, experiences and elements, and finally faith and spirituality.

After the initial coding, successive rounds of coding eliminated some codes while other codes were combined, refining the list to develop theory and identify relationships and communalities between codes around common themes. Finally, definitions of codes were developed and tested through a round of focused coding. Also, as data was analyzed, participants checked data for validation.

Ethical Considerations

Children's understanding of ritual, like pilgrimages, needs to be studied as they experience it and understand it both within the context of organized religion, as well as outside organized religion (Boyatzis, 2011). According to Alderson (2011) children need to be related to in a manner that respects them as having their own agency concerning their faith and not as underdeveloped individuals.

When dealing with adults interacting with youth, there is a power differential that needs to be taken into account. According to Clark (2011) qualitative methods allow children to have more agency and guide the process and where it goes. Therefore, interviews will be set up with open-ended questions that allow space for students to voice their experiences. In both the surveys and interviews participants will be given agency to opt out at point if they wish. Religious views and understandings can be sensitive issues that are considered private matters. The identities of students will be kept confidential, as well as any other participant who participates in the research. Each student who took the Assisi Pilgrim Survey was given a random ID and was known only to the researcher and student. A list of IDs was kept in a separate location from the names of the students who participated and will be used only to identify students who will be contacted for follow-up interviews. Any student who is interviewed was allowed to choose their own pseudonym. Also, the location of the school participating in the study, as well as those who are sought out for permission to participate in the study, has been kept confidential.

Since some of those participating in the study were minors, both permission of the parents in written form and assents of the student was obtained in order for the minor to participate. Interviews were done in a location in which both the student and interviewees could be seen. Location and time of the interview was made known to school officials. Throughout the interviews and surveys participants were given the opportunity to opt out, as the subject of a person's religious and spiritual views are sensitive topics, which are sometimes not often spoken about. Before interviews participants began again asked if they wish to participate and will be given the option to end the interview at any time.

Survey data as well as any identifying information about participants has been kept confidential. Permission slips were kept in a locked secure file cabinet that only the researcher has access. Data was gathered on a password-protected file on a computer that is not connected to the Internet.

Smith and Denton (2001) note that while incentives may be offered it is important that the participants' confidentiality is not compromised and that the incentives are not too large it can be seen as trying to unduly influence participants. Lunch will be provided for those who participate in the survey and gift certificates will be offered for those who participate in the interviews, even if they decide to end the interview early. Gift Certificate will be for \$25 Amazon gift card.

Background of the Researcher

The researcher has worked in a number of capacities in Catholic education including campus ministry and teaching, as well as assisting in faith formation and youth ministry in a number of parish and school settings. He holds a bachelor of arts in Theology from Belmont Abbey College and a Masters of Divinity from the Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology. He is currently pursuing a doctorate in Catholic Educational Leadership from the University of San Francisco. He has participated in a number of pilgrimages including the California Missions, Lourdes, Monteserrat, Fatima, World Youth Day, Assisi, Rome, and the Camino de Santiago. He has helped lead a number of youth pilgrimages, retreats, and mission trips, which has led to many discussions and research into developing better faith experiences for youth. He attended both a Catholic elementary school and high school in Baltimore. The researcher is a member of the Capuchin Franciscans, as well as an ordained priest.

Positionality

I am a Catholic priest in the United State of America who has ministered for a number year in Catholic schools. While religion may be threatening to modern adolescents, the religious order that I belong to is widely known for its ability to encounter and accompany people who have been traditionally marginalized. While the church can be seen as out of touch with those who do not practice religion, or who are socio-economically marginalized, there are a number of experiences in my life that I have shared with others that have made me more sensitive to others. Growing up most of my teenage years I felt alienated from the church and became an atheist. While I made have minimally participated in some religious practices because I was in a Catholic high school, I went from feeling some doubt to believing God did not exist. Within my own immediate family, I have several family members whose sexual identity and gender identity challenged then cultural norms. This has led to me to be more sensitive to how the practices of religion can cause harm. Economically, my family was on government assistance for a number of years which made it a challenge to attend Catholic schools, since paying tuition was very difficult without financial aid from a number of sources.

As a member of a campus ministry program, my work regularly requires me to work with students to develop liturgies, retreats, and service projects as well as to be available for mentoring, confessions and spiritual direction. I feel that because of the number of students who feel marginalized and have approached me about situations in their lives; the students will feel comfortable talking openly to me. I also feel they will be open because I attended the pilgrimage, not as a leader, but as a chaperone and that I am working on this study to improve the experience of the pilgrimage by listening to the students' voices.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Overview

A purposeful sample of interviewees was developed using Mason's (2010) 4 measures of religiosity: religious service attendance; prayer routine; catholic teaching acceptance (Belief in God and closeness); and sense of Catholic identity (picking and choosing beliefs, importance of faith, and religious salience). In addition, students from religious backgrounds other than Catholic were chosen in order to provide for a greater range of religious diversity. The sample included representatives from public, private and Catholic schools. Lastly, one student who self-identified as receiving financial aid and whose mother has a high school education, was chosen, in order to understand the impact of the pilgrimage on an underserved population.

Research Questions

1. What are the motivations of St. Bonaventure High School (Pseudonym) students who attended the Assisi pilgrimage?
2. How do students describe their experience of this pilgrimage and its elements?
3. How do students describe the influence of this pilgrimage experience in relation to their personal faith and practices?

Demographics

In order to participate in the study, one had to be a current student at St. Bonaventure High School and had to have attended the Assisi Pilgrimage. 24 out of 28 potential students participated in the study taking the Assisi Pilgrim Survey. Students who elected to participate in the study as minors, had to receive parental consent to participate or decline

participation in the study. Students who were over 18 years old had to sign a consent form to participate in the study.

The race or ethnic classification of the 24 students who participated in the survey, 9 or 37.5% were Hispanic, 9 or 37.5% were White, 4 or 16.7% were Mixed Race and 2 or 8.3% were Asian. 100% of the 24 respondents identified themselves as male. Most of the students (58.3%) were 17 years old at the time of the survey, while 41.7% were 18 years old.

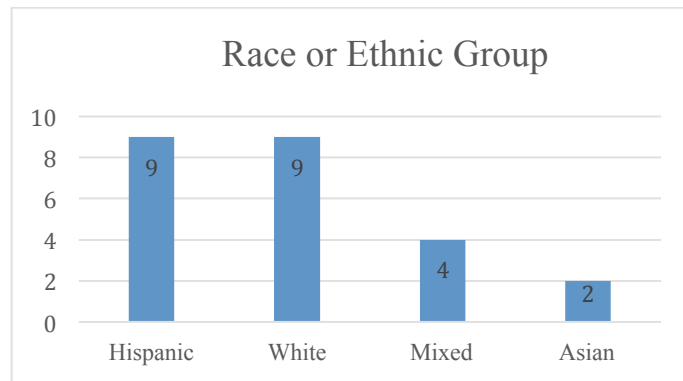


Figure 1. Race or Ethnic Demographics

In terms of Religion, 22 of the participants identified themselves as Catholic, while 1 student identified as Other Christian and 1 student identified as no religion. Of those

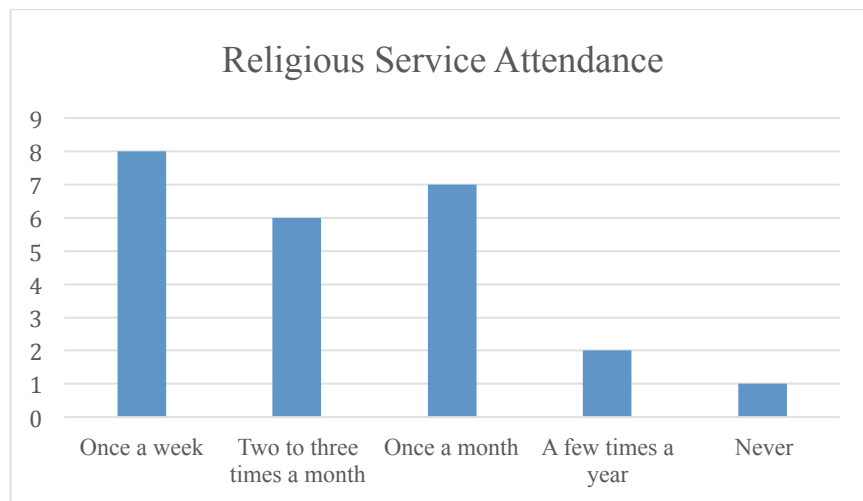


Figure 2. Religious Service Attendance

surveyed 33.3% or 8 students attend religious services once a week outside of school, 25% or 6 students attend two to three times a month, 29.2% or 7 students attend once a month, 8.3% or 2 students attend a few times a year, 4.2% or 1 student never attends religious services outside of school. Of those surveyed 37% found religion either extremely or very important in their daily lives, compared to 50% who found religion somewhat important and 8% who found religion not important at all.

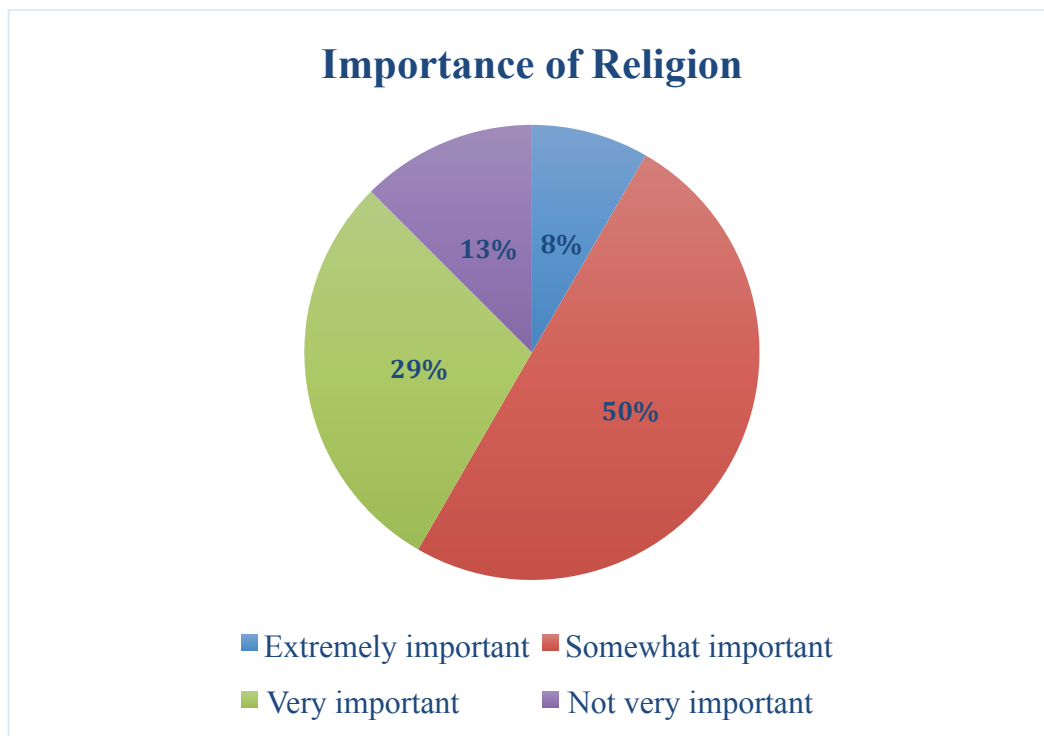


Figure 3. Importance of Religion

In terms of the prayer routine of Assisi pilgrims, showed the number of students who pray alone varied in practice. Of the 24 people who were surveyed, 2 students reported never praying alone, 1 student prays alone less than once a month, 4 students pray one to two times a month, 7 reported praying alone at least once a week, one student reported praying a few times a week, 7 students pray about once a day and 2 students pray alone many times a day. Over a third of pilgrims pray alone at least once a day.

Of the 24 pilgrims surveyed, 17 pilgrims described their view of God as a personal being involved in the lives of people today, while 7 described God as not personal, but something like a comic life force. In terms of the perception of a student's closeness or distance to God, most of the time, of the 24 pilgrims surveyed, 6 students reported feeling very close to God, 9 pilgrims reported feeling somewhat close to God, 8 reported feeling somewhat distant, and 1 pilgrim reported feeling very distant to God.

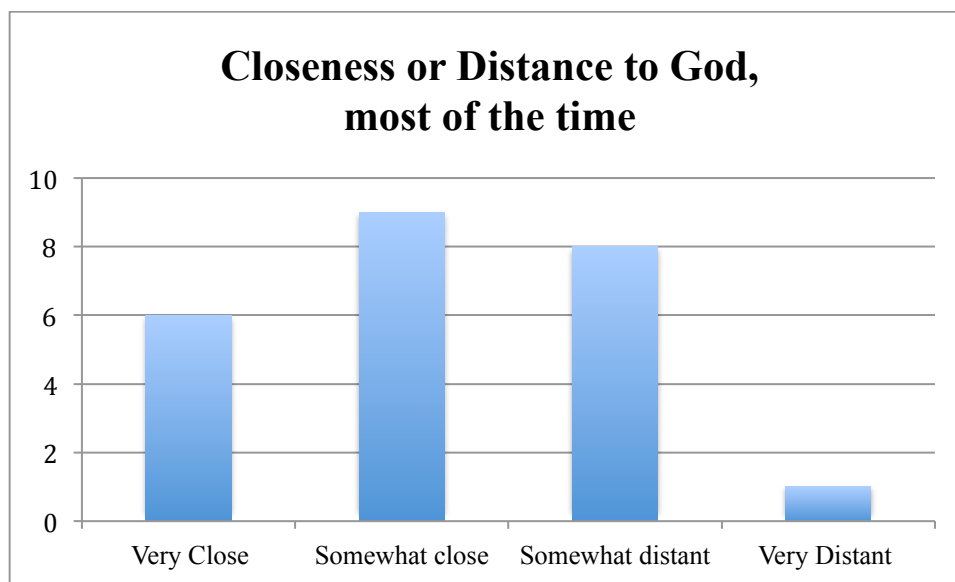


Figure 4. Closeness or Distance to God

Pilgrim Profiles

Eight pilgrims were selected for semi-structured, in-depth interviews.

Vern

Vern responded to the survey as a 17 year-old, Catholic, Hispanic male. Vern attended a Catholic grade school before attending St. Bonaventure High School. His mother holds a college degree and did not report whether or not he received financial aid for school. Vern believes in God, feels very close to God, and sees God as a personal being involved in

the lives of people today. Vern expressed that religious faith is very important to him, attends religious services weekly, and prays by himself once a day.

Robert

Robert responded to the survey as an 18 year-old, Catholic Hispanic male. Robert attended a Catholic grade school before attending St. Bonaventure High School. His mother holds a high school diploma and reported that he had received financial aid for school. Robert believes in God, feels somewhat distant to God, and sees God as not personal, but something like a cosmic life force. Robert expressed that religious faith is somewhat important to him, attends religious services about once a month, and prays by himself a few times a month.

Kyle

Kyle responded to the survey as a 17 year-old, Catholic white male. Kyle attended a Catholic grade school before attending St. Bonaventure High School. His mother's highest level of education is graduate school and he reported the he had not received any form of financial aid for school. Vern believes in God, feels somewhat close to God, and sees God as not personal, but something like a cosmic life force. Kyle expressed that religious faith is very important to him, attends religious services 2-3 times a month, and prays by himself once a day.

Dominic

Dominic responded to the survey as a 17 year-old, Catholic white male. Dominic attended a Catholic grade school before attending St. Bonaventure High School. His mother's highest level of education is graduate school, and did not report whether or not he had received financial aid for school. Dominic is unsure of the belief of God, feels somewhat

close to God, and sees God as a personal being involved in the lives of people today.

Dominic expressed that religious faith is somewhat important to him, attends religious services about once a month, and prays by himself about once a week.

Leonardo

Leonardo (also referred to as Leo) responded to the survey as a 17 year-old, white male with no religion or denomination. Leo attended a private grade school before attending St. Bonaventure High School. His mother's education included some college education, and he reported receiving no financial aid. Leo is unsure of God's existence, feels somewhat distant to God, and sees God as not personal, but something like a cosmic life force. Leo expressed that religious faith is not very important to him, never attends religious services outside of school, and never prays by himself.

John

John responded to the survey as a 17 year-old, white male who identifies as other Christian. John attended a Catholic grade school before attending St. Bonaventure High School. His mother's highest level of education is graduate school, and did not report whether or not he had received financial aid. John is unsure that he believes in God, feels very distant to God, and sees God as not personal, but something like a cosmic life force. John expressed that religious faith is not very important to him, attends religious services about once a month, and prays by himself less than once a month.

Aaron

Aaron responded to the survey as a 17 year-old, Catholic Hispanic male. Aaron attended a public school before attending St. Bonaventure High School. His mother's highest level of education is graduate school, and reported he had not received any form of

financial aid for school. Aaron believes in God, feels very close to God, and sees God as a personal being involved in the lives of people today. Aaron expressed that religious faith is somewhat important to him, attends religious services a few times a year, and prays by himself many times a day.

George

George responded to the survey as an 18 year-old, Catholic mixed race male. George attended a Catholic grade school before attending St. Bonaventure High School. His mother's has a college degree, and reported he had not received any form of financial aid for school. George believes in God, feels somewhat close to God, and sees God as a personal being involved in the lives of people today. Kyle expressed that religious faith is very important to him, attends religious services once a week, and prays by himself at least once a week.

Motivations

While ancient pilgrims undertook pilgrimages for penance or to fulfill an oath, the intentions of a number of students from St. Bonaventure High School, on Spring Break, would seem almost foreign to ancient pilgrims. According to one pilgrim:

I wanted to go to Assisi because I wanted to go and visit Italy and Assisi and Rome along with . . . um . . . learning about, I guess, my friends and the background if my school's "mascot" um and kind of just for the experience as a whole, just to see what it was like. And since my parents were willing to pay, I thought why not, it's a once in a lifetime opportunity. (Leonardo, p. 69)

While it may seem like superficial reasons for going, some student pilgrims opened up about struggles that they carried with them in hopes of finding answers:

I wanted to go on the Assisi pilgrimage first of all for the traveling experience, which I think a lot of teenagers want to do, um, but also because at the time I had really lost my faith. And I struggles to come to terms with a lot of catholic, um, ideology. So, I wanted to understand it more and grow with my faith. (Aaron, p. 97)

The interviews illustrate that each pilgrim has a number of motivations for attending the pilgrimage. For example, Kyle, who attends religious services 2-3 times a month, attended the pilgrimage not only to find meaning and learn more about St. Francis but also to be with his friends and visit Italy. On the other hand, Leo who is considered “social” and has no religious denomination, desired not only to visit Italy, but also to learn more about St. Francis. Four themes emerged: Tourist Motivation, Religious Motivation, Social Motivation, and Franciscan Motivations.

Tourist Motivation

Tourist motivation is defined as the desire to travel to another country (Italy) for a variety of cultural experiences such as sightseeing and eating different foods. Of the themes that emerged from the interviews, this theme emerged as having the most influence on the motivations of those who attended the Assisi pilgrimage including: Vern, Kyle, Robert, Dominic, Leo, John, Aaron, and George. One unique insight offered by Kyle was the idea that any tourist motivation for attending the pilgrimage was “perverted”. Kyle described that people with tourist motivations were not a real pilgrims.

Social Motivation

Social motivation is defined as the desire to spend time with or to connect on a deeper level with friends, as well as establish new relationships. Kyle, Leo, Vern, Robert, and George all identified social reasons for attending the pilgrimage. It is also worth mentioning

that a number of pilgrims cited the influence of family members for their desire to attend the pilgrimage. Both Vern and Robert had siblings who attended St. Bonaventure and attended the Assisi pilgrimage. Friends who had already graduated, and attended the pilgrimage and recommended the experience influenced Kyle. In the case of Dominic and Robert, both had relatives who supported either financially or emotionally their attending the Assisi pilgrimage.

Religious Motivation

For the purposes of this study and based on the data, religious motivation is defined as the desire to gain a deeper understanding of one's personal faith, grow in relationship with God, as well as to come to a better knowledge of the history or content of faith. Those who identified as having religious motivations for attending the pilgrimage included Vern, Robert, Dominic, Kyle, Aaron, and George. Two of those interviewed, Leo and John, who were considered "social", had no religious motivations for attending the pilgrimage. Both were not raised within a Catholic family and for both of them other than their experience at St. Bonaventure, they do not often attend religious services, nor pray often. As a result religion has little influence in their lives and, therefore provided little motivation for their participation on the Assisi pilgrimage. However, this does not mean that they are completely against Catholicism as Leo was interested in learning more about St. Francis as someone more than just a historical figure.

Franciscan Motivation

Franciscan motivation is defined as the desire to learn, to understand, and to connect more with St. Francis and the religious movement he founded. This motivation can occur both on a religious level, since St. Francis is a canonized saint whose actions are seen as a

model of Jesus Christ, but also on a secular level, since St. Francis had an influence on the cultural and historical landscape of Europe. Kyle, Leo, George, Vern and Robert all mentioned the desire to get to know more about St. Francis, as a motivation for attending the pilgrimage. The school has a strong connection with St. Francis because the school was begun and continues to be staffed by friars who belong to the order that was founded by St. Francis.

Vulnerable Experiences

For those interviewed, there were a number of reasons to be excited about the trip which they saw would provide them an opportunity to experience new things in Italy, develop new friendships, understand figure of St. Francis and possibly deepen their faith. A number of pilgrims brought concerns with them on the pilgrimage. Aaron, who did not identify social reasons for attending the pilgrimage, described struggling socially and attended the pilgrimage because he had come out at a retreat as bisexual and was worried about the rooming situation as people “may not be comfortable with me”. Robert, who received financial aid to attend St. Bonaventure, was “very reluctant to go because of money issues” feared he would be “taking money away from his family” which he described could have been used for “SAT Prep or college preparatory of stuff like that”. Dominic also described the challenge of paying for the trip because of the cost would “be such a burden” on his family”, but was able to attend because of financial support from his grandparents. Finally, Leonardo, a non-religious student who does not attend religious services nor prays on his own was “dreading all the religious” activities.

Experiences

Visiting Franciscan Places and Meeting St. Francis

Throughout the course of the ten day pilgrimage, the group, led by a team of experts on St. Francis, visited sites throughout Rome, Assisi, and the surrounding areas to see the places where St. Francis was born, lived, prayed, ministered, and died. The school sponsored the pilgrimage because of its strong connection with St. Francis. Leo described St. Francis as a “mascot” and that the school’s identity was not just as a Catholic school, but a Franciscan school because it was “developed off the ideals of St. Francis”. Dominic mentioned that St. Francis, while he is the patron saint of animals, he is “more than that”. While a number of places and events in the life of St. Francis resonated with pilgrims in different ways, one place would powerfully resonate with the high school pilgrims.

While walking to the Basilica of St. Francis in Assisi, a number of pilgrims stopped and were struck by a statue of St. Francis that was located outside of the church overlooking the valley below. Many of the group would take photos, and share them and their impressions at the interview.



Figure 5. The defeated knight. (Author's photo)

In this statue four of the students saw themselves in the person of St. Francis. Dominic sees the defeated knight who has come home after not living up to people's expectations. "He was a prisoner, and he feels like he's an embarrassment to his family and to his town that that he thought was going, you know, honor". Dominic opened up about the difficulties he was facing with his grades just before the trip. He went on to share that despite always trying to do his best, "I always feel like I'm gonna embarrass my family, all the time".

Kyle similarly expressed the fear of not living up to society's expectations, when talking about the statue. Kyle added:

I think we try so hard to be the things that we think we need to be, and that the world thinks we need to be. . . Francis tried so hard to be a knight, to be what society thought, what his dad thought would bring him glory, (what) would bring him satisfaction, bring him fulfillment.

On reflecting on his own life Kyle noted "I plan things so much and get worked up in planning out every detail, especially like my (Eagle Scout) project, and not knowing where I am going" in this he has learned to "relinquish control".

Despite seeing the dejectedness of St. Francis, there was also a sign of hope for the pilgrims. Aaron said:

Knowing we are all defeated at times in our lives. We all may not agree with something. We all may have our own struggles, but at the end of the day, there is something greater, um, that can – I – I think, that can be found in God or even if you don't believe in God, just a higher purpose, you know? We can all be that knight or

the soldier walking away, but, um, if we find the right path we are walking away with our heads down but to a higher purpose. So, that's why that picture (of the statue) really sticks out to me. (p. 100)

Kyle also saw hope "he didn't know that in being defeated- is what exactly lead him to that fulfillment, to that accomplishment and his life saving purpose".

Francis Made Real

While the young pilgrims had been taught much about the life of St. Francis, along with their religious instruction, it seemed that a number of the things passed down to them as just another story and not something real. Robert said that St. Francis was almost seen "just another fictional character". Being in the city and visiting the Franciscan sites "was very interesting because it brought truth to everything we've learned" Vern elaborated:

It's one thing being told what he did, but it's a completely 'nother thing to actually visit the leper colony he blessed with his deed and walk the streets that he walked and see the buildings he grew up in and live around . . . it was more personal and I could actually see him as a person that lived, not as this mystical figure who just is a fantastic human being. . . . It changed my views on how possible I think it is to actually emulate him." (Vern, p.4)

While many connected to St. Francis as a knight, Leonardo connected to him because of his social life. Leonardo described the life of Francis as being very similar to his in that "he comes from a family that isn't poor but isn't like insanely rich", "he goes out and parties all the time" and "he's popular as well, I wouldn't say that I am popular but I'm not unknown". Seeing this side of Francis is important for him because saints are not just "born into this life where they just pray to God all day and make miracles happen and tell people

like what their destiny”. Leonardo compared the experience as being different than learning about history:

at least for me it’s more interesting than other history. You can learn about the Declaration of Independence was created or you can learn about the life of St. Francis. In my opinion, the life of St. Francis is 20 more times interesting than the Declaration of Independence (Leonardo, 81-82).

Exploring and Making New Connections

During the course of the ten day trip, some hours of free time for pilgrims were provided both in Assisi, and in Rome. Many of the pilgrims used this time to go site-seeing, to go shopping, to sleep, to eat, or to hang out. Over the course of the interviews, it became increasingly apparent that it was during this time a number of bonds were created both among the students themselves and also among the students and the adults.

This time allowed people to connect with other student pilgrims in informal settings included seeing other sites and eating. Aaron described the experience:

there were kids I’d never talked to throughout the three years of high school who I am friends with now. I gained a really deep perception of the kids. Um, and I really did grow, um, we grew as friends and brothers in – in the sense of this experience because, you know, when you’re in a foreign place and you don’t know where to go, you don’t know which street to take but you’re given three hours to kind of wander around, um, you need a buddy to help, you know, maneuver those streets with you. So, even though you may not know them as well, um, going into it, by the end of finding a new restaurant in Assisi, you’ve had a full-on conversation with this person you didn’t know for the past three years.

John mentioned that the opportunity to wander around Assisi included experiences such as “exploring the roads” and stopping for gelato. Leo mentioned that groups would develop by inviting others to do something together whether it was to look at a statue or getting pizza.. According to Vern there were no cliques during the trip and people would look past differences.

Going up to La Rocca

High above the city of Assisi, sits the citadel of La Rocca which was used to defend the city. While it’s ancient stone walls may draw curiosity from visitors, the commanding breathtaking views of the city and the surrounding countryside are the main draw (Figure 6). Easily reached from a short walk up the hillside from the city center. A number of pilgrims interviewed showed pictures from the spot and discussed visiting the site during their free time.



Figure 6. Town of Assisi from La Rocca. (Author's Photo)

Robert discussed that during free time he and his classmates would form groups and figure different place to see and places to eat. On the way going up to La Rocca, he went up with a group that he did not really know or talk to before the trip. Robert said, "It was interesting because at school I didn't really know the people that went on pilgrimage". He said that they began to get to know one another during the long plane ride over to Italy and should share stories and inside jokes. Robert mentioned developing relationships with athletes, which would not be part of his social group. He said that during "my regular life I wouldn't have made those connections". Robert mentioned that this dynamic was further developed through a group chat that was established on the trip and has continued since returning from Assisi. Even on coming back to school they would reminisce about their times in Assisi.

Leonardo described how a number of them made efforts to develop relationships. For example he would join into a group where maybe he would only be close with one of the people, but he would try to start conversations with the person he did not know. Also they would reach out to those they did not know by:

inviting them to do like so something with you, I'll say . . .let's go get some pizza or say hey. . .do you want to go look at this statue with me? It's not like there's much to do there on your free time, so most of the time they'll be like yeah, let's go and then right there you start talking to them,. You go do that, have that experience with them and then boom, (snaps) just like that. It's pretty magical. I feel like a wizard. (p.88)

Leonardo mentioned that besides sightseeing and eating together, traveling together and bunking with other people were good ways to get to know other people. Throughout these

experiences during their free time a number of students developed new friends, or deepened their relationships with their friends.

Climbing up St. Peter's Dome

During free time students also made connections with the adults who attended the pilgrimage including priests, teachers who acted as chaperones, and another pilgrimage leader. During their free time Kyle and a number of his classmates got to develop a relationship with one of the schools administrators who attended the trip. Kyle while showing a number of photographs during his interviews shared the experience of going to the top of St. Peter's Dome with some friends and one of the teachers (Figure 6)



Figure 7. View from St. Peter's Dome. (Author's Photo)

On one of the first days of the trip they took a walk with Mr. Belding (pseudonym) to see one of the sites in Assisi, however the relationship further developed on a trip up to the top of St. Peter's Dome during one of the last days of the pilgrimage.

His desire to spend time with the administrator and teacher was:

because he was always such an almost mysterious figure that is so amazing, and fantastic, and funny, and fun to be around. But you never get to see that side of him so much when he's teaching, but you can – **[chuckles]** you can tell it's there, that I thought it was awesome going to these places with him. (pg. 38)

In describing the change in the relationship Kyle said “it was really striking to view him as a person and to see him as an individual rather than as a teacher, um, not so much something to be feared, but keeping them at arm's length, like, a business relationship”.

In describing the difference of relationship between adults and students Leo described adults and being “friends, but not friend-friends”.

Kyle while talking about his photos, talked about climbing up to the top of St. Peter's, Kyle saw a vulnerable side of Mr. Belding. The climb involved climbing several hundred steep stone stairs. Describing the challenge Kyle noted:

There was no easy climb, especially for- for him to – to climb up there, um, but when we made our way up there, it was absolutely worth it to see his reaction and to see, um everyone else's. . . I think in a way, I didn't expect- that he's always someone who you go to when you need help, doesn't almost like someone who would be needing out help to go somewhere, needing, wanting us to go with him (p.38-39).

In describing the relationship difference that a number of students had with adults versus their peers, Leonardo described it in terms of his parents. While he likes traveling to

Europe with his parents, he described traveling on this trip with his “friend-friends” versus his parents who he described as “my friends”. Much like Kyle he used terms in describing relationships with adults that go beyond acquaintances, but are not true peer relationships. Vern described the developing of good relationships with the teachers from the school while on the trip because it allowed him to develop a better respect for them that made it “easier for me to pay attention” in their classes and try to perform academically better in their class. According to Vern the pilgrimage allowed for them to spend time together and “talk about culture and different ideals” which would not have been possible if they were “just there to catch us if we broke rules and stuff”.

Sneaking out and Drinking

Two students in their responses to the open ended questions of what they did not enjoy about their experience on pilgrimage indicated they would change the fact that students were sneaking out at night and drinking. They elaborated on these experiences in their interviews. George mentioned there would be “a group of kids” who would sneak out almost every night and go to the bars. His room was near where the students were staying and “would hear people opening and closing the door” at very late hours, which he found “just kind of annoying”. When asked if there is anything that chaperones could do to prevent it, he said I did not think there would be a way because regardless “people will figure out a way to sneak out every night”. Dominic mentioned that a number of the pilgrims would be late the next morning because of being hung over and having stayed out to around 3:00-4:00am. He also mentioned annoyance at these students, however “I was getting something out of the trip that they weren’t”.

One of the students admitted to drinking on the trip. In describing his experience of drinking he said, “Culturally, it was just one- it was one thing we all agreed as a group that we had to do. Um, but with a nice meal”. In fact he recommended to future pilgrims:

‘You need to drink’, not binge drink, but I said ‘you need to go to a nice restaurant, no teachers there, and you need to have a glass of wine with you gnocchi and you need to talk to the locals and get the full Italian experience.

Faith Experiences

The Leper Colony

Throughout the pilgrimage, the pilgrimage leaders would lead a number of activities to help students develop their faith. These included periods of quiet reflections, journaling, both small groups and large group sharing of student reflections, prayer services, and masses. Many of the pilgrims described these experiences as being positive for them.

In their interviews Leo, Vern, Kyle, and Dominic described having a sense of calm or peace during these times. Vern said, “they gave us time to decompress and reflect”. These reflections occurred several times in churches and notably in a field down on the plains on the outskirts of Assisi, where St. Francis used to ministry to lepers who lived in a community. In their interviews Kyle, Dominic and Leo, all brought photos from this experience. (See Figure 8)



Figure 8. Assisi from Leper Colony. (Author's photograph)

On this particular day the pilgrims had lunch and were given time, according to Leo to “pray or meditate or just sit alone and think to ourselves”. Kyle described his experience:

I think then and there I just relaxed, and just let myself be absorbed in my surroundings and not in anything else, not in what was going to happen, what we were gonna eat, what I was gonna do with my friends, but more so just center myself there and feel the world around me, and in doing so, feel God's presence.

Many of the pilgrims described this experience of calm and peace because it afforded them an opportunity away from the stresses and pressures of life back at home. Dominic mentioned it giving him the most peace he has ever felt in his life, “just getting to sit where they kept the lepers and look at the whole town of Assisi for that amount of time that we did, it just really helped”. Both Dominic and Kyle mentioned at it gave them a release from the

stress of everyday life. Kyle described the challenge of being able to have an experience similar back home because:

it's difficult to do that, to find that, a place to do that and a time to do that, um, because so often we are worrying about homework or other commitments, My (Eagle Scout) project, that I was worrying about all last semester, college apps and everything that – it's been difficult for me to find time, and place, um, and the- the space of mind to be able to do something like that. (p.34)

Dominic described it as one of his favorite moments of the trip, in fact he described the moment “that gave me, like, the most peace in my life”. It gave him and his classmates a break from the stress of school and gave them the opportunity to sit and take in the view of Assisi, “it just helped a lot”.

For Leo, who does not consider himself religious, it provided a time to sleep, “I slept under a tree because they gave us like 30 minutes or something like that to just sit and contemplate without cell phones, or anything, just ourselves”. Leo would further add that he would do a similar thing while having free time on his Kairos retreat, the following year.

Mass Together

Throughout the pilgrimage mass would be offered once a day as the pilgrims visited different sites. While the students mentioned experiencing mass at home and school, it was a different experience for them while on pilgrimage in Italy. Kyle described one of the things that made the pilgrimage masses different from home and school was the simplicity of them. He said that the mass he enjoys going to is “not the huge cathedral mass with huge gold things – and what not. It's like I'd rather throw it together with a plate and cup and make it happen”. He used the image of the Portziucula chapel, which is a humble chapel rebuilt by

Francis, that was inside “this really grandiose enclosure” and provided an “intimate atmosphere” with still have some nice artwork on the inside.

Leonardo, who does not believe in organized religion and does not attend religious services outside those required at school, found having mass everyday “kind of excessive” he did find some new value in the experience. Leonardo said:

I’m so used to masses being an hour long, that was kind of a relief that we didn’t have 700 kids. Because here at school when he have mass it takes forever, but when we were in Assisi, it was like they did this and this and I was like oh wait, it’s over? Like wow, this is great. Why can’t mass always be like this.

While it may seem on the surface that Leonard was simply happy to have short masses, he said that he found a new appreciation for the mass. He mentioned that he “finally figured out how mass works” and that he “had gone through mass for three years not understanding how it worked”. Besides being able to understand the structure and meaning of the mass better he also appreciated how mass “was in a different location” each day. While Kyle and Leonardo are not the only ones who found the masses to be meaningful experiences, they provide a snapshot in to what the pilgrims were experiencing at mass.

Robert’s Experience

One of the reasons Robert wanted to go on the Assisi pilgrimage was because his friends were going, however, he was reluctant because of the high cost of the trip and he did not want to “take money away from his family”. His mother finally convinced him to go on the pilgrimage. Some of the things Robert hoped to get out of the pilgrimage was to learn more about St. Francis as well as to grow closer to God and learn more about his faith.

For Robert, St. Francis just seemed like “just another fictional character”, however that perspective would change throughout the pilgrimage.

Robert said that he doesn’t “really have the time to like or worship or do faith” even though he serves as one of the members of the schools’ student ministry team. He feels like he often abandons his faith and that he is letting his family down. For his family, being Catholic is something expected of him; it is not really a choice.

One of the significant experiences for Robert, like for other pilgrims, was the quiet time for reflection at the Leper Colony. This provided him with some necessary time to reflect. On reflecting there, he said that the place was interesting because St. Francis:

was so willing to like give up his life for something that he couldn’t see. . .like no one can like really back it up and like stand up against the church and do all that stuff, like it gave me hope that one day I would be able to find peace with my faith.
(p.12)

Robert discussed that his faith was deeply shaped by his family’s Mexican heritage. While his family were considered “traditional Catholics” since coming to American and experiencing “American modernization” his family has become very busy and found it difficult to find time for faith. While his mom makes it to church, Robert has found himself “so busy with school or other stuff that I have to get done that I kinda just push it aside”.

During the pilgrimage Robert got the opportunity got to make connections that he said he would not have made otherwise. He mentioned there were a number of people who he “didn’t really know” before the pilgrimage. But got to know a number of guys, especially by walking up to La Rocca. This provided his the chance to meet some new people. Even now at school he often reminisces about the pilgrimage.

Another particular way that he was able to bond with his classmates was while shopping. In Rome, he went to Gucci, a high-end fashion store where he ended up buying an expensive wallet, money that was given to him by his mother as pocket money for “food and expenses”. While he spent very little money on the trip, a number of friends were buying expensive items from the store and his friends tapped him on his right shoulder and said “When in Rome” and he responded back “When in Rome” and made his way to pay for the wallet. After the fact he said “That’s the one thing I regretted, but I guess on the pilgrimage a lot of people just fell into the tourist thing where they just spent money”. He went on to admit that he has only since used the wallet a couple times.

Another one of the highlights was visiting La Verna, where St. Francis received his stigmata. While he said the views from the sanctuary were great, what sticks out to him is what the experience did to his faith. For Robert religious experiences of God were reserved only for the select people, who were considered extra holy, while ordinary people like Robert would never be able to experience God. He said:

you hear about all these people, like saints, having some sort of experience with God and then normal people, like me, I feel like we just feel like it’s only the chosen that get to experience God (pg. 17).

He was able to have his own experience in which things were “brought to life” and what he had learned “wasn’t just another story”. The experience of being there had “strengthened my faith and like what I believed in and it really cemented like- it covered some holes that I had with my faith”. From his experience he came to the conclusion “something definitely happened here”. He would go on to describe that having mass was particularly “beautiful” and made what he had learned growing up seem like “a distant world, something out of a

comic book”. Everything about that experience made him think more about his “faith in a more physical manner”. He contrasted his mass experience on pilgrimage to home parish where there would be a “routine of reading and sitting and going home and back to work or going back to your homework”. The routines at home make him feel like he is becoming “a numb person” and “a computer that just does what it has to do to get on”.

He would go to describe how after the pilgrimage he would review photos and videos to bring back the memories and not “forget like what I was experiencing” as the pilgrimage brought him healing from previous wounds. The wounds he would go on to describe as family trauma he witnessed as his mother has brutally abused when he was living in Mexico, which lead to his mom being hospitalized for two months. He ended up living with his grandparents for a time, eventually moving with his mom back to the United States. This really made him question God throughout his life. However, the Assisi pilgrimage was like a “med kit” for his faith and gave him the desire to give his faith life “a nice good hard try again”.

Robert mentioned the mass as being particularly helpful in his healing because “something about being there with fellow classmen and not having stress about work or homework . . . I was on a break that allowed me to really concentrate on what I was hearing”. He said it was a combination of the people he was with, and the environment that he was in that helped him “become open to giving my faith another try”. The experience “opened the door that I had locked for years”.

Robert when he first got back from Assisi even “considered being a part of the – what’s it called? I’m really blanking on this stuff. (pause) The friar- like becoming a friar”. Part of this was seeing and many different Franciscan friars, which he found really

interesting and went to talk to one of the friars who was one of the leaders on the trip about his faith and the Franciscan life. In his discussions and meeting friars, Robert found that “ordinary people” could be friars.

Within Robert’s experience a number of motivations influenced him on his decision to attend the Assisi pilgrimage. His motivations did closely align to what he experienced, in part because of the nature of the pilgrimage experience. His desire to attend the pilgrimage with friends was met by having free time to socialize with them and create new friendships. He did learn about St. Francis by visiting the places that were closely connected to St. Francis. The making of connections with friends and others, as well as experiencing the places tied to St. Francis influenced his experience of healing and growth of faith while doing structured faith-based activities on the pilgrimages such as reflecting at the Leper Colony and participating at mass at La Verna. From these and other pilgrimage experiences, Robert even became open to the possibility of becoming a Franciscan friar.

Aaron’s Experience

Aaron described two main motivations for attending the Assisi Pilgrimage, one was “for the traveling experience” which he said “a lot of teenager want to do” and the second reason was to “understand” and “grow” in his faith. Aaron said he had “strayed away” from his faith, at the time, because of the Catholic Church’s “political” position on “gay marriage and abortion”, things which he felt the church “shouldn’t have a foot in”. Aaron described how his identifying as bisexual put him at odds not only with the church, but also with his Catholic family. Against his family’s wishes, he decided not to get confirmed, which usually occurs when a person is in his teens.

One of the first experiences Aaron had shared “against the advisement of the school” was drinking wine in Assisi. On describing the experience he mentioned that it was a cultural experience that “we all agreed as a group that we had to do”, but to his knowledge no one “got like belligerently drunk”. Aaron showed a picture of his glass of wine with what he described as “the best gnocchi I’ve ever had”. It was a nice meal and would recommend future pilgrims definitely to try a glass of wine when they go on the Assisi Pilgrimage.

The experience of going out to eat and explore Assisi provided him opportunities to meet many people. He even met some students from Belgium with whom he and others learned “how they viewed their own countries and how they view us as people in the United States” and saw new perspectives. It also provided him with the chance to meet “kids I’d never talked to throughout the three years of high school who I am friends with now”. During the free time “you’re given three hours to kind of wander around, um, you need a buddy to help, you know, maneuver those streets with you”.

Aaron was able to talk with one of the priests during the pilgrimage because during the meal times the faculty, staff, and pilgrimage leaders would eat with the students. During his conversations with the priest at dinner Aaron discussed the issues of politics and the church. Aaron told the priest he “did not agree with the politics of the church”, to which the priest told him “Don’t worry about that” and that “you’re praising Jesus” and “you’re not praising the politics of the church”. This helped Aaron come to a new understanding of Catholicism. One of the other things that helped him was the small group discussions which often took place in the evening. He mentioned that during the day there was more educational learning going on about the life of St. Francis, like a field trip, at night it was

more like a retreat where people would talk about their emotions, and where Aaron “started to get an appreciation for kids I’d never talked to before”.

In describing his understanding between him and Catholicism, he compared it to the Constitution, “it’s an old document, but I feel like there is a lot of room to breathe into, um, especially with my experiences with the pilgrimage of St. Francis” and his “whole journey in rediscovering Catholicism”. He said that he has “been treated with a lot of respect and I’ve realized that politics, sexuality, race, gender, um, those ideas don’t trump sort of the community within the Catholic Church”.

One of the photos that Aaron found meaningful was the statue of St. Francis as the dejected knight. He connected with St. Francis because:

we are all defeated at times in our lives. We may not agree with something. We all have our own struggles, but at the end of the day, there is something greater . . . that can be found in God or even if you don’t believe in God, just a higher purpose.(p. 100)

Aaron described a very powerful experience at the tomb of St. Francis. While praying at the tomb he became tearful and overwhelmed. “I remember feeling completely cleansed, like any doubt, any sort of, um, problems that I’d had with the Church or with myself were kind of just at ease at that point”. He recalled the kindness of a friar who gave him some prayer card, which Aaron thought he would have to pay for and the priest told him that they were free. Aaron described that he felt a very strong connection with St. Francis, almost like he was a close friend. He said:

I can't even explain it. It was like somebody put their hands on my shoulders and said you know, "It's okay. . . . grow with your faith on your own pace, but the resources are here". That was total-that's the best way I can describe it.(p.103-4)

Aaron said that he had come out during the junior retreat and still had been wrestling with his faith, but was able to come to peace with the Church during the pilgrimage experience. He compared the pilgrimage to the junior retreat and the Senior Kairos Retreat, that it "just changes you, your outlook and other people's outlook" and that "It's more than a vacation, it's spiritual". After coming back from pilgrimage, Aaron said that he hopes to attend a Catholic college and hopefully get confirmed in the faith.

For Aaron, he came to the pilgrimage seeking better understanding of the faith that was wrestling with the Church's "politics" and his own identity and ideals. Free time allowed him to get to know classmates better, as well as to talk with a priest about some of his challenges. While learning about St. Francis he found a connection to the saint. While going to the tomb of St. Francis he had a powerful experience that brought him to connect with St. Francis and with God. The comfort that Aaron received gave him a powerful experience that would stay with him and help him develop a place within the community of the Church.

Additional Perspectives of Influence on Faith

In addition, to the perspectives of Robert and Aaron from whom the pilgrimage had an influence on them in terms of their faith, a number of pilgrims did describe the influence of the pilgrimage in this area. For Vern, the pilgrimages did not necessary challenge his faith, but rather "strengthened" his views and help him appreciate "different perspectives". Before he had experiences his faith as very "structured" and "mechanical". His was

concerned just about going to church and praying. After the pilgrimage he saw his faith in a more concrete way. He described faith as not just about looking up for God, but to “look around” and “be the best person I could for those around me”. For Kyle, who had meaningful experiences on his Junior retreat, Confirmation retreat, and peer student ministry team retreat, found the pilgrimage was not a “paradigm shift”, but rather a “faith boost” that “kinda of rejuvenates”.

For Leonardo, who identifies as not religious, found himself having a better understanding of the Catholic faith, in particular to the saints and the mass. He described his understanding of St. Francis and the saints as not just people who are born holy, but people who were ordinary and had a change in their ways and lived their lives in dramatically different ways. Also he came to a better understanding of how mass is structured and what the meaning of the actions are about. While he “was dreading all of those religious” activities, after the experiences he was “happy and grateful” for them. In particular he said, “I think that the people running it know that there are people on it that aren’t religious or aren’t like too involved with their religion so they-kind of accommodate to that.” (p.86).

Further Analysis

There existed among the pilgrims interviewed, a number who had multiple and varied motivations for attending the pilgrimage, which were not necessarily religious. While for Leonardo, who did not necessarily have religious motivation for attending the pilgrimage, he had sufficient resources to participate. For others such as Robert, and Dominic, they had religious motivations to attend the pilgrimage; however the significant cost of the trip nearly prevented them from going. Students who are not necessarily religious and lack financial resources could be significantly prohibited from attending the experience.

While Aaron and Leonard discussed past retreat experiences such as Kairos and their junior retreat as positive, both described their pilgrimage experience as a significant one that allowed them to a particular unique experience that allowed them to connect more with other people and develop their faith lives. For example, Leonard explained the pilgrimage had provided time for contemplation, which better helped him to use quiet time on his Kairos retreat. Aaron recalled struggling with his sexuality on a number of the retreats he attended, but had not come to closure. It was during his pilgrimage that he was able to come find some resolution and feel at peace with both himself and with the Catholic faith. Aaron's experience on pilgrimage reflected that of others during campus ministry programming, which points to a greater need for the faith development of the students not just to be limited to short-term experiences. This supports the recommendation made by *Renewing the Vision* (USCCB, 1997), that faith development been seen as not a short term experience, but a long term development.

Two themes that surfaced from a number of the pilgrims when describing their pilgrimage experience were that of time and space. The pilgrimage provided for them a unique opportunity in term of space: an unfamiliar environment or location both in another culture and country; a space in which familiar social barriers were broken allowing students to develop relationships with peers outside their friend groups, or with adults; and a space where students could encounter God and the Catholic faith in a relevant and personal way. The extended time period provided a framework with the same group of people minus the stress of school and busyness of everyday life where new connections or opportunities became a possible.

The dedicated time on the pilgrimage for students to reflect on the life of St. Francis, attend mass, and pray revealed the importance of incorporating the signs, symbols, ritual, and stories into youth ministry. The use of elements such as sharing in small groups, symbols of religious art and rituals like mass incorporated in pilgrimage allowed the students to connect their own cultures and experiences to traditions of Catholicism. *Renewing the Vision* (USCCB, 1997) asserted the need of passing down the traditions of Catholicism through person's unique culture by way of these lived faith experiences. Turner and Turner (1978) affirmed that the affective aspect of pilgrimages plays a valuable part in the experience of pilgrims. It not only the affective act, itself, but the ability of each person to be open to these experiences that allows for an influence on the person. This dynamic is alluded to in a number of Youth Ministry documents (Francis, 2019; USCC, 1976; USCCB, 1997) which refer to the awakening experience of the disciples on the Road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35) serving as the model for youth ministry. While classrooms are often seen as disconnected from the lives of students, pilgrimages provide a unique space where people can engage their knowledge and beliefs in a lived context (Pham and Barush, 2016).

The pilgrimage is unique in that it is an optional opportunity rather than a required retreat. The freedom for students to choose to attend the pilgrimage evokes greater enthusiasm and enhances the students' ability to take ownership of their own (*Renewing the Vision*, USCCB, 1997). In their interviews, students revealed a willingness to attend the Assisi Pilgrimage, however there was a disparity in students' financial ability to pay for the trip. For Leonardo the cost of the trip was not an issue. For Dominic and Robert, the trip posed a significant financial burden on their families. While Robert described the powerful influence the pilgrimage had on his faith life, he also almost did not attend the pilgrimage.

While students from marginalized communities may benefit from the pilgrimage experience in powerful ways, they are also the ones who might face the most barriers to attend the Assisi pilgrimage. Barriers may be socio-economic, such as in the case of Dominic and Robert, but also social or religious alienation as described by Leonard and Aaron.

While pilgrimages provide a unique voluntary space that allows more space in terms of time and place for students to interact with one another and to grow in relationship with God, this space may not be accessible to all. This disparity in opportunity for students is unfortunate and may be something for schools administrations to try to address creatively. The findings of this research suggest while the pilgrimage provided an influential experience for those who attended, greater access to the pilgrimage experience is needed.

Summary

The eight student interviews showed a variety of motivations and experiences while participating in similar elements and types of events. The experiences can vary from person to person. While a number of pilgrims were motivated both by tourism and faith, these did not mean that these motivations are not necessarily contradictory ideas. As a number of students developed stronger relationships with their peers and adults during their free time; this influenced their experiences of being able to talk about their interior lives and their experience of praying together through meditation and the mass. All eight participants did find the pilgrimage to be an overall positive, meaningful experience, even though a number of things were not ideal.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of Study

All people have a right to education; as a result Christians have the right to an education in the faith. While parents are the primary educators of the children the church has the responsibility to help parents assist in in this task (Second Vatican Council, 1965). To assist in this mission in the United States, many parishes and schools developed programming such as retreats, service projects, and pilgrimages (Canales, 2007; McCarty, 2005; Roberto, 2010; Smith and Denton, 2005; USCC, 1976; USCCB, 1977). Despite this mission, there has been a disassociation of youth from the Catholic Church (Pew, 2008; Pew 2014; Smith and Denton, 2005; St. Mary's Press and CARA, 2018). However, despite these trends there has been an increase in youth participating in pilgrimages (Rymarz 2007a, 2008; Harris, 2010; Cleary, 2017). This dissertation is a response to the need to understand the influence of pilgrimages on the youth who participate in them within the context of a Catholic school.

A review of related literature explored the interconnected areas of youth religiosity, faith transmission to youth, and pilgrimages. The review first dealt with the study of the religious lives of young people and how it is a crucial time for development (Fowler, 1981; Regnerus and Eucker, 2006; Schweitzer, 2014; Smith and Denton, 2005). It supported the correlation between practice of religion and positive youth development including the lack of substance abuse (Adamczyk, 2012; Bridges and Moore, 2002; Evans et. Al, 1995; Pawlak and Defronzo, 1993; Wallace and Williams, 1991); and good mental health and wellness

(Benson, Roehlkepartain, and Rude, 2003; Donahue, 1995; Jessor, Turbin, and Costa 1998; Wallace and Foreman, 1998; Wright, Frost, and Wisecraver, 1993).

Despite these benefits many researchers have found a decline in young people's belief in and practice the Catholic faith (Smith and Denton, 2005; Pew, 2008; Pew, 2014; St. Mary's Press and CARA, 2018). The National Study of Youth and Religion found that the previous research did not represent youth religiosity fully. That while young people may not be attending religious services and may not be able to articulate their faith; they are still religious (Hardies, Pearce and Denton, 2016; Smith and Denton, 2005). A number of social forces which many scholars have identified as post-modernism which includes: pluralization, individualization, privitization of religion, and globalism have influenced adolescent religiosity (Flory and Miller, 2008; Kopp, 2010; Schweitzer, 2004; Smith and Denton, 2005). The breakdown of religious structures that support faith transmissions has led to the creation of morphed fragments of faith, called bricolage (Casson, 2011; Hervieu-Léger, 2006). A version of this bricolage prevalently found in the United States was identified as Moral Therapeutic Deism (Smith and Denton, 2005).

The review then examined the Catholic Church's mission in passing down the faith (Second Vatican Council, 1965; SCCE, 1977) and how the church is committed itself to a New Evangelization; the passing down of the faith in new ways (Paul, VI, 1975; John Paul II, 1990) in order to respond to the decline in the faith found throughout areas such as Europe and the United States (Rymarz, 2012). Within the context of the United States the review examined the history and development of Catholic schools (Heft, 2011). It also examined other forms of transmission that included CYO and CCD which like Catholic schools faced decline in the wake of a changing society (Roberto, 2010; Smith and Denton, 2005). As a

result, new forms of ministering to youth developed within parishes and schools (Canales, 2007; McCarty, 2005; McCorquodale, 2001; USCCB, 1997). A number of these programs included service trips, retreats, and pilgrimages (Seishas, 2009; Trinitapoli and Vaiseey, 2009; East, Eckert, Kurtz, and Singer-Town, 2004). While many programs had been formed, little research had been conducted to study the effects of this programming within the context of Catholic schools.

Next, the review of literature explored the role of pilgrimages in history (Coleman and Elsner, 1995; McCarthy, 2003; Turner and Turner, 1978). It examined pilgrimage theory begun by Turner and Turner (1978) and later critiques (Margry 2008, Eade and Sallnow 1991). It also explored the tension between pilgrimage and tourism (Cohen, 1992; Collins-Kreiner, 2009). Next, it explored the use of pilgrimage to revitalize the faith through the efforts of John Paul II and the creation of World Youth Day (Forschungskonsortium WJT, 2007 Rymarz, 2007a, 2007b, 2008; Mason, 2010; Cleary, 2011; Norman and Johnson, 2011; Singleton, 2011; Cleary, 2016; Mandes, 2016). Finally the review of literature examined how religious experiences were facilitated and experienced (Elkind, 1962; Elkind and Stark, 1965; Hardy 1979; Hoge and Smith, 1982; James, 1902/2009; Rankin, 2008).

A mix-method approach was taken because of multi-dimensional nature of the study. Based on youth religiosity research that was done, as well as the study of youth pilgrimage studies, this methodology was engaged. The two-phase explanatory design (Creswell & Clark, 2011) was selected as it provided the most fitting means to address the research questions. The first stage of the research process was to provide data to allow for purposeful sampling of a variety of demographics to be researched.

The *Assisi Pilgrim Survey* was composed of three sections and included 18 items. Section One utilized eight items from the National Study of Youth and Religion. These questions were used utilizing a number of measures for religiosity as recommended by Mason (2010). Section Two utilized seven questions to provide demographic information such as gender, age, race or ethnic group, religious affiliation, and Socio-Economic status. Section Three consisted of three open ended questions to provide initial data on motivations, experience of pilgrimage and elements.

Once the qualitative phase of the study was completed, pilgrims were chosen to reflect a variety of demographics, patterns of religiously, and variety of pilgrimage experiences. A purposeful sample of eight volunteers was selected to be interviewed. Interview participants were also asked to bring a couple of photos that reflected their experience of the pilgrimage. Students were asked a series of questions on their motivations for going on pilgrimage, their experiences on the pilgrimages, and the possible influence the pilgrimage had on them.

This study investigated three questions related to the experiences of high school students attending the Assisi Pilgrimage. They were:

1. What are the motivations of St. Bonaventure High School (Pseudonym) students who attended the Assisi pilgrimage?
2. How do students describe their experience of this pilgrimage and its elements?
3. How do students describe the influence of this pilgrimage experience in relation to their personal faith and practices?

The summarized findings around these three research questions follow.

Research Question 1

Pertaining to Research Question 1, students who attended the Assisi Pilgrimage (N=24) took the Assisi Pilgrim Survey, which featured an open-ended question concerning their motivations for attending the pilgrimage. Further another eight students were given semi-structured interviews in which participants were asked about their motivations concerning the pilgrimage. Themes from the interviews were compared to survey responses, and more themes were present within the interviews than within the written responses. Four themes emerged from the responses: Tourist Motivation, Religious Motivation, Social Motivation, and Franciscan Motivation. Two influences, family and money, also emerged as themes that were extrinsic to the pilgrims and influenced their motivations.

The Tourist motivation was defined as the desire to travel to another country for a variety of culture experiences such as site seeing and eating. The social motivation was defined as the desire to spend time with or to connect on a deeper level with friends, as well as to establish new relationships. The religious motivation was defined as the desire to gain a deeper understanding of one's personal faith, grow in relationship with God, as well as come to a better knowledge of the history or content of a faith. The Franciscan motivation was defined as the desire to learn, to understand and to connect more with St. Francis and the religious movement that he founded.

The study found that the pilgrims acted out of a number of motivations. While some may exhibit some motivations that were directed towards the social and tourism end, often these would be accompanied by reasons that could include Religious and Franciscan motivations. Those who were not considered particularly religious, such as Leonardo, might also have been motivated by the desire to know more about St. Francis and the Franciscans.

Meaning that people who were not considered to have religiosity, the identification with organized religion or God, were open to things that could be seen as “religious”.

One extrinsic force, which since it is external factor was not considered a motivational factor but did have influence of the decision whether or not to attend the pilgrimage, was money. For a number of students, such as Robert and Dominic, the high cost of the trip, which was seen by them as a burden on the immediate family, almost prevented them from attending the pilgrimage. This was counteracted by another external force: family had influence over the student’s decision to attend the pilgrimage. In the case of Robert, his mother encouraged him to attend despite the limited resources of the family. For Dominic, his grandparents provided both encouragement and financial assistance so that he could attend the pilgrimage. Another example of the family influence can be seen in number of the pilgrims whose siblings had attended the pilgrimage, such as Vern and Dominic. This is supported by the data from the NSYR that was analyzed by Smith and Denton (2005), which showed that family, especially parents, and friends had a powerful social influence over the religiosity of young people.

The influence of the figure of St. Francis and the Franciscan charism stood out as particular motivations for students to attend the pilgrimage. Cook (2011) observed the character of a Catholic school’s culture is very much tied to the Founder of a sponsoring religious order because the ideals and values of that school are often personified in role models who serve as a sign for the school’s culture. Since the school’s pilgrimage was centered on the figure of St. Francis, the social and tourist motivations did not overshadow the influence of St. Francis and the Franciscan ideals.

Research Question 2

Data related to Question Two came from the experiences shared by eight pilgrims purposefully selected from the surveys. The open-ended questions were used to select students with different experiences from the pilgrimage to provide a variety of data. Before the interviews, participants were invited to bring photos that represented positive experiences of the pilgrimages. From the answers to the interview questions and the discussion of elicited photos, a number of similar experiences and themes associated with them emerged.

Throughout the pilgrimage the group visited a number of places associated with the life of St. Francis. Dominic, Leonardo, Kyle, Robert, and Aaron all mentioned particular experiences of visiting various Franciscan places that influenced how they connected to the person of St. Francis. While visiting the Franciscan places did something more than just make a person who seemed “mythical” and “fictional” become a historical experience, he became someone they could relate to personally. Of particular interest was the statue of the crestfallen St. Francis returning from a failed career as a knight. This statue particularly resonated with students who felt they were under certain societal or family expectations to live a certain way of life, but not living up to these expectations. With this, many also expressed hope since Francis carved out his own path that was even greater than the ones laid upon him as a knight.

Another experience and theme that emerged from the data was the experience of making connections during free time. During this, time pilgrims would do a number of things such as site seeing, shopping, and eating out that allowed them to connect with other people, in particular classmates and adult leaders. The opportunity to wander around Assisi and Rome provided a number of students from different social groups a chance to bond. For example, Robert mentioned hanging out with athletes, which is not a group of people with

whom he associates. Likewise, this opportunity would provide space in which students were able to bond with adults, including the teachers, in ways that were informal and provided deeper, meaningful relationships. This phenomenon can easily be identified with Turner and Turner (1978)'s idea of liminality, the breaking down of social structures, and the experience of *communitas*, an idealized form of community, which was theorized to occur while on pilgrimage. While Turner and Turner (1978) envisioned this occurring primarily within a religious context, this particular social context took place within a religious context.

Research Question 3

In dealing with the faith context of Research Question 3, a variety of experiences emerged that were unique to each individual. While similar elements may have contributed to the experience, the influence sometimes differed from person to person. One common experience shared through the interviews was the experience of calm and peace during the meditation time at the Leper Colony. This experience was for a number of pilgrims the highlight of their pilgrimage experience. For many it was an opportunity to take a break from the stress and anxiety of their daily lives and just be present in the moment. Being present made a number of pilgrims such as Robert, and Kyle, feel like they were in God's presence. This opportunity to spend time in meditation is not one that Kyle, Leonardo, Dominic, and Vern found normally have time for because of the commitments of school.

Another element described by a number of pilgrims as a meaningful experience was that of the mass. While a number of pilgrims such as Leonardo and Robert felt like they were going to mass more than once a day, they still reported positive experiences. For Leonardo, having an intimate mass, as well as one which was in a different location, helped him appreciate and understand the meaning of the mass more. Robert came away from the

mass, not only with a deeper appreciation of the ritual, but also with answers. The mass seemed to resonate with his life in a particular way. While Robert, Vern, and Kyle mentioned the experience of mass back home as very structured and mechanical, the mass on the Assisi pilgrimage was simple and intimate which provided them with a powerful experience.

Both Aaron and Robert had particular, meaningful experiences that were not the result of one element or experience of the pilgrimage but a culmination of a number of things. For Aaron it was partly the result of being able to connect with others and find acceptance, especially the result of a meaningful experience talking to a priest. This was followed by a powerful experience of healing while praying at the Tomb of St. Francis. Finally, leading to Aaron desiring to be confirmed in the Catholic faith and wanting to attend a Catholic College. For Robert, it was a culmination of experiencing the Franciscan places, having time to reflect at the Leper Colony and culminated at the mass at La Verna where St. Francis had a mystical experience. This was followed up with having meaningful experiences with a number of friars which led to Robert's openness to consider a vocation as a Franciscan.

Conclusions and Implications

Research Question 1

It may be concluded in regards to Research Questions 1, that the motivations of St. Bonaventure students (N=24) for attending the Assisi pilgrimage are varied and not necessarily tied to the religiosity of each individual. While Donnelly (1992) and Cohen (1979, 1992) argue that pilgrims typically have either a tourist or pilgrim motivation for going, the results support Kreiner (2009) in that pilgrims have a diverse set of motivations

and experiences. While the work of Allen (2005), Cleary (2016), Mason (2010a), Rymarz (2007a) developed a spectrum of motivations of pilgrims correlated to the religious profiles of religiosity, the pilgrims interviews (N=8), showed that while some pilgrims like Vern, who show a high level of religiosity in their surveys, when interviewed they showed social, religious, and tourist motivations. This research sheds light on a more complex web of motivations that exist for pilgrims attending a high school sponsored pilgrimage. The findings also support Cleary (2016, 2017) in that those attending pilgrimage for Catholic schools showed a great variety of religiosity and motivations.

Research Question 2

The description of the student's experiences around visiting the places associated with the life, ministry, and death of St. Francis implies that the trip provided a way for the students not only to learn about the saint, but also to connect with him in an affective way that contributed to a positive experience of the pilgrimage as well as a way for the pilgrims to think about their own lives. Visiting Franciscan places also influenced the pilgrims by helping them reflect on how they can better serve other people.

The interviews highlighted the importance of free time in making connections with others during the pilgrimage. This could be seen in Robert, Leo, and Aaron's development of relationships with peers during free time. It can also be seen in the development of relationships with adults during free time as described by Kyle's going up St. Peter's Dome with Mr. Belding, as well as Robert and Aaron's discussions with priests during free time. While for Cohen (1979, 1992) Donnelly (1992) who viewed social aspects as distracting from the religious nature of a pilgrimage, this data seems to imply that the social aspect can contribute to the experience. This social time is important because the development of

relationships are key to Catholic culture formation (Cook, 2011). However, there is sometimes that desire for social experience can take away from the pilgrimage experience. As was described by George and Dominic, the late night drinking of a number of pilgrims caused sleeping pilgrims to be awakened by the early morning noises of returning students after a night of partying.

Research Question 3

The findings do support Cleary (2016, 2017) in that those who had moderate levels of religious practice and belief before the pilgrimage became more committed. This can be seen in the experiences of Robert and Aaron who had moderate levels of religious practice and belief. They expressed having powerful experiences during the pilgrimage that led them to the desire to want to be more committed to their faith.

In terms of a constructed religiosity, the data found in this study showed similar results to the data from adolescents studied by Smith and Denton (2005) that showed high school students constructed their beliefs in unique ways. Although showing a low capacity to use religious vocabulary to describe their faith, they tended to be religious. This suggests that the quantitative research that has been conducted (Pew 2008, 2014) is not sufficient in understanding the complexity of beliefs in the United States and that a mixed method approach is better in capturing the subtleties of belief and practices.

A number of religious traditions such as the mass and knowledge about saints seems to have been handed down with some patching of ideas as Hervieu-Léger's chain of memory (2000) suggests. An example of this could be seen in the understanding given by Leodardo that St. Francis was a "mascot" for St. Bonaventure H.S., the term historically used by the Catholic Church would be that St. Francis is one of the patron saints of the school. Another

example is Aaron's desire to attend RCIA when he is in college. Since Aaron was already baptized Catholic, he would attend confirmation and not RCIA which is reserved for people who are not already Catholic who want to enter the church. While these are subtle differences, the religious curriculum at the school includes instruction on these religious ideas.

The data also supports that structured religious activities such as masses, rituals, prayers, meditation, and group sharing, a large part of the programming offered during the trip, were identified as some of the more transformative experiences during the pilgrimage. Leonardo, Kyle, and Robert all mentioned the mass as being particularly more influential and powerful compared to what was experienced back home. Leonardo, Vern, Kyle and Dominic considered the meditation that took place at the Leper Colony as one of the most powerful experiences of the trip. This supports the research done by Harris (2010), Rymarz (2007b) and Singleton (2011) about the influence of structured faith activities such as masses, rituals, and prayer on the experiences of young people on pilgrimages. Vern, Kyle, and Dominic mentioned that the overload of studies and other commitments prevented them from having time to slow down, to reflect, to pray, and to attend mass. This supports the findings of Smith and Denton (2005), which found that the commitments from an environment that places its priorities on achieving academic success so that one can be more financially wealthy often comes at the cost the spiritual and moral development of students in Catholic schools.

Also found in the data was need for the support structures which are used in the passing down of the faith. As shown with Dominic and Aaron the support of family was crucial in their participation in the pilgrimage. Also, both Dominic and Vern mention that

their brothers had gone on the pilgrimage, had positive experiences, and encouraged them to attend. These findings support the claim made by Smith and Denton (2007) of the critical role family plays on the transmission of the faith.

The interviews conducted affirm the positive influence of Catholic Campus Ministry programs on high school students as found by Sureau (2012), and Martin (2016). However, the campus ministry programming also have a negative influence on students as shown by the research conducted by Maher (2001) and Burke (2011). Dominic and Robert represent a number of students who had difficulty paying for the trip. Because of the high cost of the trip, it is plausible that a number of students who are on financial assistance are not able to attend the pilgrimage. Also for Aaron, there was some anxiety concerning the rooming situation since he was afraid of how he would be treated because of his sexual identity. This study found the need for better system of support both pastorally and culturally in campus ministry programming for those marginalized as recommended by Aldana (2015), Ellis (1996), Maher (2001).

Summary

This mixed-method study of students from St. Bonaventure High School showed that those who attended a campus ministry sponsored pilgrimage were diverse in their motivations for going. It demonstrated a complex set of themes such as: Tourist motivations, Social motivations, Religious motivations, and Franciscan motivations for attending the pilgrimage. In addition to these internal motivations, it identified a number of external factors such as financial concerns and family concerns that could influence pilgrims' desire to attend. In collecting data from student interviews and photo-elicitation, it was shown that there were a number of experiences such as developing connections during free time and

connecting with St. Francis while visiting Franciscan places that influenced pilgrims' recollections of the pilgrimage. Finally, it identified a number of structured elements such as the meditations, small group discussions, and masses that had a positive influence on the student's description of their personal faith. While the long-term influence of the pilgrimage is not known, the Assisi pilgrimage served as an influential campus ministry program, alongside retreats and service trips in helping form students' faith in the *chain of memory*.

Recommendations for Future Research

Based on the findings of this study, the following items represent recommendations for future research in the area of students and the influence of Catholic High School Campus ministry programs.

1. Conduct a longitudinal study of students before the pilgrimage, immediately after the pilgrimage and after high school to study the lasting influence of the pilgrimage experience.
2. Conduct a comparative study of students who attend pilgrimage to those who attend a service trip to see how experiences are similar and different.
3. Replicate this study with students who have attended Kairos retreats and service trips.
4. Conduct a qualitative study designed to explore the perceptions and experiences of pilgrimage chaperones and organizers, and compare them to those of student participants.
5. Conduct an ethnographic study of a group of high school students attending a pilgrimage together.

6. Conduct a follow-up qualitative study designed to study the influence of the entire campus ministry program after the students are in college.
7. Conduct a study to explore the reasons students did not attend the pilgrimage.
8. Conduct a study exploring the experience and influence campus ministry programs have on students who are identified as being from marginalized populations.

Recommendations for Future Practice

The findings of this study suggest that while students may have influential experiences on the pilgrimage, there is a great need for open-ended programming that is more relational, dialogical, and flexible rather than dogmatic, didactic, and rigid. Overall there is a need for more flexible opportunities in campus ministry programming, which allows for greater access to students who experience social marginalization due to a variety of factors. Ross (2011) described pilgrimages as helping “the pilgrim access his or her interior landscape and journey with that space” (p. xxxix). Pope Francis (2019) wrote that while young people can often “have a powerful experience of God” this is regularly followed up by being presented teachings on “doctrinal and moral issues, the evils of today’s world, the Church, the social doctrine, chastity, marriage, birth control and so on” (§ 212). The powerful “experience of encounter with the Lord should never be replaced by a kind of ‘indoctrination’” (§ 214). Pope Francis used the example of pilgrimages as a form of “popular piety” which “attract young people who do not readily feel at home in ecclesial structures, and represent a concrete sign of their trust in God”(§ 238). Pope Francis criticized Catholic schools for their pastoral approach to students focused on “religious instruction that proved often incapable of nurturing lasting experiences of faith” (§ 221). He pushed for

more inclusive youth ministry that allows various young people to be a part of a church that has “open doors and make room for everyone, with their doubts and frustrations, their problems and their efforts to find themselves, their past errors, their experiences of sin and all their difficulties.” (§ 234).

Throughout Europe, the United States, and Australia, the phenomenon of people identifying with a faith while not being formally connected to it in practice or creed (Rossiter, 2011; Smith and Denton, 2005; Taylor, 2007), was described by the sociologist Grace Davie (1994) as “believing without belonging”. Taylor (2007) described the attraction of young people to pilgrimage experiences because they can “explore Christian faith without any preconditions as to the outcome” (p. 517). Taylor (2007) posited that young people are attracted to pilgrimage experiences because “they are received as searchers, that they can express themselves . . . and explore Christian faith without any preconditions as to the outcome”(p. 517). Pilgrimage experiences provide a “departure from the everyday, and the contact with something greater a sense of universal” (p. 517).

Within the context of retreats, Rossiter (2106) studied secondary school retreats, and found that students found the elements: being with friends, personal sharing both by staff and students, and personal reflection as being the most valuable elements of a retreat (p. 139). While retreats produce a unique environment in which students can be positively influenced (Rossiter, 2016; Tullio and Rossiter, 2009), these highly structured and packaged experiences may not necessarily have a long-term influence on students because of the questionable way in which the personal issues of teenagers are not dealt with in a way that is tied to their lived experience (Burke, 2011). While retreats such as Kairos, can be highly structured

experiences with presupposed outcomes, retreats do provide a space in which students can interact with various levels of religiosity to the level in which that want to engage.

In my own experience assisting with retreats, it is often a small select group of student and adult leaders who lead talks and activities; while on the pilgrimage all attendees have an opportunity to participate. In the past, students have shared feeling that their own life stories do not matter as those giving talks because they have not experienced great personal hardships. This is in contrast the pilgrimage experience, which offers an equal opportunity for attendees to experience a variety of activities that are designed with people of various interests and religious backgrounds. Thus enabling participants to experience the tradition of the Catholic faith in a way that was inviting.

Based on these observations the following recommendations are offered for future practice:

It is recommended that programming be shaped to be more intentionally inclusive. Programming should be developed in a way that both allows space for students to have strong religious experiences, but also provides space that is inclusive and welcoming of those who do not relate well to organized religion, in particular Catholicism, as well as those who belong to other religious groups.

In order to be more inclusive, it is recommended that greater support for marginalized students be given to participate in campus ministry programming, particularly after sharing about their experiences on campus ministry experiences such as retreat, pilgrimages and service projects. Also to be more inclusive, it is recommended that schools find ways to bring down the cost of pilgrimages. Some suggestions are: sponsoring pilgrimages that are

local, that schools provide financial assistance for those who are unable to bear the entire cost of the trip, and being frugal in planning trip amenities.

It is recommended that programming be shaped in ways that are more flexible. Programming should be developed in away that places priority on meeting students within their own context and building relationships. Rather than focusing on a didactic approach, it is recommended that an affective approach should be taken in the faith development of students. This includes creating informal interactions between school personnel such as teachers and staff members that allow students to discuss important issues related to their lives. School personnel's presence during unstructured time could also discourage the drinking that took place during various times of the pilgrimage.

Closing Remarks

As both families and the institutional church continue the forming of young people in the faith, the new methodology proposed by Pope Paul VI (1975) and Pope John Paul II (1979, 1990) continually needs to address a society that faces a number of dramatic changes (Flory and Miller, 2008; Kopp, 2010; Schweitzer. 2004). While there has been shown a decline in the number of people associating with the Catholic church in the United States (Pew, 2007, 2014; St Mary's Press and CARA, 2017), there has been found a more complex understanding of what it means to be religious and spiritual for adolescents that is not often captured in surveys (Smith and Denton, 2005; Hardie, Pearce and Denton, 2016).

As schools develop programming for campus ministry programs, it must not just take in the goals of faith formation that are set up by the USCCB (1997), but also the complexities of teenager's lives in relation to the church and society. While retreats, pilgrimages, and service trips may provide opportunities for youth to find time to reflect on their lives and

develop their faith, Catholic schools must find ways to support students in their day to day lives in order for this programming to have lasting effects. Students who have been wrestling with their faith because of their sexuality, socio-economic status, racism, or adverse childhood experiences should not have to wait to attend an experience like the pilgrimage in their junior year, or Kairos in their senior year to get empathy or the space to seek support.

As someone who had a number of difficult childhood experiences and doubted God's existence, it was not until the last months of my senior year that I attended a meaningful opportunity that allowed me to come to peace with my relationship with God. When I did return from the experience, it was not until I attended a Catholic college that I found the day-to-day support for my faith that helped me to develop a better sense of myself. In high school I would have never been able to afford a trip like the Assisi pilgrimage. While a freshman I did attend a band trip to Atlanta, but because of my socio-economic situation, did not have the money to buy lunch on the way home. Fortunately a kind senior, who knew my brother, lent me a few dollars to get a burger. As I listened to the experiences of the students who were interviewed about the Assisi pilgrimage, I found a program that was helpful to them, but also one that was limited since the cost prevents a number of students from attending. Also, if the influence of the pilgrimage is going to be lasting the school needs to develop more ways to support students in their day-to-day lives.

This dissertation supports the efforts of Campus Ministry programs that do provide meaningful opportunities for students to get a break from the stress and anxiety of school, to find a space that is more calming and relaxing, to meet new people, and to develop their own faiths. This dissertation challenges Campus Ministry programs to make sure opportunities are accessible to all; to provide a safe and welcoming environment for all people, especially

marginalized populations; as well as to balance the desire of passing down the faith by meeting the students where they are in their personal journeys. The positive and negative influence of these programs can only be accomplished by critically examining the experience of students who are participating in the programming.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Letter to Administration

Dear _____,

My name is Fr. Christopher Iwancio and I am a doctoral candidate at the University of San Francisco in the Catholic Educational Leadership program. I am currently working on my dissertation which focuses on the experience of high school students who attend pilgrimages through their Catholic high school. The study will consist of a questionnaire given to those who have participated in any pilgrimage program offered by your school and from the results a number of students will be invited to be interviewed about their experiences.

The questionnaire and interview protocol are attached, so that you may examine it before making a decision. The identity of students will be handled confidentially. The name of the school will not be listed or published in the dissertation. Students who participate in the questionnaire will be given food as compensation for their participation. Also students who participate in the interviews will be given \$25 gift cards.

This study has minimum risk, while students may feel slight discomfort talking about their faith and religion, they are free to decline to answer any questions, as well as end the participation at any point.

This study will add to the body of knowledge about how students experience campus ministry programming and hopefully will lead to continuing developing the best programs and experiences which will help them in their life journeys. If you would like more information please feel free to contact me at (707)-321-1989 or ciwancio@gmail.com.

If you have further questions about the study, you may contact the IRBPHS at the University of San Francisco, which is concerned with protection of volunteers in research projects. You may reach the IRBPHS office by calling (415) 422-6091 and leaving a voicemail message, by e-mailing IRBPHS@usfca.edu, or by writing to the IRBPHS, Department of Psychology, University of San Francisco, 2130 Fulton Street, San Francisco, CA 94117-1080. Participation in research is voluntary. You are free to decline to be in this study, or to withdraw from it at any point.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. May God continue to bless you and your school. Thank you for your work in the mission of Catholic education.

Sincerely,
Fr. Christopher Iwancio

APPENDIX B

Minor Consent and Assent Letter

Dear Parent or Guardian,

My name is Fr. Christopher Iwancio and I am a doctoral candidate at the University of San Francisco in the Catholic Educational Leadership program. I am currently working on my dissertation which focuses on the experience of high school students who attend pilgrimages through their Catholic high school. Your school's principal_____, has given me permission to conduct this research at your child's school.

With your permission, I am asking your child and others who participated in the Assisi pilgrimage to participate in this research study. If your child chooses to participate and with your support, their participation will involve a questionnaire given to those who have participated in the pilgrimage program offered by the school and from the results a number of students will be invited to be interviewed about their experiences. The survey will take about 20 minutes to complete and will be given during school hours at a date determined by the school. Several students will be invited to participate in follow-up one-on-one interviews, which will be conducted a couple weeks after the surveys. The one-on-one interviews will last no more than one hour and will be conducted during the school day.

The interviews will be digitally recorded, and later transcribed for the study. The identity of students will be handled confidentially, each student will be given a pseudonym. The name of the school, nor the student's real name will not be listed or published in the dissertation. There is no direct benefit from students participating.

This study has minimum risk, while students may feel slight discomfort talking about their faith and religion, they are free to decline to answer any questions, as well as end the participation at any point. The anticipated benefit of this study will generate a better understanding of students' experiences of the pilgrimage and the impact it has on their lives. Only I will have access to the responses you make. Neither your child's teacher nor you will know if your child chooses to participate in this project or will know the answers they provide.

Students who participate in the questionnaire will be given lunch as an expression of gratitude for their participation. Also students who participate in the interviews will be given \$25 Amazon gift cards.

PARTICIPATION IS COMPLETELY VOLUNTARY. Participants are free to opt out of participating in this study, or stop participating in the research at any point. Participation in the study will have no bearing on the student's grade or status at the school. This letter will serve as a consent form for your child's participation. If you have any questions about the research, you may contact me at cmiwancio@dons.usfca.edu . If you have further questions about the study, you may contact the IRBPHS at the University of San Francisco, which is concerned with protection of volunteers in research projects. You may reach the IRBPHS office by calling (415) 422-6091 and leaving a voicemail message, by e-mailing IRBPHS@usfca.edu, or by writing to the IRBPHS,

Department of Psychology, University of San Francisco, 2130 Fulton Street, San Francisco, CA 94117-1080.

Thank you for your consideration. Please complete form and return it to the Front Office no later than (Date).

Gratefully,

Fr. Christopher Iwancio

Statement of Consent

I read the above consent form for study conducted by Fr. Christopher Iwancio of the University of San Francisco. The nature, demands, risk, and benefits of the project have been explained to me. I am aware that I have the opportunity to ask questions about this research. I understand that I may withdraw my consent and discontinue my child's participation at any time without penalty.

___ I consent to my child's participation in the Assisi Pilgrim Survey.

___ I do not consent to my child's participation in the Assisi Pilgrim Survey.

Signature of Subject's Parent/Guardian

Date of Signature

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent

Date of Signature

Statement of Consent

I read the above consent form for the study conducted by Fr. Christopher Iwancio of the University of San Francisco. The nature, demands, risk, and benefits of the project have been explained to me. I am aware that I have the opportunity to ask questions about this research. I understand that I may withdraw my consent and discontinue my son/daughter's participation at any time without penalty.

___ I consent to my child's participation in the Assisi Pilgrim One-on-One Interview.

___ I do not consent to my child's participation in the Assisi Pilgrim One-on-One Interview.

Signature of Subject's Parent/Guardian

Date of Signature

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent

Date of Signature

Dear Student:

My name is Fr. Christopher Iwancio and I am a doctoral candidate at the University of San Francisco in the Catholic Educational Leadership program. I am for you to participate in research, as part my doctorate degree, which focuses on the experience of high school students who attend pilgrimages through their Catholic high school.

I am asking you to participate in a questionnaire given to those who have participated in the pilgrimage program offered by the school and from the results a number of students will be invited to be interviewed about their experiences. The survey will take about 20 minutes to complete and will be given during school hours at a date determined by the school. Several students will be invited to participate in follow-up one-on-one interviews, which will be conducted a couple weeks after the surveys. The one-on-one interviews will last no more then one hour and will be conducted during the school day.

Your parents or legal guardians have already given permission for you to participate in this study, but you do not have to participate if you choose. You may quit this study at any time by simply telling me that you do not want to continue. You can skip any questions or tasks that you do not want to complete. Your participation in this study will not affect your grades in any way. There are no known risks involved in this study and you will receive nothing for your participation. To protect your confidentiality, your responses will not be shared with anyone unless required by law. Only I will have access to the responses you make. Neither your teacher nor your parents will know if you chose to participate in this project or will know the answers you provide.

If you have any question about this study, please contact me at cmiwancio@dons.usfca.edu.

Sincerely yours,

Fr. Christopher Iwancio

Agreement

I agree to participate in this research project and I have received a copy of this form.

Student's Name (Please Print)

Date

Student's Signature

I have explained to the above named individual the nature and purpose, benefits and possible risks associated with participation in this research. I have answered all questions that have been raised and I have provided the participant with a copy of this form.

Researcher

Date

APPENDIX C

Student over 18 years old Consent Letter

Dear Student,

My name is Fr. Christopher Iwancio and I am a doctoral candidate at the University of San Francisco in the Catholic Educational Leadership program. I am currently working on my dissertation which focuses on the experience of high school students who attend pilgrimages through their Catholic high school. Your school's principal _____, has given me permission for me to conduct this research at your school.

With your permission, I am asking those who participated in the Assisi pilgrimage to participate in this research study. If you choose to participate, the research will involve a questionnaire given to those who have participated in the pilgrimage program offered by the school and from the results a number of students will be invited to be interviewed about their experiences. The survey will take about 20 minutes to complete and will be given during school hours at a date determined by the school. Several students will be invited to participate in follow-up one-on-one interviews, which will be conducted a couple weeks after the surveys. The one-on-one interviews will last no more than one hour and will be conducted during the school day.

The interviews will be digitally recorded, and later transcribed for the study. Your identity will be handled confidentially, each student will be given a pseudonym. The name of the school, nor each student's real name will not be listed or published in the dissertation. There is no direct benefit from students participating.

This study has minimum risk, while you may feel slight discomfort talking your faith and religion, you are free to decline to answer any questions, as well as end the participation at any point. The anticipated benefit of this study will generate a better understanding of students' experiences of the pilgrimage and the impact it has on their lives.

Students who participate in the questionnaire will be lunch as an expression of gratitude for their participation. Also students who participate in the interviews will be given \$25 Amazon gift cards.

PARTICIPATION IS COMPLETELY VOLUNTARY. Participants are free to opt out of participating in this study, or stop participating in the research at any point. Participation in the study will have no bearing on your grade or status at the school. This letter will serve as a consent form for your participation. If you have any questions about the research, you may contact me at cmiwancio@dons.usfca.edu. If you have further questions about the study, you may contact the IRBPHS at the University of San Francisco, which is concerned with protection of volunteers in research projects. You may reach the IRBPHS office by calling (415) 422-6091 and leaving a voicemail message, by e-mailing IRBPHS@usfca.edu, or by writing to the IRBPHS, Department of Psychology, University of San Francisco, 2130 Fulton Street, San Francisco, CA 94117-1080.

Thank you for your consideration. Please complete form and return it to the Front Office no later than (Date).

Gratefully,

Fr. Christopher Iwancio

I HAVE READ THE ABOVE INFORMATION. ANY QUESTIONS I HAVE ASKED HAVE BEEN ANSWERED. I AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT AND I WILL RECEIVE A COPY OF THIS CONSENT FORM.

PARTICIPANT'S SIGNATURE

DATE

APPENDIX D

Assisi Pilgrim Survey

Provided ID Code_____

Section One- Religious Attitudes and Practices

1. How important or unimportant is religious faith in shaping how you live your daily life?

Extremely important
Very important
Somewhat important
Not very important
Not important at all

2. About how often do you usually attend religious services, NOT counting weddings, baptisms, funerals, or religious services during school?

Never
A few times a year
Many times a year
Once a month
Two to three times a month
Once a week
More than once a week

3. Do you believe in God, or not, or are you unsure?

Yes
No
Unsure

If "No" selected, the on-line survey uses skip logic to bypass the next two items, and continues with: "Which of the following statements comes closest to your own views about religion?"

If "Yes" or "Unsure" selected, the on-line survey advances to this item:

4. How distant or close do you feel to God most of the time?

Extremely distant
Very distant
Somewhat distant
Somewhat close
Very close
Extremely close

5. Which of the following views comes closest to your own view of God?

God is a personal being involved in the lives of people today

God created the world, but is NOT involved in the world now
God is not personal, but something like a cosmic life force

6. Which of the following statements comes closest to your own views about religion

Only one religion is true

Many religions may be true

There is very little truth in religion

7. Some people think that it is okay to pick and choose their religious beliefs without having to accept the teachings of their religious faith as a whole. Do you agree or disagree?

Agree

Disagree

8. How often, if ever, do you pray by yourself alone?

Never

Less than once a month

One to two times a month

About once a week

A few times a week

About once a day

Many times a day

Section Two- Demographics

9. My gender is

Male

Female

Other (Specify) _____

10. My age is

16

17

18

19

Other

11. My race or ethnic group is best described as

American Indian

Asian

Black

Hispanic

Pacific Islander
White
Mixed
Other

12. Among the following religions or denominations, I consider myself to be:

Catholic
Orthodox
Protestant
Other Christian
Non-Christian
No religion

13. What level of education does your mother have?

Grade school
Some high school
High school degree
Some college
College degree
Graduate school
Decline to State/Don't know

14. Are you on some form of financial aid?

Yes
No
Decline to State/Don't know

15. How would you describe your previous school?

Public
Private
Catholic

Open Ended Questions

16. Why did you attend the Assisi Pilgrimage?

17. Describe what you most enjoyed about the pilgrimage

18. Describe what you least enjoyed about the pilgrimage

Other Comments

APPENDIX E

Interview Guide

Interview Guide

Introduction Questions:

How are things going in school?

How did you decide to go on the pilgrimage? Was there any particular reason you went?

Overall experience:

How was the overall experience for you?

What was your favorite part?

What was your least favorite part of the trip?

Photo Questions:

Can you describe the photo to me in your own words?

What meaning does this photo have for you?

Special Experiences:

Were there any experiences during the trip where you felt God's presence?

Were there any experiences during the trip that made you feel uncomfortable or were really negative to you?

Impact:

What kind of impact did going on the pilgrimage have on you?

Did it impact how you saw God, religion, yourself or others?

Would you encourage others to do on this trip? What would you tell them?

APPENDIX F

IRB Permission



IRBPHS - Approval Notification

To: Christopher Iwancio
From: Terence Patterson, IRB Chair
Subject: Protocol #1132
Date: 11/28/2018

The Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRBPHS) at the University of San Francisco (USF) has reviewed your request for human subjects approval regarding your study.

Your research (IRB Protocol **#1132**) with the project title **Assisi Pilgrim Survey and Interview Protocol** has been approved by the IRB Chair under the rules for expedited review on **11/28/2018**.

Any modifications, adverse reactions or complications must be reported using a modification application to the IRBPHS within ten (10) working days.

If you have any questions, please contact the IRBPHS via email at IRBPHS@usfca.edu. Please include the Protocol number assigned to your application in your correspondence.

On behalf of the IRBPHS committee, I wish you much success in your research.

Sincerely,

Terence Patterson, EdD, ABPP

APPENDIX G

Permission from School

